

# Brutality of man in "lord of the flies" essay

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The novel " Lord of the flies" depicts humans in their most evil form and how humans are controlled by societal norms but can change at the slightest opportunity to brutal creatures. For the purposes of this paper, the character of Jack the choir leader will be analyzed. Jack is depicted as the most brutal character. He plots all of the evil schemes and destroys the law and order society that had been established by Ralph.

As established in Rousseau philosophy, man is free in a state of nature. He is also in oblivion and unaware of his surroundings and is in most cases unconscious of what is happening around him. In this state, man can be extremely peaceful or extremely dangerous. Man is inherently evil, greedy and destructive and would utilize any given chance to destroy (Hobbes 98). This explains why man in a state of civilization still wages war against fellow man in a bid to win more territory.

But man's true nature of brutality is but revealed in the novel " lord of the flies" (167). This assertion is confirmed by the character of Jack. After Ralph is voted as the group's leader and Jack maintains his position as the choir leader, a rivalry ensues between Jack and Ralph. Jack establishes himself as the leader of the hunters formerly the choir members. The hunters then go ahead to terrorize the civility that was put in place by Ralph, by continually attacking and torturing those captured from Ralph's camp in a bid to assimilate them into the hunter cannibals' community. This confirms the philosophy Rousseau, that man in his state of nature is inherently cruel and cannibalistic and would not give up a chance to kill and destroy (334). This is exactly what happens in a state of war in the modern world. The desire to kill and destroy is insatiable thus can only be controlled by societal norms or

rules and regulations.

The brutality of man is evident in Jack from the beginning. He has the intention of killing a sow, but fails to do so since it's the first time (Golding and Forster 78). This shows that the society's norms are still inherent in Jack. As the boys stay longer on the island, man's beastly nature is portrayed as Jack and his crew murder Simon and Piggy and go ahead to torture Sam and Eric in a bid to convince them join their savage group. This confirms the assertion by Rousseau that eventually, man would revert into a murderous savage when allowed to go back to a state of nature (Rousseau 134). That is why there should be societal measures and controls.

The novel "lord of the flies" therefore adequately expresses the nature of man both in his civilized state and in his state of nature. When man is in a state of nature, he is driven by circumstance and the inherent human urge to control and destroy. "The pause was only long enough for them to realize the enormity of what the downward stroke would be" (Golding 102). This shows that when he is in a civilized state controlled by societal norms, man becomes less brutal and becomes conscious of the life around him. Man therefore inhabits a state of two conditions and which can vary according to the prevailing circumstances.

## **Works cited**

Golding, William and E. M. Forster. *Lord of the Flies*. New York: Penguin Publishers, 1954.

Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan*. Michigan: Forgotten books, 1976.

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *El Contrato Social*. California: Editorial MAXTOR, 2008.