

# Harrison bergeron theme essay



Harrison Bergeron, a short story by Kurt Vonnegut, highlights the perils of governmental control, coupled with people's ignorance. Vonnegut goes ahead to predict the results of such a move. The most prominent theme of Harrison Bergeron is the lack of freedom in American society. Vonnegut also explains how the loss of civil rights is catching with Americans. What is the result of all these? There is a high probability that America will end up in a dystopia. In summary, the loss of freedom and civil rights would lead to America's dystopia are the main messages of Harrison Bergeron. The essay briefly discusses the topics of the story and the questions raised by the author. Some of them are illustrated by the quotes from the text to demonstrate its tone and the literary devices used in the story.

As aforementioned, Americans love freedom, and Harrison's actions evidence this; he escapes from prison, goes ahead to remove his handicaps, and finally tries to influence those around him. " Why don't you stretch out on the sofa, so that you can rest your handicap bag...?" (Vonnegut Page 216).

The government chained this handicap bag around George's neck; however, Harrison is telling George to ' rest' it, as a sign of rebellion and push for freedom. Nevertheless, in Harrison's world, this freedom is no more, and people cannot make choices because they are above average in everything, and as a result, they are disabled. For instance, the dancers are cloaked to ensure that " nobody would feel like something the cat drug in" (Vonnegut Page 216).

The fact that all people are above average in everything takes away the freedom of choice and hampers everyone in the new dystopia America. The plot unfolds around the main theme of Harrison Bergeron. The main idea of neglect of freedom of choice is also expressed in the article of Clark. The author argues that “ Uninformed citizens are left vulnerable to the political exploitation of special-interests” (Clark, 1). That proves that, though Americans love freedom, their freedom of choice is restricted by lack of information.

The loss of civil rights is another contributing factor to this dystopia in America. Everyone is equal “ due to the 211th, 212th, and 213th Amendments to the Constitution...the unceasing vigilance of agents of the United States Handicapper General” (Vonnegut Page 218). In this state, the ‘ Handicapper General’ ensures everyone is equal, and he or she has no right, including the right to life. No one in the nowadays society is truly free, as it will be shown in the next paragraphs of the essay. Harrison Bergeron’s character George says, “ Two years in prison and two thousand dollars fine for every ball I took out” (Vonnegut Page 216).

George here talks of the consequences of removing the ‘ handicap’ that the government has placed around his neck, evidence of loss of civil rights. George even watches her daughter die on television, and he cannot complain leave alone filling a suit. All these events resonate well with what is happening in America today. Manson discusses the issue of loss of civil rights by American citizens in one of his articles, which is devoted to mind control.

There is multiple “ evidence for government involvement in attempts to control people’s behavior” (Manson, 1). The mind-control conspiracy theory proves the intrusion of the government to people’s personal lives and even to their consciousness. The violation of fundamental civil rights defined by the Constitution is apparent.

Vonnegut insinuates that if what is happening in contemporary America is not countered, then a dystopia in America is inevitable. That is the central idea of Harrison Bergeron. Even though Vonnegut wrote this story many years ago, he had seen what was lurking; for instance, after the 9/11 events, congress passed the US Patriot Act that allowed security agencies to probe personal issues.

That resonates well with “ the unceasing vigilance of agents of the United States Handicapper General” (Vonnegut Page 216). Even though the loss of freedom in contemporary America is not as bad as in Harrison’s society, American authorities are slowly taking away freedom.

For instance, smoking regulations placed public places is a move of its kind. To this, Vonnegut would say, “ Some things about living still aren’t quite right. The ‘ rightness’ of living is disappearing as people lose freedom and head to the new dystopia America. Indeed, the freedom of Americans is gradually lost.

According to Manson, even the right to individual opinions is violated. As a result of the government, activity is such that “ a person simply becomes a pair of eyes designed to observe and transmit data.” This serves as evidence of American citizens being deprived of their rights for freedom.

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This analysis essay outlined the central idea and the main theme of Harrison Bergeron. In summary, Vonnegut tries to highlight how government control would slowly convert America into a dystopian nation. Despite the love that Americans have for freedom, Vonnegut is afraid that this is being taken away, and people will have “ a little mental handicap radio in their ears tuned to a government transmitter” (Vonnegut Page 218). That would take away freedom, and civil rights would suffer the same fate for those who rebel against the set ordinances will have, “ ten seconds to get their handicaps back on” (Vonnegut Page 219).

The overall effect in this situation would be a nation where all people are equal according to government standards hence dystopia. The take-home point in Vonnegut’s short story is, people should come out of their ignorance, take action, and correct government errors; otherwise, America will be a place of parity without dreams and competition hence dystopia America.

Clark, J. “ Regulating Government” The Encyclopedia of Public Choice.

Dordrecht: Springer Science+Business Media, 2004. Credo Reference. Web.