
The Idea That Power Corrupts in “Animal Farm” And “Lord Of The Flies”

Not all leaders are selfish and greedy for the urge of power. Fortunate enough some leaders are more reliable with power but others can't stand it. They are always there wanting unlimited power, no matter how much they are willing to sacrifice. In George Orwell's and William Golding's novels, inferior characters, who play the roles as a spokesperson, followers and enforcer, strengthen the power of the leaders by reinforcing them through their fears, thus ensuring the leaders' success. George Orwell and William Golding both illustrate different outcomes of such a situation in their novels “Animal Farm” and “Lord of the Flies” respectively. In both stories, a stable government is replaced by a volatile, even hostile environment. Both text share similar concepts in that a new government can commonly appear to be more stable and reliable than the previous authority, when in reality it evolves to be much worse which reflects upon how power can corrupt a society and that “absolute power, corrupts absolutely.”

Some people seek power so that they can control and manipulate others and in contrast there are those who seek power for the benefit of the collective. These two distinct motives are clearly seen in both novels. In George Orwell's novel, Napoleon who became the leader after the rebellion converted into more of a strict and selfish dictator. Napoleon believed that the animals were inferior, a lower class of society that could become manipulated into working for him. Furthermore Napoleons heartlessness happens during a scene, after Snowball was exiled, Napoleon summons the animals for an authorized meeting based on the confessions relating to the crimes of the animals. Napoleon then followed this up by slaughtering the animals that disagreed with him, such as the hens who disapproved upon putting their eggs for sale which led to their swift death. “And so the tale of confessions and slaughters continued until there was a pile of corpses laying before Napoleons feet and the air was heavy with the smell of blood.” This clearly reflects upon how hostile and terrifying Napoleon was for power. Snowball who is Napoleon's counterpart is intelligent and passionate in which he is based on Leon Trotsky the Soviet politician. Snowball is less devious and proved to be a better speaker then his counterpart which indicates that he is more likely to win the loyalty of the animals which weakens the reinforcement of Napoleons triumph. This indicates that Snowball was the more reliable leader, which made Napoleon feel threatened by him and that's why Napoleon decided to chase him out of the farm to regain more power over the animals. Alternatively in Golding's novel, the leader, Ralph is a reliable leader and is a rather laid back character within the text, although he may possess the sinister undertones of a possible evil presence.

His means of being bad are a lot more underhanded and quiet and mostly unintentional. In addition Ralph stands for all that is good. Jack however is a more selfish and devilish leader who opposes on destructible hunting. His rules allow ruthless killing and unethical behavior in regards to unnecessary violence. Jack's society ultimately leads to corruption, killing many innocent people in the process, while Ralph's safe as the boys are rescued. Ralph also used a repetition of hope towards being rescued while Jack manipulated the once civilized boys into complete savages within a short amount of time.

Power corrupts commonly through the leaders who continually manipulate others to fear their current status. This creates an illusion of unethical and conflicting behavior. In George Orwell's

novel "Animal Farm" the power that the 3 pigs obtained had unethically corrupted them, in which Napoleon established total power amongst the animals, which corrupted the society as a whole.

Similarly his text "Lord of the Flies" William Golding indicates that power absolutely corrupts, in which the desire for power divides the boy's brittle civilization. History overall has clearly proven that power is the evil that exist in communism style governments and congregation. Similarly in Golding's novel "Lord of the Flies" Jack the antagonist of the text, uses fear to manipulate the boys with the beast "Beelzebub," which led to an excessive thirst for power, in which this destroyed the boy's brittle civilization which ended up causing major havoc and competition inside the untouched jungle. Power was also used in positive way in the text before everything was thrown into chaos. Piggy who discovered the conch shell, used this to keep their civilization, this is because the conch shell symbolized the authority of civilization and order which kept the boys together after the crash. Jack however neglected the conch shell and disregarded anyone who held it.

Both texts share a mutual response when identifying their respective audiences. In William Golding's text "Lord of the Flies" teaches that any individual has the capacity to become evil. In addition the maturity level for, "Lord of the Flies" was intentionally targeted for adults. As for George Orwell's Novel "Animal Farm" the text itself is targeted to the general population of the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republic) which was a former communist country in Northern Asia and Eastern Europe which was established during 1922. This was also targeted to the people who wanted to be informed about the possible outcomes and dangers of communism in World War II. He also wanted to let the future generation know about communism and how communism affects people's lives. Satire was the novels most evident styles and allegory was an additional style that used seemingly useless characters into establishing those characters into important figures in Russian History.

Each text both share similarities of how power corrupts overtime. Comparing both texts, the Lord of the Flies is surrounded by a myriad of young military cadets who miraculously survived a plane crash inside an isolated island. However "Animal Farm" is a society overrun by animals after they disposed Farmer Jones. George Orwell used language techniques such as characterization for characters who symbolizes iconic people throughout the recent course of Russian history. Farmer Jones symbolizes Tsar Nicholas II who was stubborn and regarded his power as the world of god. This is similar to how Farmer Jones mistreated the animals in his farm, he believed that he had full power and control of his animals, until they fought back for their rights. This also reflects upon how the rebellion of Russia fought for the disposal of Tsar Nicholas II who was overthrown by Lenin and the Bolsheviks who later on took power during the start of the Russian Revolution in 1917 and leading to the rise of the Soviet Union. Napoleon who is one of the main antagonists in the novel emerges as the leader of Animal Farm after the rebellion, Napoleon portrays Russian Communist Joseph Stalin who became the Soviet Dictator after the death of Vladimir Lenin. Similarly in William Golding's allegorical novel "Lord of the Flies", many of his characters reflect upon significant ideas and themes throughout the text. Ralph who is the protagonist represents civilization, order and leadership. Piggy represents rationalism, intellect and scientific aspects of civilization. In addition Jack represents uncontrolled savagery and the craving for unnecessary power.

In both texts, rules are there to suppress unethical behavior, however in a totalitarian regime these rules can be distorted through propaganda to promote unethical behavior. In George Orwell's text, he respectively created the 7 commandments which encrypts "All animals are

equal” but realistically “Some animals are more equal than others.” In which this is an allusion to the 10 biblical commandments. However in William Golding’s text, there is a rule that if you hold the conch shell in the beach, it will immediately grant you the permission to speak. Reflecting upon this significant item, the conch shell becomes a powerful symbol for unity, order and civilization within the novel. Furthermore there was an intriguing scene where piggy was brutally murdered by a falling boulder which hurled him down off the mountainside to his unfortunate death. The death of piggy and the broken conch shell symbolized the absolute destruction of civilization and rationality within the island. Piggy’s glasses however represented the authority of science and intellectualism within the society, this is evident to when the boys used Piggy’s glasses to focus on the sunlight to exert heat into producing fire. To where fire is an important factor into humanizing a society. However when Piggy’s glasses are shattered, this symbolizes the loss of order and civility which has caused an outbreak within the society which indicates that all hell breaks loose within the text.

Propaganda is used to promote political reviews or causes through misleading or biased information. Each text apply propaganda as a reinforcement to strengthen the antagonist’s character. Propaganda has played an important role throughout the Russian Revolution and because of this propaganda is one of the main themes throughout ‘Animal Farm’. In “Animal Farm” George Orwell cleverly conveys the use of propaganda through the use of manipulation speech, he decided to portray this theme of propaganda through Napoleon’s spokesperson Squealer. Squealer used propaganda to take advantage on the animal’s stupidity. He manipulated the animals through describing a twisted version of the events on the battle of the cowshed in order to promote Napoleon’s point of view. Squealer claimed that Snowball was planning to leave the field to the enemy.” Another example used within the text is the song “Beast of England,” which spread around farms, this specific song was used to motivate the animals into thinking about the revolution, and to create a hatred bond between animals and humans. Similarly in William Golding’s novel “Lord of the Flies” Jack the unbridled savage advocate’s propaganda about the superior beast “Beelzebub” who is located on the mountain, but in reality it is the dead pilot that is still attached to his parachute. Jack manipulates his associates by putting fear into their minds by promoting his imaginary ideas into believing that there is an actual threat. Jack then presents himself as a strong leader who is capable of hunting and protecting the boys from the beast. He also provides just enough evidence for the existence of the beast into forcing the boys to follow him blindly. This shows that Jack uses the beast in a similar manner as real propagandist from history used to create scare tactics. The resolution in animal farm was that the pigs evolved into humans and that the animals later on began to realize that there wasn’t much of a significant difference from them towards their original oppressor. This is evident to how George Orwell quotes “All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others.” “The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again; but already it was impossible to say which was which.” Golding however saves the day, by ending the horrific conflict that was produced by the boys. The naval officer who appeared at the end of the book, saved Ralph from being disposed of, this was a sign that their civilization came back and the irony of the ending was that it wasn’t particularly happy, due to the unbridled savagery and horrific violence that took place in the island.

Although both text are based on completely different stories, each text has incorporated literary techniques respectively to convey the theme that power corrupts. In both novels, they both acquire a myriad of literary techniques such as symbolism and characterization that captures the narratives plan. With everything taken into account the activities of the fundamental

characters who endeavored to pick up control over the others in the general public were in the long run prompt the defilement of the two social orders. In the end both authors convey the text efficiently by showing how the urge of power can degenerate a general public by utilizing their characters in their books. Both of the texts intentionally give the reader the perspective of how society may be corrupted if the leaders of our nations become degenerate with power.

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