

"montana 1948" by larry watson essay sample

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Montana 1948 is a novel about the struggle between honesty and corruption. Discuss."

It is without doubt that ' Montana 1948' is a tale about the struggle between honesty and corruption. During the tragic events which took place in the ' Wild West' town of Bentrock, we see the misuse of power and reputation through the tyrannical characters of Julian and Frank Hayden. However, despite the persona of his father and brother, Wesley Hayden contradicts his family name, and chooses to act honestly and with strong moral beliefs.

The novel Montana 1948 traces the events of August 1948 through the recollections of the adult David Hayden. Despite the sordid nature of his uncle's crimes, and the effect they have on the Hayden family, David brings to mind a memory of his parents who are strong enough to withstand the pressures exerted by Frank's crimes, Julian's rage and the fact that they have dishonoured the Hayden name.

Julian is the epitome of corruption and is the power broker in Bentrock. It is this excessive power which enables Julian to do as he pleases, and have the town community obey him without question. The crimes that Frank commits cause tremendous tension between the Haydens, as it sparks a tragic turn of events. When the corrupt father Julian finds out about Frank's captivity in Wes's laundry room, rather than his incarceration in the jail, he is appalled and orders his henchmen to free Frank from captivity. This underground course of action shows Julian's corruption as he is prepared to sacrifice anything so his son and the Hayden reputation would not be damaged.

Furthermore, when Julian states " Is this why I gave you that goddamn badge? So you could arrest your brother?" shows the dishonesty behind the former sheriff, and portrays that the reason why Wes was given the position as sheriff was so he could keep the Hayden control over Bentrock, and ignore any law-breaking on a Hayden's part.

Perhaps the event that displays the essence of corruption throughout ' Montana' is after Frank's suicide. The funeral director Clarence Undset is brought into the conspiracy, to bury the truth about Frank's death, and Marie Little Soldier's cries for justice. " What bribes were offered, what