

# A study of societal cruelty as depicted in george orwell book, a hanging

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## **A Hanging**

How we define life and our humanity greatly comes from our ability to choose right from wrong. We live in a society where death is the most common consequence of committing a terrible crime. Many societies believe that two wrongs do not make one right, but when being put in a situation where the affected includes people within its community often change their minds when it comes to choosing the right path. Every individual should be able to choose their own right to live, but in many cases this does not happen, as people are presented with choices where they literally have other peoples lives in their hands.

Life is defined as a gift that should be given no matter what. It is not right for societies to condemn individuals based on their past actions or judgments against them. As Orwell suggests in A Hanging there are people capable of understanding the error of their ways, if given the chance to redeem themselves. One example of that can be when Orwell saw the Hindu man step aside to avoid the puddle, this clearly shows that this convict is aware of his surroundings, and therefore is capable of taking actions to avoid trouble. Thus society condemns a person without even giving them a second chance based on their previous actions.

Orwells story A Hanging gives us an idea of how society can sometimes contradict itself to the whole life/death situation. Orwell portrays the inhumanity in such society as kind of ironic, especially when people believe that causing the death of another is virtually unforgiving. Relieving the

details of the execution lead Orwell to begin doubting the insensitivity of the society as Orwell realizes what it means to destroy a healthy, conscious man. Killing another person is inhumane; people lose the sense of morality and capacity to appreciate the life of a person regardless of their crimes, and society begins to intervene in their decision.

How we behave as a society, and how we confront the loss of a life depends on how we evaluate the importance of life. Having to kill someone because of what they did and saying that we have fixed something that was wrong does not necessarily mean that we fully understand to what extent life is worth for someone. Most time individuals within a society believe that such horrible acts do not make any difference and that is just another job, or even pretend that it was the right thing to do and have all these people anticipating the moment like Orwell expresses when he recalls how the same thought was in all our minds; oh, kill him quickly, get it over, stop the abominable noise. Therefore not fully understanding the effect that it may have on its own society and how it will help it to shape society into a more complex world.

Furthermore, even thou society may think that life may not have any value for someone who has warranted this type of punishment, it is wrong to think that life itself can only be appreciated by its own people. The selfishness shown by society towards this issue should not be disregarded as not important because in the end it is society who will decide the fate of people who have wronged someone. It is implied, however, that life can and will

only be fully understood, if we as a society understand that people can still redeem themselves and show that everyone has the capacity to change.