

The human mind: id .vs. ego and superego (lord of the flies



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Isaac Lee 9Ak Essay Lord of the Flies The human mind: Id . vs. Ego and Superego Lord of the flies was written by William Golding. It is about a group of boys who crash-landed on the island. They are to survive and as the novel progresses, the boys' imaginations takes them to hallucinating about a ' beast' being on the island. The ' beast' is a representation of fear and leads to the power struggle between Ralph and Jack with Simon standing by the side. William Golding uses the power struggle as a representation of the human mind, how the Id, the savage, basic instinct of our mind is always there and the reason for civilization (e. social interaction and rules and the consequences.) The power struggle represents the human mind. The three main characters are the representation of the three parts of the mind, focusing on the Id, which is always there floating in the back of ones mind. The human mind is split into three different parts, the Id, the Ego and the Superego as thought by an austrian neurologist - Sigmund Freud. The Id is the set of uncoordinated instinctual trends, basically, the hunger for everything we desire.

Freud thought that the Id was driven by the ' libido' - the energy from life's instinct and the will to survive, it gives the feeling to desire. The ego is the organized realistic part of your mind, it satisfies the Id by controlling it through any means to divert, transform or converting the powerful force of Id to useful and realistic modes of satisfaction that can be done in reality and suppresses the need for everything. The superego is your conscience, it judges the right and wrong, it seeks perfection that is beyond the limits of reality, even beyond the ego.

Overall, the ego is always negotiating with the id, trying to prevent it from over whelming itself while the superego watches over, jumps in when it thinks that it Lee, p. 2 can have a moral decision about the situation. In the Lord of the Flies, Jack represents the id. He has an unquenchable thirst to kill and to thrive e. g. ' He tried to convey the compulsion to track down and kill that was swallowing him up. ' (P70) The impulse in him to murder was eating him. In the story. As he progresses, he begins to show signs of savagery. In the beginning, they all had one opinion but that changed radically as the ' beast' showed up. When Jack heard about the beast, the first thing he wanted to do was to hunt the beast. As you could say, that the beast was a flame that sparked of Jack's Id, after that, he left the tribe and formed his own, a manifestation for power. As Jack does in the book, the Id springs out, takes over control of our mind and takes advantage of our fear of the beast. Shortly after that, they began to worship and offering the head of what they kill to the beast.

As the Id was driven by the ' libido', Jack was driven by hunting. Then, the beast's form was a motif, a repeatedly occurring idea, or thing, which upon repetition derives it's meaning in relationship to the theme. The first time that the beast appeared, nobody really believed in the beast. In page 34, a child tells Ralph through Piggy ' He wants to know what you are going to do about the beast thing. '(P48). After that, they laughed it off, as if it wasn't real. But after a while, in chapter , they begin to doubt whether the beast is real or not, when samneric saw a ' shape' on the hill.

The result - They were absolutely terrified about the ' beast'. Ralph represents the Ego in the Lord of the Flies since he has always been

struggling with Jack in power and strength. A key moment in the book of the power struggle is when Jack leaves the tribe “ I’m going off by myself. He can catch his own pigs. Anyone who wants to hunt when I do can come too. ” Lee, p. 3 This shows that Jack is far apart from the other people and only cares about himself. This shows that Jack is power hungry and only cares about himself. This symbolizes that the Ego is trying to control the Id.

As the ego, it is also trying to divert the power of the Id to realistic methods as stated before, when Jack raised that question of hunting for food everyday and so, Ralph decided that Jack could hunt, but not every hour so they can keep the fire going. Therefore, Ralph represents the Ego. Simon represents the superego in the Lord of the Flies. When Simon heard about the beast, he didn’t cower away, afraid of the beast, he did the opposite. The only person who does not believe that there is a beast is Simon. Simon later discovers that the physical ‘ shape’ is actually a man in a parachute being dragged up the hill by the wind.

He then goes to untangle the figure, even though it is foul and rotten away. We can see this in this quote: Simon knelt on all fours and was sick till his stomach was empty. Then he took the lines in his hands; he freed them from the rocks and the ? gure from the wind’s indignity. He saves the figure even though it is not obligatory, he saves it out of his own goodness and will, he does this not for the greater good, but only because just because it is unfair for a corpse that has to be strung up like that. Therefore, Simon represents the superego in the Lord of the Flies. The ‘ beast’ in the book is a manifestation of fear.

This paragraph will focus on how our fear or Id is always part of us, in the back of our minds, unconsciously. Mentioned in the previous paragraphs, it shows that the mind is split into three different parts, the id, the ego and the superego. The id eats away at us, when there is a trigger to set us off. The person who really became an 'id' was Jack, by the end of the book he was a dehumanized animal. The trigger for Jack was the the 'beast' itself. When they saw the physical form of the beast, which was just a man on a parachute, they were Lee, p. 4 absolutely terrified, they ran away from it as fast as they could.

Something interesting to point out was as Ralph was running down the mountain, it also said that: 'Ralph found himself taking giant strides among the ashes, heard other creatures crying out and leaping and dared the impossible on the dark slope; presently the mountain was deserted, save for the tree abandoned sticks and the thing that bowed. (p135)' Notice how here that it describes the other boys as 'other creatures' but not boys. They are descending into the darkness of primitive humans. At first, they were putting on face paint and just laughing it off, but then it gets very serious as shown through this quote: The face of red and white and black, swung through the air and jiggled towards Bill. Bill started up laughing; then suddenly he fell silent and blundered away through the bushes. Jack rushed towards the twins. "The rest are making a line. Come on!" "But-" "-We-" "Come on! I'll creep up and stab-" The mask compelled them.' (P66) Notice that Jack said that they are making a line and they will creep up and stab them. This reflects on the final scene how the hunt for Ralph is just like this scene, it is

providing foreshadowing for later. They stab to satisfy their own need to hunt.

A great example for this is from Simon's death to Piggy's death and finally to the hunting of Jack. At the death of Simon, we can tell that it was an accident and it was ambiguous whether it was intentional or unintentional, they were all driven to fear with the surroundings. Then came Piggy's death. Ralph and Piggy came to Jack's fort for peaceful means to ask for Piggy's glasses back. But then, they got into an argument and came teeth to teeth fighting. Roger observed from above and as it says: ' High overhead, Roger, with a sense of delirious abandonment, leaned all his weight on the lever. '(p200 - 201) and then,

Lee, p. 5 ' The rock struck Piggy a glancing blow from chin to knee; the conch exploded into a thousand white fragments and ceased to exist. Piggy, saying nothing, with no time for even a grunt, travelled through the air sideways from the rock, turning over as he went. The rock bounded twice and was lost in the forest. Piggy fell forty feet and landed on his back across that square, red rock in the sea. '(P200-201) This shows that Roger, under the influence of Jack, did this cruel act of violence on purpose, killing Piggy just like that. But the most inhumane act they did was to hunt and kill Ralph.

The reason? Hunting is an act of mainly gaining something like meat and such while here, they are hunting Ralph just for pleasure and to add on to that, hunting is usually to hunt animals, but here they are hunting a human.

In addition, here is an extraction from the hunting of Ralph. ' The ululation spread from shore to shore. The savage knelt down by the edge of the thicket, and there were lights flickering in the forest behind him. ' (Page 221)

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The hunting of Ralph takes place throughout the island. The boys are no longer being described as boys in this quote, as stated that ' The savage knelt' (P221).

The children have truly become uncivilized barbarians, hunting each other as if it was just a game of fun. An interesting point in the book is when Simon is talking to the imaginary ' Lord of the flies'. It holds something very sinister. ' You knew, didn't you? I'm part of you? Close, close, close! I'm the reason why it's no go? Why things are what they are? ' (P158) The Lord of the Flies is always part of us. This supports how it is fear itself that is haunting these boys, they descend into darkness with out civilization. The head speaks to Simon in an ominous way, with ' Why things are what they are? ', suggesting that we created it ourselves.

Lee, p. 6 The important of civilization and how, without it we would become savages is a wide topic. The main focus of civilization in this book is fire. Symbolically, the fire represent the will to be civilized; the absence of the fire represent the loss of civilization. The fire in this book is a symbol for civilization because they keep it going to signal a ship, in the end, they just give up on keeping the fire going for two reasons, one, Samneric saw the ' beast' on the hill, which made them terrified, second, there was not enough people once most of the people from Ralph's tribe went over to join Jack's tribe.

Piggy states that "' That's where they've gone. Jack's party. '"(P188) They lose the will to live. Jack's ideal of a good life on the island is to hunt and kill nothing else while Ralph's ideal is to sustain the smoke from a fire so a ship will see it and come rescue them. A detail to point out is also that Piggy says <https://assignbuster.com/the-human-mind-id-vs-ego-and-superego-lord-of-the-flies/>

on P37 ' I bet it's gone tea-time' This brings back what they were doing back at home - a routine. Here in the jungle, they have just recently crashed and have no organization whatsoever, by saying this, Piggy is bringing back the children to what they would have done if they were back in civilization.

Another reason for civilization and social interactions is that we would go insane if it were not that we had someone to talk to. For example, when Simon was traversing to the sow's head that Jack's tribe had killed and offered to the imaginary ' beast', this character the ' Lord of the flies' pops up in Simon's unconsciousness, he starts to hallucinate. ' Simon shook. " There isn't anyone to help you. Only me. And I'm the Beast. "' . When we are alone, things like this start to happen. ' The world, that understandable and lawful world, was slipping away' (P98).

Another example of the group descending into civilization is when Jack meant to kill Ralph: ' Vicious, with full intention, he hurled his spar at Ralph. ' (P201) We don't kill a fellow human being that easily and when we do it is with reason, but here, Jack throws it at Ralph, with intention but without reason. The murderous hate has consumed Ralph. He is uncivilized and barbaric. In conclusion, Lord of the Flies is a book where the power struggle between Ralph and Jack, but with Simon as the overview figure, is a representation of the human personality, with Simon and

Lee, p. 7 Ralph trying to contain Jack just as in the mind how the Ego and Superego try to contain the Id, how the Id is always in the back of mind and without civilization we would descend into becoming savages. But the children, as previously mentioned, were only around ten to twelve years old and children as the symbol of innocence but yet they consider and commit

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such inhumane acts, does it not mean that we are all savages at the bottom of our heart too?