

## **Significance and Justification of the title She Stoops to Conquer**

She Stoops to Conquer is a comedy of manners, satirizing the hypocrisy and the baseness in the high-bred characters who are so class conscious. This satire is most apparent in Tony Lumpkin, the son of Mrs. Hardcastle from her previous marriage, whose base nature is exemplified in the tavern scene. It is also rather apparent in the vain and materialistic characteristics of Mrs. Hardcastle. Goldsmith clearly employs the character of Charles Marlowe, the son of an old friend of Mr. Hardcastle, to satirise the English preoccupation and emphasis on class distinctions.

Even without reading the play, the irony of the title is obvious, since the "she" in question is lowering herself in order to prove herself superior. In context of the play, the title could be argued to refer both to Kate's plan to trap Marlow and to Goldsmith's purpose of using "low comedy" to convince his audience to embrace it. The former is a good description of the irony of Kate's plan: in order to convince herself she is a worthy match for Marlow, she has to first convince him she is of a low class. However, the title also describes Goldsmith's purpose: he wishes to convince an audience to embrace this "low" or "laughing" comedy, and by indulging in it, he might convince them that it is superior to "sentimental" comedy. Regardless of which description one uses, the irony of the title expresses Goldsmith's view of humanity: while we pretend to be of impeachable high class, we all have a "low," base side that we should celebrate rather than try to ignore