

Short fiction literary analysis essay examples

[Business](#), [Management](#)



The passage from “ Civil Disobedience” is used by Ellison because it outlines the dystopian future where everyone is just brainwashed and the masses are kept in their place by the government. In the story by Ellison, everyone has to follow a schedule and they must do everything according to what the government dictates. A lot of people share this view of society, the government and leaders. However, no one really makes a stand. Those who protest or go against the social norm are labeled as outcasts and a bane in society. The idea of the Ticktockman, or the Master Time Keeper is quite interesting, because it is taken to an extreme. Not only is he responsible for making people suffer, but he can also choose to end one’s life. He is able to make a person’s heart stop with the use of a “ cardioplate”. This is something that can be compared to the type of government Thoreau speaks of. Since there are people on top who are being praised for their ideas and their leadership, they can dictate who can live and who will die. By extending reach and help to only a select amount of people, those who are heading the government can actually control which people in what areas survive. Ellison uses this example at the start of his story to show what type of society is present in the story. The reader then has an idea of the kind of government going on, and will be more engaged in the story. Those who see governments like this, as a type of unequal dystopian world are often seen as outcasts and rebels. If the masses do not realize that they are being manipulated, no change will come and everyone will get used to being oppressed, knowing nothing else.

There were three types of men mentioned in the short excerpt entitled “ Civil Disobedience”. They are those who serve the state physically, or with their

bodies. These people are seen to be the ones who are responsible for change within the system. The men who are categorized here are those who do not necessarily exercise judgment. They can be seen as pawns as all they do is follow commands. This category could be the largest out of the three mentioned by Thoreau, and are the military as well as police officers or those in legal authority. These are the Ticktockman's subordinates. Those who do the hard, physical labor for the time keeper. These are seen as guards who keep things running according to the said pace. They are the ones who are in charge of keeping things running smoothly and keeping the people routine and on time.

The second type of men are those who are the brains of the state. They are the ones who serve the land using their head because they are ones with an education. These are ministers or politicians. People praise them and put them in this type of position because they are said to be smart. They blind society by keeping an image of themselves, and keeping their peers in power. The people below them allow them to brainwash society and adhere to their plans. People listen and obey because it is the only thing they know how to do, it has been going on all throughout history. In the story by Ellison, this is one person known as the Ticktock Man. He is the one who is in charge of giving orders. He is the decorative representation of leadership. Even though he doesn't keep the people in line himself, he is seen as the leader and makes the ultimate decisions in the society. Everything that everyone must do is up to him. He is also in charge of deciding whether people live or people die. This is very representative of those who are in government and how they can decide which people should have the benefits of resources of

government aid.

“ Civil disobedience makes up this third type of men” (Thoreau). These are the ones who are considered weak and useless by the government. They are the men who have a conscience and who try to resist against the state. These are the type of people who really show what the government is going and how they are responsible for all the hardships. The government tries very hard to keep these types of people under wraps. In reality, these kind of people are truly responsible for change and success because they are not blinded by empty promises or lies. In the story, the Harlequin is the one who represents the rebels. These are the type of people who can see through the lies of the government. He tried to fight against the autocratic rule of the Ticktock man by being late and distracting workers. This seen as a type of protest – he was seen to go against the norm in order to prove a point. He actively tried to show people that they did not have to follow the Ticktock man because he does not care about anyone else. In the end, the Harlequin was brainwashed like the rest of society and goes on telling everyone that he was wrong for his accusations. This can be compared to the rest of society where no wants to go against power and authority because they are afraid of the consequences they might face. This might be death, jail or exile. The story characterizes the third type of man very well in Harlequin.

Works Cited

Harlan Ellison (1965). “ Repent, Harlequin! said the Ticktockman”.