

# The differences and similarities of the book divergent essay sample



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The book *Divergent* by Veronica Roth and the short story "Harrison Bergeron" by Kurt Vonnegut, has similar and different views on how they want their societies to function. In each of these stories, citizens both support and go against the governments' expectations. The government in each of these stories has ways of overpowering their citizens, which is why Tris, the main character in *Divergent*, and Harrison, the main character in "Harrison Bergeron" rebel against the governments. The way the societies function, the citizens views of the government and the function of the governments all sum up what each of the societies believe about human beings, life and the world. The function of societies in each of the stories has similar and different ways of working. In *Divergent*, there are five factions or groups: Erudite, Amity, Candor, Abnegation and Dauntless. The Erudites are filled with knowledge, which is why many people in this faction are teachers. The role of Amity in society is to cultivate strong peaceful relationships with everyone. They are trustworthy, kind, self-sufficient, and forgiving. The faction of Candor is known for telling the truth and nothing but the truth. Not only are they truthful but they are also fair and impartial with their judgments. Abnegation, meaning self-denial, is the faction that has many leaders in government. They enjoy taking care of other people and making others happy. This is the faction that Tris was born into. Finally, the last faction is Dauntless. The members of Dauntless are usually fearless and not discouraged when in the face of danger. This is also the faction that Tris switches to. Veronica Roth describes each of the faction's roles of the society as: " Working together these factions have lived in peace for many years,

each contributing to a different sector of society. Abnegation has fulfilled our need for selfless leaders in government;

Candor has provided us with trustworthy and sound leaders in law; Erudite has supplied us with intelligent teachers and researchers; Amity has given us understanding counselors and caretakers; and Dauntless provides us with protection from threats both within and without.” (43) This sums up each of the roles of the factions. In “Harrison Bergeron”, society is created so that everyone is equal. Not only are they equal before God and the law, but they are equal in every way possible. There was no one that was stronger, quicker, smarter, or prettier than someone else. Vonnegut stated that “...all this equality was due to the 211th 212th 213th Amendments to the Constitution and to the unceasingly vigilance of agents of the U. S. handicapper general.” In Divergent and in “Harrison Bergeron”, their societies were created so that the citizens could be treated equally. They differ because in each faction of Divergent, everyone isn't equal.

In Divergent and “Harrison Bergeron”, societies not only have different functions, but the citizens in each have different views on the societies. The citizens in “Harrison Bergeron” and Divergent agree and disagree with the rules of the government. In “Harrison Bergeron”, George and Hazel, Harrison's parents, agree with society because they don't want it to be like it was before year 2081. George tells Hazel that he does not want to compete with everybody again stating: “... and pretty soon we'd be right back to the dark ages again, with everybody competing against everybody else. You wouldn't like that, would you? 'I'd hate it.' Hazel said. 'There you are' said George. 'The minute people start cheating on laws what you think will

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happen with society?'..." This means that he doesn't want society to be like it was before, and neither does Hazel. In other ways, some people disagree with the society.

For instance, Harrison is put into jail because he is extremely intelligent, an athlete and under-handicapped. To him, this is not fair. In *Divergent*, many members of each faction agree with how things are run. For example, the mother and father of Tris don't want anything to be changed because they feel it might disrupt the way the factions have been flowing. Tris on the other hand, does not agree with how the government is run. She thinks that Erudite is trying to start a war against Abnegation because of reports that Jeanine Mathews, the leader of the Erudite, wrote about the Abnegation.

Tris says about the reports that: "...The reports that labels my family as corrupt, power-hungry, moralizing dictators? The reports that carry subtle threats and hint at revolution? They make me sick to my stomach. Knowing that she (Jeanine Mathews) is the one who released them makes me want to strangle her..." (360) In this statement, Tris does not agree at all with what Jeanine has written about her family, but she decides to lie and say she does agree so that it doesn't raise any suspicion. In both of these stories, the citizens agree and disagree with the rules of the society. Not only do the citizens have certain views on the function of society, but they also have different opinions of the leaders in government.

In the society of *Divergent*, and the society of "Harrison Bergeron," there is one head person that governs the society. In *Divergent*, Jeanine Mathews is the head of the Erudite but she is basically the head of each of the factions.

Even though Abnegation is the one that has most of their people in the government, Jeanine feels as if she is the one that runs things. She almost succeeds in starting a war against Abnegation saying to Tris that: “ currently, the factionless are a drain on our resources. As in Abnegation. I am sure that once the remains of your old faction are absorbed into the Dauntless army, Candor will cooperate and we will finally be able to get on with things.” (429, 430) This means that Jeanine wants Abnegation and everyone else to be easily controlled.

In “ Harrison Bergeron”, Diana Moon Glampers is the Handicapper General (H-g). She is the one that makes the decisions about what type of handicap the citizens would need. She is also the one that kills Harrison after he escaped from jail. Both of these women have similar and different ways of running their societies. Jeanine Mathews wants everything her way and will stop at nothing to get it.

This is why there is a war on Abnegation. In some ways, this is how Diana Moon Glampers is because she doesn't want Harrison to run free, so she kills him, not caring who his death might effect. Jeanine Mathews, the leader of Erudite in Divergent, and Diana Moon Glampers, Handicapper General in “ Harrison Bergeron”, play large roles in the decisions that the societies make. Both Divergent and “ Harrison Bergeron” have similar and different views on their cultures. Each story has unique ways of explaining their societies. The way the societies function, the citizens views on the societies, and the way the governments are ran, each explain the way of life in “ Harrison Bergeron” and Divergent.

Works cited

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