

Repressive society in harrison bergeron by kurt vonnegut



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The year is 2081, the addition of the 211th, 212 and 213 amendments to the Constitution makes everyone "equal", George and Hazel Bergeron have a child named Harrison, Harrison is taken away from them when Harrison is 14. George has a radio in his ear because of his above average intelligence while Hazel has no handicap because she would be considered average by Harrison, however, has many handicaps because in the story he is considered a "... a genius, an athlete, is under-handicapped"

In the story, *Harrison Bergeron* by Kurt Vonnegut Jr, the government handicaps those whom they think are above average, so they handicap them to make them equal. For Instance, " It was then that the Bergerons' television tube burned out. Hazel turned to comment about the blackout to George. But George had gone out into the kitchen for a can of beer. George came back in with the beer, then paused while a handicap signal shook him up. and then he sat down again"(quote is taken from the story)The evidence shows the reader that the government controls the thoughts of its citizens because after the death of Harrison and the ballerina is shown on television, the radio handicap went off, disrupting the people's ability to think. Like George Bergeron. It appears to the reader that the government makes sure that it has control over its citizens so that they do not remember the death of Harrison and the ballerina. In the scene where George's handicaps are described, Kurt Vonnegut uses description to show the reader how the government handicaps George so he is "equal" to everyone else. This connects to the theme that through the use of physical and mental handicaps the government seeks to achieve total equality throughout its citizens, however, this only causes more problems than it solves.

The government handicaps its citizens so everybody is considered "Equal". For Instance, " Hazel had perfectly average intelligence, which meant she couldn't think about anything except in short bursts. And George, while his intelligence was way above normal, had a little mental handicap radio in his ear. He was required by law to wear it at all times. It was tuned to a government transmitter. Every twenty seconds or so, the transmitter would end out some sharp noise to keep people like George from taking unfair advantages of their brains."(quote is taken from the story). In the scene, it explains that Hazel is considered " average" so she does not need any physical or mental handicaps. While George, on the other hand, does have a mental handicap because "...his intelligence was way above normal,"(quote is taken from the story) so he is required by law to wear it at all times. This shows that the government acknowledges George's above average intelligence so to make sure he stays in line with others, the government tortures him by forcing him to wear a mental handicap at all times. Kurt Vonnegut uses the description of his characters to describe how Hazel is not handicapped but George is handicapped. This connects to the theme that through the use of physical and mental handicaps the government seeks to achieve total equality throughout its citizens, however, this only causes more problems than it solves.

The government should not have complete control over its citizens. While one could present the argument that the government should not have complete control over its citizens, but however they're naive ways of thinking may forget that in the story, it says " Hazel had perfectly average intelligence, which meant she couldn't think about anything except in short

bursts. And George, while his intelligence was way above normal, had a little mental handicap radio in his ear. He was required by law to wear it at all times. It was tuned to a government transmitter. Every twenty seconds or so, the transmitter would send out some sharp noise to keep people like George from taking unfair advantage of their brains”(quote is taken from the text this implies that the government does not have total control over Hazel.

Through the use of physical and mental handicaps the government seeks to achieve total equality throughout its citizens, however, this only causes more problems than it solves. After Harrison and the ballerina are killed on TV, the government sets of the radio handicapped so people cannot remember the death of Harrison and the ballerina. Having complete control over society is unhealthy for the people.