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## Evil in Children in Lord of the Flies

### The Evil Within Man

Children, the most uncorrupt of human-kind, when children know right from wrong, yet they still choose to do wrong, what does that say about man's morality? In the allegorical novel, *Lord of the Flies*, written by William Golding, a "pack of british boys" are stuck with the challenge of survival. As time goes on rescue does not arrive for the boys until majority of the boys are more animals than they are human. In the novel Golding tries to show that authority is needed to create order and to force people to be civil, when in reality the power within the position is the reason that the evil is brought out within mankind. This point is proven throughout the novel of *Lord of the Flies*, as well as through the article of *The Psychology of Evil*, and the *LA Times* article: *Teen's attack on Chinese girl draws comparison to 'Lord of the Flies' from judge*.

In Golding's novel, Jack and Ralph continuously seem to fight over power and have very different ideas on how to rule the other boys on the island. On page 150 of the novel, Jack orders one of the boys to go fetch him a drink. Golding then mentions, "Power lay in the brown swell of his forearms authority sat on his shoulder and chattered in his ear like an ape" (*Lord of the Flies*). Golding here shows the difference between Jack and Ralph ruling. While Jack uses his newly found power to order people around without reason, Ralph uses his power to find protection for the littluns and to keep a signal fire going. On page 200, Golding seems to use a lot of irony to prove a point, "...her bows hauled up and held by two rating. In the stern-sheets another rating held a sub-machine gun" (*Lord of the Flies*). Though Jack and Ralph's power struggle is not shown through that moment, Golding shows that savagery and evil does not only exist on the boundaries of the island, but everywhere else in the world as well. In the novel, Jack represents dictatorship and absolute monarchy; therefore Ralph representing a democratic government. There have been many wars throughout history involving a power struggle or greed for more land, even about the way the government is going to be run. Power is the source of evil and the source of most wars. If one person were to be given all the power, he would have no regulation and would continue to rule and do as he pleased.

In Philip Zimbardo's "The Psychology of Evil", he speaks about what makes us evil and what the meaning of evil is, "Evil is the exercise of power. And that's the key: it's about power. To intentionally harm people psychologically, to hurt people physically, to destroy people mortally, or ideas to commit crimes against humanity" (TEDTalk). This is what we define evil; to intentionally hurt someone, to destroy people. But why do people act evilly? May be it's the sense of power they receive. Within the same speech Zimbardo speaks about a study done to middle-aged, everyday citizens. "All evil starts with 15 volts. And then the next step is another 15 volts. The problem is at the end of the line it's 450 volts. And as you go along the guy is screaming... quantifying evil as the willingness of people to blindly obey authority, to go all the way to 450 volts" (TEDTalk). Zimbardo makes a point that if anyone believes they are doing some form of good, they could be blinded into doing evil. Think about these quotes in the sense of an elementary school bully. So, why do students bully? Most people are told it is because they have a bad life and they need some sense of control in it. Then again, what is control? Control leads to power. So to that child, he continues to bully others because he enjoys the sense of power.

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In the LA Times article “Teens’ attack draws comparison to Lord of the Flies by judge”, written by Cindy Chang and Frank Shyong they speak about a torturous and sadistic case that had taken place in San Gabriel, California: “...they stripped her naked, kicked her with high-heeled shoes, slapped her hundreds of times and burned her nipples with cigarettes.” This here they introduce it as a case of assault. As they continue with the article they go into even deeper detail about the attackers’ background, explaining how they are students from China, studying abroad. “...The father of one of the juvenile suspects was arrested on suspicion of attempting to dissuade the victims from pursuing the case by offering them money” (LA Times). Foreign exchange is easily tens of thousands of US dollars alone. With other explanations from the article it is quite obvious these teens come from a wealthy family. Money is the equivalence to power, with money one can do as they wish and as they please. Since these children know they have the money to be able to persuade others into not taking part into the case, therefore they are using their “power” to do as they please.

Though man is inherently evil, the evil within man would never surface if they weren’t to be given power. This shown throughout the Jack and Ralph’s power struggle, through the studies where one were to electrocute another, as well as through the exercise of power shown in the LA Times article. Who were to say that man would work better without government? Without government, man would be even more chaotic that it is with government. The best way from preventing man from unleashing the evil within him would be to create a government where the power would be shared, a government like the democratic government. Looking through history and even now, dictatorship or absolute monarchy has yet to work for a country, so should a single person be left with power alone?