

Rationale

George Orwell's, *Animal Farm* inspired me to create allegorical story based on real world events about complete power through totalitarian leadership. My piece, "Slaughterhouse", explores the dynamic between the young Italian men who fought during World War II (WW2) and the effect of forced conscription by the government. The story is set in an isolated farm, following a first person viewpoint of a sheep about to be sent for slaughter by the man he trusted. The narrative ridicules the fascist soldiers being conscripted for war under these glorious stories, the soldiers looking for glory are sheep following a leader and being led to their deaths. Similarly, to Orwell's use of anthropomorphism, the sheep represent the Italian soldiers being conscripted for war and Mr Brown represents Benito Mussolini who, although he believed conscription was necessary, also cared deeply for his people. The narrative emphasises the message that although someone's intentions may be for the better good, their judgements can be clouded, and these intentions are essentially bad. "Slaughterhouse" appeals to young adults because of their impulsive and rash decisions to fight for what's right and not thinking of the repercussions.

The allegory illustrates how the underlying idea of power can defer from its expectations. Mussolini's intentions can be displayed in a positive light as he was seen as a father to his nation; his army gave his people strength in the form of protection, showing love and care in his rallies and speeches, presenting the glory of Italy despite his tough rule. However, in his fascist rule, Mussolini also used control and fear to dominate citizens in Europe before WW2, in which they lost basic rights, showing his overall power to be negative. In the story, the use of the simile "He was like the angel of death", demonstrates the contrast between positive and negative power. The use of the "angel" represents the characterisation of Mr Brown being caring and loving. However, as it is juxtaposed to "death", it then portrays him with cruel intentions. Therefore, the sheep's judgements about Mr Brown shifted from being a father figure to a cold-hearted murderer. This allows readers to connect Mr Brown's character as a man associated with beauty and love coinciding with something as horrendous as death, ruining the connotation of an angel. The lives of the sheep are not their own as they are prepared for slaughter.

The allegory depicts the mental control of power through the sheep being controlled mentally through fear. Mussolini controlled the population and maintained his fascist rule by using his Blackshirts to beat citizens who did not conform to his ruling, resulting in Italian citizens abiding by his rules out of fear. The narrative states, "Blaring shrieks and screams were heard...as Mr Brown had carried him straight to the house". This imagery demonstrates Mr Brown's physical control as he uses his physical strength of carrying Noah to mentally install fear to the sheep. The imagery allows readers to clearly understand the fear the sheep felt, realising, and accepting Mr Brown is about to slaughter their friend. This fear instilled mental control parallels Mussolini's actions to use and brainwash the youth in the military regime in a militaristic manner, which results in Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and shock amongst soldiers. The repercussion of PTSD from soldiers is alluded to by the narrator drifting his mind into a state where no one can harm him, by being "transported to a beautiful countryside, where the earth sang with a gentle breeze". This personification of the earth singing emphasises his methods to cope from his traumatic experiences.

In conclusion, the implication of reading this narrative is the perspective that power is overall a negative element and can become corruptive eventually, no matter how good the intentions of the person in power. However, it also gives readers the realisation and insight into the horrific effects on individuals and society of blindly trusting powerful leaders and people in power.