

Dave grossman's on killing essay examples

[Sociology](#), [Community](#)



In the book, " On Killing", the author utilizes a set of various themes to explain his ideas. The author mainly describes the psychological aspects of soldiers in the battle field and how it affects their behavior. The author describes to his elite audience the psychological concepts using different literary skills. He uses different intonations and perspectives to convince his audience. He also cites other researchers' views to help deliver specific nuance and meaning to his audience. The author explains why soldiers develop a love for one another and the desire to protect and help each other when they work as a group over time. The author uses three major themes: physical description, visual imagery and archetypal symbolism to explain his concepts, bring out his personality, and explain the psychological behavior of soldiers in a battle field.

Visual imagery is used by the author in an attempt to help the audience understand the concept of brotherhood amongst soldiers. While quoting Du Picq, the author explains, " Four brave men who do not know each other will not dare attack a lion. Four less brave men, but knowing each other well, sure of their reliability.. and mutual aid, will attack resolutely" The description helps create an image in mind about how soldiers with an understanding would fight to defend each other. They would always try not to let each other down. Imagery is a literary theme used by the author and the writers he quotes to expound on the concept of teamwork among soldiers. The relevance of imagery in this chapter is to create a link between the ability of soldiers to fight or kill when they are in the company of their colleagues. The use of imagery in the second chapter is to help the audience relate the past real life incidents with the author's argument.

Visual imagery is a literary technique that helps the author use historical events to expound on his points chronologically in the second chapter. While explaining the role played by groups in history, the author uses imagery to create a visual link between reality and group absolution. The author describes how chariots and other weapons were used at war over the past centuries. Imagery creates a chronological order of how the different weapons were used and for what reasons. Through imagery, readers can have a visual thought of why chariots, cannons, phalanx and machine guns were developed and how they were used to achieve the objective of killing enemies.

Physical description is another major theme used by the author in the second chapter. This is meant to develop a relationship between the arguments on soldiers' group mentality and the real life activities. The author describes different situations where soldiers put their lives in danger when defending one another by killing the enemy. This is illustrated in the second paragraph of chapter two where examples of U. S soldiers during the Vietnam War defended one another. This behavior by soldiers is described by Dyer as "special kind of love" Description is an effective approach to help the audience relate the concepts with real life examples in the past. Description expounds on how soldiers can be vicious in protecting their colleagues' lives rather than when they are on their own.

Physical description is also used to explain how group absolution causes anonymity of killers. The author describes how soldiers benefit from staying as a group and fighting together to achieve a common purpose. Description portrays the author as a knowledgeable individual, who has conducted

comprehensive research on group absolution. The author gives his account, as well as that of other scholars, through description. Therefore, description is used to acknowledge the work of other scholars and the thoughts of the author.

Description is used to make a comparison between groups in the past and groups in a modern battle field. The author initially gives a detailed account of the weapons used in historical military activities such as chariots, cannons, phalanx and machine guns. The weapons are used to describe how groups of soldiers operated in the past. For example, he explains that the chariot was inefficient but the phalanx created group awareness and accountability. The last bit of the second chapter describes how groups behave in modern day battlefields. He demonstrates how soldiers care for one another so much that they would kill an enemy just to save the lives of their friends. These descriptive comparisons are important because they help readers understand that group absolution has evolved over time. They show that group absolution is a phenomenon that has been perfected over the years because it is a determinant in winning wars.

In the second chapter, archetypal symbolism is used to help the audience establish the seriousness of the issue of group absolution among soldiers. For example, the author that, “ seems to facilitate a kind of atavistic killing hysteria that can also be seen in the animal kingdom.” The author uses the animal kingdom to portray the life of a soldier in the battlefield. The animal kingdom is used to symbolize a contextual battle field where soldiers have to look out for themselves and also their colleagues. Symbolism is a good way of giving an alternative scenario of the prevailing conditions in the battle

field. The author justifies his main argument that soldiers must act as a group rather than individual if they want to survive.

Symbolism is used to demonstrate historical changes in time and tactics at war. The author gives a symbolic account of how the use of chariots was replaced by the use of phalanx. This demonstrates the changing times and the change in war tactics. The author writes, "The chariot was defeated by the phalanx." This is symbolic because the author is not really referring to the chariot and the phalanx. The chariot symbolizes crude war tactics where group absolution was not fancied. The phalanx symbolizes the new generation, described by the author as "a crew-served weapon." These meant soldiers would look out for one another, be accountable for resources and also create mob anonymity. The introduction of gun powder and the development of the machine gun are also symbolic in the context because they represent change in war tact and how group absolution was viewed. Therefore, symbolism is used to create a chronological awareness of the transition from crude war tactics towards group absolution and accountability.

The perspective of the author is that soldiers prefer to look out for one another because they feel it is their responsibility. He even insinuates that as soldiers stay together on the battle field for long, they become selfless and value the safety of their colleagues. Another perspective of the author is that soldiers kill enemies because they want to save lives of fellow soldiers rather than their own. This is illustrated under the subtopic accountability and anonymity. The tone used in the second chapter is a concerned one. Soldiers behave in a concerned manner because of the bond they develop when they

spend a lot of time together. The responsibility to look out for one another develops from the continuous difficulties experienced as a group.

The role of the tone used in the second chapter is to enhance the credibility of the author's argument. The author argues that soldiers care and defend the lives of their colleagues more than they care about their own lives. To make his audience believe the argument and the examples, a convincing and concerning tone must be used. The tone also helps capture the audience's attention. The author's tone demonstrates confidence in the information he presents, which boosts the credibility of the information. Therefore, the author portrays group absolution among soldiers by using three major themes. The author uses imagery, symbolism and description to help the audience grasp the concepts and ideas in the arguments. The author's arguments are presented in a concerned tone to ensure that the audience remains keen to learn about group absolution among soldiers. The second chapter of the book is portrays the author as an objective writer trying to prove his arguments to his audience using evidence from psychologists and case studies.

Works Cited

Grossman, Dave. *On Killing*. New York: Little, Brown and Company, 1996.