

“Toxic Masculinity In Books (Lord of the Files)”

By Joe Blakely

Toxic masculinity is a concept that transcends time and culture, and its manifestations can be observed in literature as a reflection of societal norms and expectations. 'Lord of the Flies,' written by William Golding, is a classic novel that delves into the darker aspects of human nature, including the impact of toxic masculinity on a group of boys stranded on a deserted island. The story explores how unchecked aggression, power struggles, and the suppression of vulnerability contribute to a toxic environment among the young characters.

The boys' descent into savagery on the island is marked by a struggle for dominance and control, reflecting traditional stereotypes associated with toxic masculinity. The character of Jack embodies aggressive and domineering behavior, showcasing a distorted sense of manliness that prioritizes power over collaboration. The novel highlights how toxic masculinity can emerge in situations of crisis, as the boys' attempts to assert their masculinity become increasingly destructive, leading to violence and chaos.

Furthermore, 'Lord of the Flies' portrays the societal expectations placed on boys to conform to rigid gender roles. The fear of appearing weak or vulnerable is palpable among the characters, contributing to a culture of aggression and hostility. The novel serves as a cautionary tale about the dangers of toxic masculinity, illustrating how unchecked aggression and the rejection of empathy can lead to the breakdown of social order and moral decay. Golding's exploration of these themes in 'Lord of the Flies' remains relevant as a critique of toxic masculinity and its consequences for individual and collective behavior.

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