

Traditions apparent:
"although the
villagers had
forgotten the



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Traditions are a normal thing that occur in every type of society around the world. By 'tradition', it simply means the transmission of customs or beliefs from generation to generation. Although traditions are done all over the world, there are many problematic outcomes that can come out of it, things such as forgetting the true reasons for traditions. Certain violent behaviours become normalized in a society that perform violent rituals. Additionally, some traditions can interfere with potential progression in each individual society.

In Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery", unveils the toxicity and disadvantages that traditions can sometimes bring to a society. With tradition, it is normal to understand its purpose and to at least remember how it's done and just simply its history. In "The Lottery", the author of the story was constantly exposing the fact that the people of the town barely remembered anything about the lottery. By the lack of history within story and by the narrator bring to light things that they remembered as vague rituals they have discarded such as: "toneless chants" (Jackson, 2) and "a ritual salute" (Jackson, 2), it is clear that they no longer care about how the lottery is performed as long as it ends with someone becoming stoned to death in the end.

The only history that the people of the town can justify this tradition is when Warner said: "'There has always been a lottery'" (Jackson, 4). Its apparent lack of history is what makes it so powerful: it's like a force of nature for these people, and the people of the village can't even imagine rebelling against it. In the following quotation, this becomes apparent: "Although the villagers had forgotten the ritual and lost the original box, they still remembered to use stones" (Jackson, 7). Because they do not perform the

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rituals of this tradition properly, it's obvious that that tradition has lost all meaning to the people of this town.

When the author says: " Because so much of the ritual had been forgotten or discarded, Mr. Summers had been successful in having slips of paper substituted for chips of wood" (Jackson, 2) it becomes clear that the actual rituals are no longer important to them as long as someone is executed as it is the tradition's purpose. This makes the reader wonder whether or not the tradition still has any meaning if it is not performed properly? When something has lost all of its meaning, it becomes a matter of routine and this is what has happened to the townspeople. They perform the ritual out of obligation because they are used to it and they believe that they need to, but they no longer remember why. When they show up to the morning of June 27th every year and " half listen to direction" (Jackson, 3), it's evident that they no longer really care. When they blindly follow a tradition, certain behaviour can become normal to them. When a tradition is performed for so long, it becomes normal to a society without any questions asked.

When a tradition such as the lottery is kept for many years longer than it probably should, certain behaviours become normal for a society. When the narrator discloses: " The whole lottery took less than two hours, so it could begin at 10 o'clock in the morning and still be through in time to allow the villagers to get home for noon dinner" (Jackson 1). This shows that for the people of the town, they view the fact that someone had been executed as nothing. After the act is done with they go on with their lives as if nothing has happened and have family dinner and wait until the next year. They are blindly following a tradition and not putting it into question. We can see the <https://assignbuster.com/traditions-apparent-although-the-villagers-had-forgotten-the/>

level of normalization of these actions and the desensitization of the townspeople. As a society that accepts this type of behaviour, it's easy to presume that they have problem differentiating what's right from wrong as an entire community. In the story when someone says: " They do say, that over in the north village they're talking of giving up the lottery" (Jackson 4).

This shows the fact that other townspeople are deciding that this tradition is outdated and wrong. Unfortunately these townspeople do not agree. "

Lottery in June, corn be heavy soon" (Jackson 4), this quotation shows that the people are still trying to justify their sacrifice, this saying means that if they perform the lottery in June, their crops will be good, implying that if they do not perform the lottery then they will not have good crops.

The fact that other towns are giving up this tradition and they are still having good crops means that this tradition is no longer justifiable. For the townspeople within the town of this story, this tradition is so normal to them they can't see themselves ever giving it up. The townspeople are governed by a mob psychology and abandoned their reason to act with great cruelty. Performing the tradition is easy . they are just blindly following the past so that they do not have to do the hard work of critical thinking in the present.

After a long period of time of accepting certain behaviours and normalizing outdated traditions, this can interfere with potential progress as a society.

Tradition means the past, progress means the future. According to the townspeople, tradition is the most important thing to them as a community if they want good crops. They refuse to let it go. When a tradition is valued as much as it is in this story, it interferes with potential progression as a

community and as a society. When things have always been a certain way, opportunities to make changes seems so unimportant. As previously mentioned, the people of the town weren't impressed that many villages were giving up the lottery: "" Some places have already quit lotteries." Mrs. Adams said. " Nothing but trouble in that," Old Man Warner said stoutly. " Pack of young fools.

"" (Jackson 3). This quotation shows how much they depend on this tradition. They can no longer identify potential opportunities for progression anymore. Furthermore, the people of the town limit their progress when they hold onto traditions that don't make sense anymore.

It's becoming clear to many towns that there is no reason for this sacrificial tradition anymore due to the fact that they followed it blindly for many years and it has lost its purpose and reasoning. In Shirley Jackson's " The Lottery", unveils the toxicity and disadvantages that traditions can sometimes bring to a society. In the story, the people of their village have forgotten the true rituals and meaning of their tradition. Also, they have discarded their reasoning and have normalized violent behaviours. Their unwillingness to let go of their tradition has interfered with their potential progression as a community and as a society.

Ultimately, traditions will always be around but it's important to recognize when it's time to progress as individuals and follow the progress of society for advantageous reasons.