

Government control in fiction

Business



In everything someone does, their actions come from a series of events that shape who they are and what they do. From a young age, parents shape their baby's future self. In a way, they are controlling who the baby will be when they are older. Similarly, the government shapes the lives of their citizens with everything they do. Different governments can control people in extremely different ways. The realistic fiction novel *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding, and other sources, all explore different types of government through their different methods of control.

In a totalitarian state, the government controls its people through fear and absolute power. This government's type of control is demonstrated in *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding, and "Totalitarianism" published by Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 6th Edition. In totalitarian government the state has complete control over religion, military, government, and laws. In modern totalitarian governments, the leaders strive to "control not only all economic and political matters but the attitudes, values, and beliefs of its population, erasing the distinction between state and society" ("Totalitarianism" pa. 1). In this type of government, the controlling power can not only kill any citizen at will, they can do so with no trial.

This fear of death the government instills in citizens is used to accomplish their control over society. Once the control is achieved they make it nearly impossible for an uprising by suppressing all the population and "erasing the distinction between state and society." In the novel, Jack's society is similar to a totalitarian society in the way he controls his people. Jack blends society and state as he creates the religious system of the beast and uses this to help him rise to power. Once in power, Jack feels as if "Power lay in the

brown swell of his forearms, authority sat on his shoulder and chattered in his ear like an ape” (Golding 191). Jack gains his power by using the fear of the beast and begins to set up a government.

The first impression the reader receives of the new government is Jack’s immense power. He controls all of the people’s lives with fear. This is very similar to the modern totalitarian governments, as they both control their people through similar means. To control their people, Totalitarian governments gain power through fear and keep it by being absolute rulers of all aspects of the citizen’s lives. In a democratic government, the people have some control through compromise. In Barack Obama’s speech to Howard University and in *Lord of the Flies* this is shown.

In the novel, Ralph’s first government he is chosen as leader by an “ election by acclaim of Ralph himself” (Golding 20). The people of the society are a democracy because they elect their leader. The affairs of this community are talked about in public where the input of all of the citizens of the mini government can put their input in, but the final decisions come from Ralph. The people believe that they are deciding what is happening and how it will happen. The idea of this is what controls the people; even though they believe to have power, the leader has the true power. Similarly, in the U.

S. A., the people elect the leaders, and they believe they have a say in the government. As the president of America, Barack Obama learned first hand how democracy works. As he explained in his speech, “ democracy requires compromise, even when you are 100 percent right” (Obama 5).

He explained that even as an elected leader who has the power to make the decisions, he must still speak with the people to decide what to do.

Depending on what the people want he might have to do some things differently. This sense of control the people have is what controls them.

While this is very different than in a totalitarian government the ruling powers still control the people through false beliefs that the individual has control. In the last government type, Communism, the ruling powers control the people through hope and fear, as demonstrated in *Lord of the Flies* and in “Communism” in *Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia*, 6th Edition.

Communism is known by many people as a government that has complete control over its people. Communism, at a basic level it is “a classless society in which all goods will be socially owned” (“Communism” 1). The government comes into play to enforce this system where everyone has everything. The work the people do all goes to the government where the government is responsible for distributing the wealth to the rest of the country. The people have hope that their work will be rewarded, but they are receiving a fraction of what they earned. Then the people start to uprise and the government has to use death and fear to keep them working.

This is what leads to the depiction of modern communism. In the novel *Ralph* attempts to create a communist society where the hunters hunt and the builders build and everyone has their role. This doesn't work out for him because once they “Decide thing. They don't get done” (Golding 96). Ralph uses reason to get his point across and the people listen at first but without the reward they don't work any longer.

This happens in communist countries in the real world as well, but in the real world the leaders enforce strict laws to make their citizens work. This aspect of fear isn't present in Ralph's society because he believes that they can listen to reason and see things as he can. Due to Ralph's beliefs he loses his citizens because he can not do the one thing that made the communist so successful. He could not use fear as a weapon even when given a clear opportunity, in the form of the beast, he refused to use fear and instead chose logic. Thus he loses his government to Jack and his government fails. The key to any government is control over its people and in a communist government fear must be used to control or else it won't work. How governments control their people in different ways is explored in *Lord of the Flies*, by William Golding, and other sources.

The citizens in three different types of governments; Communism, democracy, and totalitarian, all share a certain quality, they control their people in order to succeed. In the modern world there are millions of separate governments that all succeed because, from the large governments that form countries to the small local town governments that control the school of a single town. One person can be under the control of a hundred governments without even knowing and in some way each government can control something about that one individual. Each decision they make can affect millions of people or it can effect ten people, either way they still change people's lives in different ways every day. Works Cited OBAMA, BARACK.

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