

How orwell shows the strengths and weaknesses of the proletariat in animal farm



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This essay will consider what the strengths and the weaknesses of the proletariat are, and how Orwell shows them, including analysis of the irony used throughout the novel. The weaknesses that will be included are: their loyalty, poor memories and gullibility. The strengths that will be included are: their physical strength, they have vision and unity. The first sign of the strength of the animal is in the first chapter: "they should all meet in the big barn as soon as Jones was out of the way" This shows that the animals have the control between them to have a meeting, and to even consider planning a mutiny against the current leader of them, Mr Jones.

This also shows that they have vision for a better life. Another of the animals' strengths that comes through in this meeting is their unity. Without having unity they would not have been able to overthrow Jones. A symbol of the unity is the song, Beasts of England.

They sung it in: "in tremendous unity" They are all united for the same thing. This, ironically, wakes up Jones and angers him. However he is angry about the noise and not the song, this is in contrast to later in the novel, when the farmers are angry about the song, because they fear the rebellion that the animals could have. The physical strength of the animals is shown in "The battle of the Cowsheds": "they flung themselves upon their tormentors" They are so strong as a unit they are able to get rid of the people who they have worked so hard for in the past.

It shows their strength in being able to get rid of them, but also in their confidence in their abilities to provide for themselves, and have an ideal farm. Boxer's strength is shown when he disagrees with Squealer: "I do

not believe that” This shows that even though Boxer is the loyalist of the animal, and his motto is “ Napoleon is always right”, he still has his doubts, and he has the strength to say what he is feeling. This is when the pigs first turn against him. Later Napoleon, who represents Stalin in the allegory, tries to have him killed by a dog, but:” Boxer saw them coming and put out his great hoof, caught the dog in mid-air, and pinned him to the ground” This shows Boxers strength physically, and also his strength to defend himself. However he does not use his own free will after, he looks to Napoleon to see what he should do with the dog. This is again showing the weakness of Boxer in his loyalty to Napoleon.

One of old Major’s ideals was:” in fighting man, we must not come to resemble him” This is heavily ironic and in contrast to the end of the book. It also leads to another weakness in the animals, the weakness of not being able to recognise when things are going wrong, until they already have.” The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig..

. it was impossible to tell which was which” This is the very last line in the book, it shows that it has taken the whole novel for the animals to realise what has actually happened, and the pigs only ever had there own interests in mind. One of the main weaknesses of the animals is their loyalty to whoever is in charge of them.” the duty of loyalty to Jones” Even after the meeting, and old Major’s speech some of the animals are still in doubt of the idea of a rebellion because they are so loyal to Jones. Even though he has put them through all sorts of misery some of the animals still want Jones, who represents the Tsar in the allegory, to be their master.

They are so loyal that they are blind to the reality of the situation. As soon as Jones is overthrown the animals switch their loyalties to the pigs:” the pigs did not actually work, but directed and supervised” the animals are blind to the fact that the pigs are only helping themselves, and are not really helping with the harvest. Also the use of the words “ directed” and “ supervised”. This is how the animals view the situation, when in reality it is more likely to be “ ordered” and “ watched”. The animals are blinkered by their ideals. Another weakness of the animals is their gullibility.

The commandment is changed to “ No animal shall sleep in a bed with sheets” Although the animals don’t remember this, Squealer soon persuades them that it was always like it. It shows their gullibility in that they believe everything that Squealer says, but it also shows their ultimate trust in him because they do not even doubt him. Another example of the weaknesses of the proletariat is that of Mollie. She didn’t want change:” you were allowing him to stroke your nose” She liked the way things were before the rebellion. She represents the better off or privileged people in a society.

She doesn’t want change because the way things are to start with suit her more. Her weaknesses are her vanity and selfishness. She is soon a traitor to the ideals of Animalism, and goes to work at another farm. From this essay it is clear that the animals have both strengths and weaknesses, however it is their weaknesses that become their eventual downfall.

If the animals had put together their strengths they could have overthrown the pigs. The biggest weakness of the animals was their loyalty to the pigs, if they had not been so loyal they could have had a better life. However the

whole novel shows that an idealistic world is impossible to achieve. It may be ideal to some parties, but no world could benefit everyone.

Orwell makes this point more effective by writing the novel as a fable, using innocent animals to represent the evil people in the world and especially in Russia, in the Russian revolution.