

# The lottery and harrison bergeron essay sample



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People have been participating in governing their countries either directly or indirectly since a sort of politics came into being. A small number of people can monopolize authority and abuse it for the sake of their own benefits unless masses of people take part in governing their countries. Therefore, their participation plays very crucial roles in their societies. By not taking their political actions, they can become passive. It can result in unfavorable societies. The Lottery and Harrison Bergeron stories criticize reckless obedience made by people in two societies described in very sensational manner. Purpose of this essay is to analyze how the stories describe passive societies in order to criticize a blind obedience by comparing and contrasting two stories. Both stories have more similarities than differences between the society structures and more differences than similarities among the characters for criticizing a blind obedience for authorized power.

Similarities between two society structures in the stories will be discussed in this part. First, there are cruel policies in both societies. In the Lottery story, a person who picks up the lottery paper is supposed to be stoned to death. In the Harrison Bergeron story, outstanding people are supposed to be equipped with handicaps depending on their ability. Even though, those policies look very anti-ethical, people in both societies never question and just obey them. The people show typical blind obedience to readers. Second, both societies have their own specific purposes with the cruel practices. In the Lottery story, the villagers do the lottery to ensure their good harvest as Mr. Warner said "Used to be a saying about Lottery in June, corn be heavy soon". (The Lottery, par 33) And, the writer of Harrison Bergeron story says "They were equal every which way." (Harrison Bergeron, par 1).

The society intends to make people equal in this story. The next similarity is that powerful authorities govern two societies. In the Lottery story, Mr. Harry Graves, Mr. Warner and Mr. Summers are in charge of leading their village. And, in the Harrison Bergeron, the Handicapper General, Diana Moon Glampers does the same thing in her society. There is no group of people who objected their authority in both stories. Forth, when the main characters were executed to death, no one tried to stop it. In Harrison Bergeron story, the General shot the gun twice at Harrison and the ballerina. They were dead immediately even before they fell on the floor. (Harrison Bergeron, par 77) No one in the studio took any actions to stop the General. In the Lottery story, Tessie continually exclaimed that the lottery was unfair. However, instead of listening to her, the villagers ignored her and threw stones to her. She was subsequently stoned to death. (The Lottery, par 79 and 80) No one tried to protect her from being stoned.

Some similarities of the characters in both stories can be found. First, two characters, Tessie and Mr. George, expressed their discontent but just obeyed the system. In the Lottery story, Tessie only proclaimed that the process of selecting a sacrifice was unrighteous. In actual, she did not take any concrete action to overthrow the system. Likewise, Mr. George in the Harrison story did not execute any actions although he was suffered by the handicaps on his body. He believed that the United States in 2081 was a lot better than in the old days when completion existed. (Harrison Bergeron, par 29) Second, the main characters, Tessie and Harrison Bergeron revolted for the sake of the most important thing to them in personal. Tessie took her action because she was supposed to lose her life. The writer of the Harrison

Bergeron story says “ nobody had ever born heavier handicaps”. (Harrison Bergeron, par 44) Harrison was equipped with more handicaps than any others in the country, which resulted in his imprisonment.

The following will discuss differences between two stories. One difference can be also found in society structures. In terms of leadership described in those stories, Different styles of leadership are practiced. In the Lottery story, men’s authority is always above women’s. Many evidences with regard of that are found in the story. Mrs. Dunbar was supposed to draw for her husband because he was absent. Mr. Summers asked her if she had a “ grown boy” to draw for her family. She answered that she had a son who was not sixteen yet. (The Lottery, par 13 and 14) It is interpreted that a boy over sixteen can be a representative for his family because he is man.

And, the tall boy by the name of Watson said that he was drawing for his mom and himself. (The Lottery, par 16) And, the people who lead the society, Mr. Graves, Mr. Warner and Mr. Summers were all men. Based on those evidences above, it can be acceptable that men are positioned higher than women. On the contrary, in the Harrison Bergeron story, The United States Handicapper General, Diana Moon Clampers, is in charge of administrating the system as a woman, who is definitely imperial. Women seem to be in the same level with men or above in a sociable manner in this story.

Several differences can be discovered in the plots of two stories. The first argument is that how people are responsible for in the death that happened in the stories. The villagers in the Lottery are directly responsible for Tessie’s

death. They all stoned at her, which caused physical injury and ended up with her death. On the other hand, People in the studio were indirectly responsible for Harrison's death. They did not clearly take any actions that could physically harm him. However, It is evident that they are somewhat accountable for his death because they looked on it. The second argument regarding the death is about its traits. In the Lottery story, death could not help happening because the ceremony had to end up with someone's death. It played a very important role to follow the tradition. On the other hand, in the Harrison Bergeron's story, the death might not have happened. If Harrison had not executed his action, he would not have died. Therefore, death in the Lottery was inevitable; however, it was unlike in the Harrison Bergeron story.

Some figures in the stories expose different natures. Mr. Adam said that over in the north village, the villagers were talking of giving up the lottery. (The Lottery, par 32) In addition, he said that some places had already quit lotteries. (The Lottery, par 34) Based on his speaking, he evidently seemed to be opposing in the lottery. What is interesting is that he did not express his objection directly. He just took a couple of examples such as a trial for giving up the lottery in north village and quitted lottery in some place to show his opinion. In the end, he didn't revolt against the lottery but participated in it. On the contrary, Harrison Bergeron executed a certain action to overthrow the government and got imprisoned. (Harrison Bergeron, par 42)

He carried his objection into effect unlike Mr. Adam did. Moreover, Harrison can be contrasted with Tessie in terms of tendency for their system. Tessie

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was not against the lottery until she was selected. As soon as she was so, she started to protest the fairness of the lottery. (The Lottery, par 79) On the other hand, Harrison was kept in a prison for the cost of his action from the beginning of the story. And, he escaped from the prison because he could not keep up with the system even in the jail in the middle of the story. (Harrison Bergeron, par 42) He seems to have protested the policy constantly since he was forcibly equipped with the annoying handicaps.

In summary, in terms of society structure, both societies have cruel policies to accomplish their specific purposes in common even though they are against human rights. And, strong authorities rule both societies and most of the people obey them without questioning. Nobody tried to stop the cruel policies in both stories. In terms of characters described in the stories, Mr. Adam did not show actual execution. He just stopped at speaking his opinion. However, Harrison executed his objection. Tessie was temporarily against the policy. On the other hand, Harrison maintains his objection for the system throughout the story. Both stories criticize the blind obedience in common.