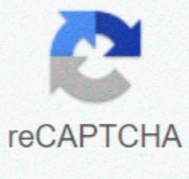




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## Analysis of the lottery by shirley jackson pdf

1948 short story by Shirley Jackson This article is about the short story. For other uses, see Lottery (disambiguation). "The Lottery"AuthorShirley JacksonCountryUnited StatesLanguageEnglishGenre(s)Short story, DystopianPublisherThe New YorkerPublication dateJune 26, 1948 "The Lottery" is a short story written by Shirley Jackson, first published in the June 26, 1948, issue of *The New Yorker*. The story describes a fictional small town in the contemporary United States, which observes an annual rite known as "the lottery", in which a member of the community is selected by chance. The shocking consequence of being selected in the lottery is revealed only at the end. Readers' initial negative response surprised both Jackson and *The New Yorker*: subscriptions were canceled, and much hate mail was received throughout the summer of its first publication,[1] while the Union of South Africa banned the story.[2] The story has been dramatized several times and subjected to much sociological and literary analysis, and has been described as one of the most famous short stories in the history of American literature.[3] Plot Details of contemporary small-town American life are embroidered upon a description of an annual rite known as "the lottery". In a small village of about 300 residents, the locals are in an excited yet nervous mood on June 27. Children gather stones, as the adult townsfolk assemble for their annual event, which in the local tradition is apparently practiced to ensure a good harvest (Old Man Warner quotes an old proverb: "Lottery in June, corn be heavy soon"). However, some other villages have already discontinued the lottery, and rumours are spreading that a village farther north is considering doing likewise. The lottery preparations start the night before, with coal merchant Mr. Summers and postmaster Mr. Graves drawing up a list of all the extended families in town and preparing a set of paper slips, one per family. All are blank except one, later revealed to be marked with a black dot. The slips are folded and placed in a black wooden box, which in turn is stored in a safe at Mr. Summers' office until the lottery is scheduled to begin. In the morning of the lottery, the townspeople gather shortly before 10 a.m. in order to have everything done in time for lunch. First, the heads of the extended families each draw one slip from the box, but wait to unfold them until all the slips have been drawn. Bill Hutchinson gets the marked slip, meaning that his family has been chosen. His wife Tessie protests that Mr. Summers rushed him through the drawing, but the other townspeople dismiss her complaint. Since the Hutchinson family consists of only one household, a second drawing to choose one household within the family is skipped. For the final drawing, one slip is placed in the box for each member of the household: Bill, Tessie, and their three children. Each of the five draws a slip, and Tessie gets the marked one. The townspeople pick up the gathered stones and begin throwing them at her as she screams about the injustice of the lottery. Themes One of the major ideas of "The Lottery" is that of a scapegoat. The act of stoning someone to death yearly purges the town of the bad and allows for the good. This is hinted in the references to agriculture. The story also speaks of mob psychology and the idea that people can abandon reason and act cruelly if they are part of a large group of people behaving in the same manner. The idyllic setting of the story also demonstrates that violence and evil can take place anywhere and in any context. This also shows how people can turn on each other so easily. When or where it is set specifically, is never said, leaving some to consider it science fiction.[4] Alongside the mob mentality, the story speaks about people who blindly follow traditions without thinking of the consequences of those traditions.[5] Reception Readers *The New Yorker* received a "torrent of letters" inquiring about the story, "the most mail the magazine had ever received in response to a work of fiction".[6] Many readers demanded an explanation of the situation in the story, and a month after the initial publication, Jackson responded in the *San Francisco Chronicle* (July 22, 1948): Explaining just what I had hoped the story to say is very difficult. I suppose, I hoped, by setting a particularly brutal ancient rite in the present and in my own village to shock the story's readers with a graphic dramatization of the pointless violence and general inhumanity in their own lives. North Bennington Jackson lived in North Bennington, Vermont, and her comment reveals that she had Bennington in mind when she wrote "The Lottery". In a 1960 lecture (printed in her 1968 collection *Come Along with Me*), Jackson recalled the hate mail she received in 1948:[1] One of the most terrifying aspects of publishing stories and books is the realization that they are going to be read, and read by strangers. I had never fully realized this before, although I had of course in my imagination dwelt lovingly upon the thought of the millions and millions of people who were going to be uplifted and enriched and delighted by the stories I wrote. It had simply never occurred to me that these millions and millions of people might be so far from being uplifted that they would sit down and write me letters I was downright scared to open; of the three-hundred-odd letters that I received that summer I can count only thirteen that spoke kindly to me, and they were mostly from friends. Even my mother scolded me: "Dad and I did not care at all for your story in *The New Yorker*", she wrote sternly; "it does seem, dear, that this gloomy kind of story is what all you young people think about these days. Why don't you write something to cheer people up?" The *New Yorker* kept no records of the phone calls, but letters addressed to Jackson were forwarded to her. That summer she regularly took home 10 to 12 forwarded letters each day. She also received weekly packages from *The New Yorker* containing letters and questions addressed to the magazine or editor Harold Ross, plus carbon copies of the magazine's responses mailed to letter writers. Curiously, there are three main themes which dominate the letters of that first summer—three themes which might be identified as bewilderment, speculation and plain old-fashioned abuse. In the years since then, during which the story has been anthologized, dramatized, televised, and even—in one completely mystifying transformation—made into a ballet, the tenor of letters I receive has changed. I am addressed more politely, as a rule, and the letters largely confine themselves to questions like what does this story mean? The general tone of the early letters, however, was a kind of wide-eyed, shocked innocence. People at first were not so much concerned with what the story meant, what they wanted to know was where these lotteries were held, and whether they could go there and watch.— Shirley Jackson, "Come along with me"[1] Critical interpretations Helen E. Nebeker's essay "'The Lottery': Symbolic Tour de Force" in *American Literature* (March 1974) claims that every major name in the story has a special significance. By the end of the first two paragraphs, Jackson has carefully indicated the season, time of ancient excess and sacrifice, and the stones, most ancient of sacrificial weapons. She has also hinted at larger meanings through name symbolism. "Martin", Bobby's surname, derives from a Middle English word signifying ape or monkey. This, juxtaposed with "Harry Jones" (in all its commonness) and "Dickie Delacroix" (of-the-Cross) urges us to an awareness of the Hairy Ape within us all, venerated by a Christianity as perverted as "Delacroix", vulgarized to "Dellacroy" by the villagers. Horribly, at the end of the story, it will be Mrs. Delacroix, warm and friendly in her natural state, who will select a stone "so large she had to pick it up with both hands" and will encourage her friends to follow suit ... "Mr. Adams", at once progenitor and martyr in the Judeo-Christian myth of man, stands with "Mrs. Graves"—the ultimate refuge or escape of all mankind—in the forefront of the crowd. Fritz Oehlschlaeger, in "The Stoning of Mistress Hutchinson: Meaning and Context in "The Lottery"" (Essays in Literature, 1988), wrote: The name of Jackson's victim links her to Anne Hutchinson, whose Antinomian beliefs, found to be heretical by the Puritan hierarchy, resulted in her banishment from Massachusetts in 1638. While Tessie Hutchinson is no spiritual rebel, to be sure, Jackson's allusion to Anne Hutchinson reinforces her suggestions of a rebellion lurking within the women of her imaginary village. Since Tessie Hutchinson is the protagonist of "The Lottery", there is every indication that her name is indeed an allusion to Anne Hutchinson, the American religious dissenter. She was excommunicated despite an unfair trial, while Tessie questions the tradition and correctness of the lottery as well as her humble status as a wife. It might as well be this insubordination that leads to her selection by the lottery and stoning by the angry mob of villagers. The 1992 episode "Dog of Death" of *The Simpsons* features a scene referring to "The Lottery". During the peak of the lottery fever in Springfield, news anchor Kent Brockman announces on television that people hoping to get tips on how to win the jackpot have borrowed every available copy of Shirley Jackson's book *The Lottery* at the local library. One of them is Homer, who throws the book into the fireplace after Brockman reveals that "Of course, the book does not contain any hints on how to win the lottery. It is, rather, a chilling tale of conformity gone mad." [7] In her book *Shirley Jackson: Essays on the Literary Legacy*, Bernice Murphy comments that this scene displays some of the most contradictory things about Jackson: "It says a lot about the visibility of Jackson's most notorious tale that more than 50 years after its initial creation it is still famous enough to warrant a mention in the world's most famous sitcom. The fact that Springfield's citizenry also miss the point of Jackson's story completely ... can perhaps be seen as an indication of a more general misrepresentation of Jackson and her work." [7] In "Arbitrary Condemnation and Sanctioned Violence in Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery"" (December 2004), Patrick J. Shields suggests there is a connection between the death penalty and "The Lottery" when writing: Though these ritual executions seem to have the support of the entire community and have been carried out for as long as everyone can seem to remember, a doubt seems to linger. Mrs. Adams tells us, "Some places have already quit the lotteries" (S. Jackson, 1999, p.77). On another level, we as readers feel quite uncomfortable observing such blind obedience to tradition among the villagers. And further, we as readers may be likely to make a connection as we witness modern day executions and realize that there is arbitrariness in these instances as well... It is hard for some to imagine abolition of capital punishment in our culture. They equate abolition with undermining law and morality. But it is precisely law and morality that are being undermined by the arbitrary condemnation of capital punishment.[8] Adaptations This section needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed.Find sources: "The Lottery" - news - newspapers - books - scholar - JSTOR (August 2017) (Learn how and when to remove this template message) In addition to numerous reprints in magazines, anthologies, and textbooks as well as comic adaptation, [9] "The Lottery" has been adapted for radio, live television, a 1953 ballet, films in 1969 and 1997, a TV movie, an opera, and a one-act play by Thomas Martin. 1951 radio version A radio adaptation by NBC was broadcast March 14, 1951, as an episode of the anthology series *NBC Presents: Short Story*. Writer Ernest Kinoy[10][11] expanded the plot to include scenes at various characters' homes before the lottery and a conversation between Bill and Tessie Hutchinson (Bill suggests leaving town before the lottery happens, but Tessie refuses because she wants to go shopping at Floyd Summers's store after the lottery is over). Kinoy deleted certain characters, including two of the Hutchinsons' three children, and added at least one character, John Gunderson, a schoolteacher who publicly objects to the lottery being held, and at first refuses to draw. Finally, Kinoy included an ending scene describing the townspeople's post-lottery activities and an afterward, in which the narrator suggested: "Next year, maybe there won't be a Lottery. It's up to all of us. Chances are, there will be, though." [11] The production was directed by Andrew C. Love.[10][12] Television adaptation Ellen M. Violett wrote the first television adaptation, seen on Albert McCleery's *Cameo Theatre* (1950–1955). 1969 film Larry Yust's short film *The Lottery* (1969), produced as part of Encyclopædia Britannica's "Short Story Showcase" series, was ranked by the Academic Film Archive "as one of the two bestselling educational films ever". It has an accompanying ten-minute commentary film *Discussion of "The Lottery"* by University of Southern California English professor James Durbin. Featuring Ed Begley Jr. as Jack Watson in his third film, Yust's adaptation has an atmosphere of naturalism and small-town authenticity with its shots of pickup trucks in Fellows, California, and the townspeople of Fellows and Taft, California.[13][14] 1996 TV film Anthony Spinner's feature-length TV film *The Lottery*, which premiered September 29, 1996, on NBC, is a sequel loosely based on the original Shirley Jackson story. It was nominated for a 1997 Saturn Award for Best Single Genre Television Presentation. See also "The Lottery in Babylon" References ^ a b c Jackson, Shirley; Hyman, Stanley Edgar (1968). *Come Along with Me: Part of a Novel, Sixteen Stories, and Three Lectures* (2nd ed.). New York: Viking Press. ISBN 9780670231584. ^ Brown, Bill; Yost, Peter; Press, Eyal; Sachell, Liz; Park, Edward (February 1986). 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