

RH

Ms. Fargo

L&L

16 December 2018

Jack as an Antagonist

Many of the boys in *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding demonstrate deplorable attributes, but it is universally agreed that Jack is the antagonist of the story. Throughout the book Jack displays lack of conscience and neglects those around him. Jack's main motivators are fear and violence. He manipulates the boys to do what he wants, and that almost leads to their demise.

Notably, Jack is egotistical even when he is first introduced. Jack prides himself as the leader of the choir boys, and he can sing a C sharp. This may just be the nature of a presumptuous twelve-year-old. Further into the book this is definitely not the case as we see Jack kill two boys. Not directly, but he played a part in each. When they are killed he just dismisses the thought of death as if it had a miniscule effect on him. In fact, once Piggy dies Jack threatens Ralph with, "See? See? That's what you'll get! I meant that! There isn't a tribe for you anymore! The conch is gone-" As stated, Jack is taunting Ralph right after his friend's death. Jack doesn't just disregard others' lives, but he disregards the greater good.

Jack always has his own goals he wants to accomplish before anything else can get done. For example, when Simon and Ralph are building shelters Jack hunts pigs to no avail. Furthermore, Jack is still hunting pigs when fire is the priority. In both instances

Jack is working for personal gain. He doesn't care about escaping the island. The whole point of his tribe is to play, eat, and hunt. The only reason the boys were rescued was because of their carelessness to set the whole island on fire which would have left them starved if no one noticed the fire. Proof that Jack disregards everyone and everything and leaves destruction in his wake.

In addition to displaying neglectful and socially harmful behaviors, Jack leads in a destructive manner. First off, he takes advantage of the boys' fear. Next he transforms their fear into violence, and this is seen when he turns this violence against the vulnerable. The boys killed Simon because they were scared of the beast, so the boys killed the first humanoid they saw. Debatably, the boys killed Piggy because they were afraid of the truth and of what they have become. Finally, the boys hunted Ralph down due to the fact that he was the only one left that looked through the eyes of a realist. Ralph saw that Jack's subjects would get nowhere by playing and hunting. To sum up, Jack exploits the fear of others to get rid of those with opposing ideas.

Immediately, you can find evidence of Jack being a fearful person. Notably, Jack carries a knife with him. Jack didn't know the plane would crash, so why would he bring a knife? In addition, Jack acts very insecure. For half the book he covers his face in a mask, covering his once unattractive and uncharismatic face. Jack surrounds himself with people and armed camp castle rock with traps. Jack is also very afraid of the beast, for he was leading the circle that mistook and killed Simon. Jack's fear has not just caused damage mentally, but physically.

The Lord of the Flies may be the main manipulator in the book, but Jack manipulates the boys as well. Jack stoops low enough to torture kids who haven't done anything wrong, tying them up for hours like they're prisoners of war. Jack doesn't do any dirty work either. Roger kills Piggy with the boulder, and Simon is killed by the boys when they were in a collective group. In both instances Jack doesn't directly kill people. In the first instance it can be argued that Roger wasn't manipulated by Jack therefore killed him on his own accords, but this occasion may have been prevented if Jack as a dictator figure didn't antagonize Ralph and Piggy. In the second instance, Jack had created a safe environment for the boys to be warm, fed, and most of all, not afraid. The only way for Jack to keep the boys assured was the promise of protection from the beast. What did the boys do when they were met with an unknown figure? They beat and bashed it to death. Jack has influenced the boys in very violent and harmful ways that ultimately led to unnecessary deaths.

Jack manipulated the boys, but the tempter is still the Lord of the Flies. The Lord of the Flies was like the puppet master and Jack was merely his puppet. The Lord of the Flies manipulated Jack by using his fear and violent nature against him and the boys although Jack is still the main antagonist because the boys would be better off if Ralph didn't have a "political" opponent.

Sociopathic tendencies, harmful to those around him, and manipulative all are notorious traits of the reprehensible Jack Merridew. An argument could be made that he is only twelve, but does a normal twelve-year-old carry a knife and manipulate other children to worship him as an idol? It should be unanimous that Jack can't and won't

ever change after the events that took place in Lord of the Flies. He takes others down with himself, and with little regret or sympathy. Jack Merridew, a boy not misunderstood, but calamitous and disgraceful.