Lord of the Flies (1963): The Development of Rules Within an Adolescent Culture

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Lord of the Flies is not a fun book. Most of us were required to read it in junior high or high school, and we found it, as well as the society that it represented, “nasty, brutish, and short.” The story of an ungoverned group of stranded young boys, which degrades over time into a murderous horde, has been analyzed, rehashed, and deconstructed to death.

The book’s story has also been captured on film—twice. The 1963 Lord of the Flies (Lord I) was a dark, black-and-white movie that, according to Roger Ebert, “was still shocking [because it implied] that ordinary school kids could be killers—that they had the seeds of evil in them, and, given the opportunity and freedom from the restraints of society, the seeds would grow.” Unfortunately, by 1990, when the equally dark remake of Lord of the Flies (Lord II) hit the theaters, such a suggestion was no longer shocking.

Lord I, released in 1963, suffers from the poor production values and uninspiring soundtrack of its time. Although it starts with a fairly good explanation of the boys’ predicament during the title credits (stills of a boys’ school, war scenes, rockets, a map of the South Pacific, and a downed plane), the title scenes are probably the best part of the movie. The boys on the island are British private school boys, complete with a robed choir (led by Jack Merridew). Jack’s propensity toward violence is foreshadowed by his repeated use of a knife to catch some of the other boys, notably the wistful Simon, by surprise. Ralph, the elected chief, and Piggy, his bespectacled, self-nominated sidekick, are calm.
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and deliberate—the clear opposite of Jack. *Lord I* tracks the book fairly well, from the marching first appearance of the choir, to the nighttime frenzy that results in Simon's murder, and to the hunting of Ralph near the end.

*Lord II*, released in 1990, updates the story\(^1\) and changes the accents. The casting is racially mixed. The boys are more clearly adolescent in *Lord II*—in *Lord I*, the boys seem pre-adolescent.\(^2\) Instead of an adapted choir chant used in *Lord I*, the boys in *Lord II* chant military cadences.\(^3\) The cadences are in keeping with the evident military school background of the boys in *Lord II*. Jack's boys refer to him as Colonel, and the boys' jackets and pants have a clear military bent.\(^4\) Updating the setting and changing the boys' school to a military school, though, doesn't improve the story.\(^5\)

Both movies have the same ambiguous ending as the book does, with Ralph being saved from certain death by the appearance of an adult (who—depending on which version you are watching—may or may not be fighting his own war). But Hollywood is not always so wedded to authenticity. It's not a huge stretch of the imagination to conceive of *Lord II* ending anywhere from full closure (Jack and his tribe get tried for murder and attempted murder) to retaliation and triumph (Ralph overcomes Jack's threats and recaptures the governance of the boys). Hollywood does not shy away from such cavils.

The movie versions of *Lord of the Flies*, then, could have gone in other directions had the respective directors so chosen. My question, then, is this: was it inevitable that the island society had to degenerate into viciousness, given that this society was populated by pre-adolescent and adolescent boys? More specifically, if we could recast the movie (*Lord III*)—perhaps with girls—would that force a change in outcome?

My guess is that it would. If Kohlberg's theories about moral development resonate with you,\(^6\) then you would conclude that there is something curious about adolescent\(^7\) male\(^8\) reasoning (and about the hint of a rigid, uniformed, private school) that forces Golding's result.\(^9\) This essay examines the inevitability of a violent outcome when the creators of a society lack the ability to create a rational foundation for that society.\(^10\)


**SOCIAL CONTRACTS REDUX**

There are a lot of ways to build societies using the construct of a social contract. There's Locke's version, which conceives of a society formed by agreeing with other men, to join and unite into a community for their comfortable, safe, and peaceable living, one amongst another, in a secure enjoyment of their properties, and a greater security against any that are not of it. This any number of men may do, because it injures not the freedom of the rest; they are left, as they were, in the liberty of the state of Nature. When any number of men have so consented to make one community or government, they are thereby presently incorporated, and make one body politic, wherein the majority have a right to act and conclude the rest.

Then there's Rousseau's version, which distinguishes “between subduing a mob and governing a social group.” To Rousseau, “there is no way in which [people] can maintain themselves save by coming together and pooling their strength in a way that will enable them to withstand any resistance upon them exerted from without. They must develop some sort of central direction and learn to act in concert.”

The members of the society band together and give up their individual rights in order to attain the benefits of an organized society. If, however, the social contract creating that society is violated, then each of the members regains the rights he or she ceded to the society.

Yet another version—the Rawlsian version—begins from the “Original Position” (an as-yet uncreated society) and applies the “veil of ignorance” to enable members of a society to come up with rules before knowing whether they'll occupy an advantaged or disadvantaged position in society:

The aim is to use the notion of pure procedural justice as a basis of theory. Somehow we must nullify the effects of specific contingencies which put men at odds and tempt them to exploit social and natural circumstances to their own advantage... [To do this,] the parties are situated behind a veil of ignorance. They do not know how the various alternatives will affect their own particular case and they are obliged to evaluate principles solely on the basis of general considerations.

All of these versions of a social contract require a conscious decision to create an ordered society. The organization of the community in *Lord of the Flies*, though, happens more by accident than by design. Given the boys' age and maturity level, they don't have the
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capacity to form an actual society, and they're certainly not going into a ready-made society on the island. They clearly understand that some rules are in order, even for a temporary aggregation of people, but they don't extrapolate from their predicament (they may never get rescued from their island) to the conclusion that follows from their predicament (they may be stranded together forever and will have to devise some way to get along). Their rules are not that much more deliberate than those created for a neighborhood baseball game. Nor are they particularly well-thought-out rules; they're simply rules for the sake of rules. There's no sense of "giving up one's rights in exchange for protection" here. These boys don't intend to give up any of their rights. They're just playing at society, not organizing one. That is part of the problem.

But could they, at their stage of moral development, actually have created some sort of social contract that would cement a new society? I don't think so. Most adolescents are not morally developed enough to form a social contract.

THE STAGES OF MORAL REASONING

Most scholarship on moral reasoning includes both a discussion of Lawrence Kohlberg's six stages of moral reasoning and Carol Gilligan's reaction to Kohlberg's work. In a nutshell, Kohlberg claimed that people may progress through six different stages (ranks) of moral reasoning.

In Stage One, people (boys) make moral decisions out of a desire to avoid punishment (of themselves, not of others). In Stage Two, they make moral decisions based on a quid pro quo rationale: "you keep your promises, and I'll keep mine." Social contracts begin to develop in Stage Three, as people enforce rules because the rules exist and not because the rules are inherently correct or just. The construct of a social contract becomes more visible in Stage Four ("law and order") reasoning, where people follow rules because those rules have been chosen by the majority and thereby are just. Stage Five reasoning enforces rules that are derived from fundamental rights (e.g., natural law)—not simply because the majority chose the rules. Because the rules are formed from fundamental and shared beliefs, and not from the mere fact that the majority adopted them, people with Stage Five reasoning skills are capable of considering the rights of the minority.

As for Stage Six:

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Rather than change, stage six makes that change. In stage six, stage-five "universal ethical principles" are applied to the situation. These principles are based more on notions of justice and fair play, legitimate social contracts, and rules for the humanity of others. The need for incarceration of the castaways that actor might also apply in stage six. Likewise, stage-six rules are applied to people in accordance with achievement, viewing the product of genetics and effort as the foundation of any specific intrinsic value.

Armed with this enhanced moral development, we might see that the boys in the story are not so different from us. They elect Ralph as chief because his strength of leadership is reliable. The signal fire switches allegiances to "rules"—such as they are—placed by Jack.

I doubt that we can simply say that Stage Three reasoning might attract rescuers, Stage Four reasoning grabbing the resources, and Stage Five reasoning forming the social contract starts to come into play in Stage One or Stage Two. There is no real hope that the boys will learn to balance the needs of the few against the needs of the many. (Of course, they are eventually rescued, so there is hope for some of them.)

Kohlberg's stages of moral reasoning are limited. They are not applicable to all societies. As Piggy says, "If the grownups would just think what they were doing, they wouldn't be doing it." Kohlberg's stage of moral reasoning is limited to the success of the grownups.
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Rather than change the stage-five perspective of a moral being, stage six makes that perspective more conscious and universal. At stage six, stage-five values become deliberate principles, or "universal ethical principles," that the actor can apply to any situation. These principles are based less on the social contract and more on notions of trust and community that must precede any legitimate social contract and must flow from a fundamental respect for the humanity of others. Thus, a stage-six actor might recognize the need to incarcerate a criminal to protect potential victims, but that actor might also want to preserve the dignity of the offender. Likewise, stage-six actors often advocate the distribution of societal resources in accordance with need rather than talent or achievement, viewing accomplishment or talent as primarily the product of genetics or differential opportunity rather than the result of any specific intrinsic merit.37

Armed with this convenient way of thinking about the stages of moral development, we can begin to see that the boys on the island never had a chance to succeed at creating a viable society. At best, most of the boys in the story are at a Stage Three level of development.38 They elect Ralph as chief by majority rule, and not out of any particular strength of leadership that Ralph demonstrates.29 When the majority switches allegiances to Jack, becoming part of his hunting tribe, then the rules—such as they are—are still based on majority rule (as governed by Jack).40

I doubt that we can even describe the boys’ thought processes as Stage Three reasoning. They live for the moment, letting the fire (which might attract rescuers) go out, hunting and playing as they see fit, and grabbing the resources they need as they need them.41 The concept of a social contract starts to develop in Stage Three, so if the boys are mired in Stage One or Stage Two reasoning, there’s no contract, no society, and no real hope that they’ll stick together long enough to be rescued.42

(Of course, they are eventually rescued, but they don’t know that ahead of time.)

Kohlberg’s stages of moral reasoning provide a useful, if somewhat limited,43 means of analyzing what went wrong with the boys’ community. As Piggy says in Lord II, “[w]e did everything just the way the grownups would’ve. Why didn’t it work?” The answer is that the boys weren’t constructing a society in which the talents of each were used for the benefit of all. The boys didn’t use Piggy’s brains, Jack’s bravery, or Ralph’s quiet presence to create a temporary sanctuary while waiting for
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rescue. They were merely mimicking the forms and ceremonies of an adult society.

We can’t fault them for failing to create an adult society if they didn’t have the cognitive development that would have allowed them to do so. Robert Kegan, whose specialty is adolescent cognitive development, points out that our adult frustration with the choices that adolescents make is due to the fact that we expect them to react to the world in the same way that we do—but they simply can’t.

The most common kind of lack of common sense we find in teenagers is often mistakenly referred to as “poor impulse control,” an imprecise characterization paying too much respect to the “raging hormones” view of adolescence. The categorical order of mind is enough to handle impulse control. What we are asking here of adolescents is more complex, because it is rarely unmediated impulses that actually lead adolescents into the more foolish risks they are willing to run. Much more often it is an embeddedness in the short-term, immediate present—a present lacking a live relation to the longer-term future.

Jack’s tribe can’t sacrifice the fascination of hunting for the need to keep the rescue fire lit. The “littleuns” (the youngest of the stranded boys) can’t control their bodily functions long enough to avoid polluting their food source. Only Piggy, Ralph, and Sam and Eric (the twins) seem to be able to think more abstractly about the future, and Sam and Eric are torn between the power that Jack represents and the decency that Ralph represents.

THE PERSON OR THE SITUATION?

But do we really have only a problem of moral development here? My sociologist friends tell me that moral development alone—which is an individual trait—can’t explain the entire situation. The particulars of the situation itself will interact with the traits of the individual, and both the person’s individual traits and his situation will affect an outcome.

Peer pressure is one such particular influence. There are some well-regarded studies showing that even relatively obvious physical conditions—the distance from one point to another, the length of a line—can become subject to “groupthink,” placing peer pressure on the unbelieving minority to conform to the wrong-headed thinking of the majority. And if hardwired concepts, such as size and location, are

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If the boys’ moral development is society, and if the situation

facilitate anarchy, then what?

Doesn’t Jack offer a sort of substitute and isn’t that exchange?
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manipulable by the particulars of the situation, what about the fuzzier concepts of behavior?

Certainly Stanley Milgram's studies on the willingness of experimental subjects to inflict pain (electrical shocks) on complete strangers give us a glimpse about how powerful the effect of a particular situation can be. In Milgram's best-known study, the actual subject was asked to give a series of progressively more severe shocks to someone who was posing as a fellow experimental subject. Although the actual subject usually agonized about administering the shocks, he went ahead and administered them nonetheless.\(^5^4\)

In analyzing Milgram's experiment, Lee Ross and Richard Nisbett concluded that the powerful structure of the situation—the authority figure setup; the calm tones of the experimenter standing next to the subject who was administering the shocks; the experimenter's repetition of the phrases, "The experiment requires that you continue. You have no choice"—served to overcome the subjects' expressed desire to stop the experiment before reaching the "severe shock" stage.\(^5^5\) The large majority of the subjects were stymied by their own uncertainty and could not overcome the social pressure of the situation. It's not that the subjects were sadists. But the structure of the situation prevented them from acting on their own reluctance to continue the shocks.

Now let's go from adults to the adolescents of Lord of the Flies. If adults in a well-lit laboratory at Yale couldn't overcome the structure of their situation, how then could young boys stranded on a deserted island overcome Jack's charisma, when Jack was offering them both food and excitement? These boys went from a structured school environment to a wild and unsupervised mystery place, with only the age stratification of the group as the common element. No wonder it was easier for them to follow Jack's lead than it was to create the remembered society that they had left behind.

**THE ROLE OF THE UNIFORM**

If the boys' moral development doesn't allow them to form a cohesive society, and if the situation in which the boys find themselves tends to facilitate anarchy, then what is it, exactly, that Jack's tribe represents? Doesn't Jack offer food (survival) in exchange for allegiance (unity), and isn't that exchange the foundation for a social contract—and a society?
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Jack's role as the Hunter/Chief creates a community of sorts, although I'm not sure that the boys actually consent to be governed by his rules as much as they are bullied into submission by his many demonstrations of force. That bullying eventually causes the group to murder, not just once, but twice. Until Ralph is rescued at the end of the story, Jack's tribe is heading for a third count of murder. Their first murder, as they dance around the fire and pantomime the killing of the Beast, may have been an accident. Their frenzied re-enactment of the hunt, along with the rather unfortunate timing of the dance (in the dark), causes them to kill one of their own, Simon. By the time that Jack's tribe is chasing Ralph with a stick "sharpened at both ends," though, the killing is no accident.

The horror of the book and the two movies lies in the contrast between these sweet-faced young boys and their aptitude for murder. Lord I and Lord II prepare us for the boys' descent from society into anarchy by using a time-honored convention: as the boys' clothes become more tattered and less recognizable as uniforms, the boys' behavior degenerates as well. Their community, such as it is, breaks down as their dress becomes more "primitive."

The two pivotal scenes—the dance that leads to Simon's murder and the tribe's hunt of Ralph—both depend on the disguise of war dress. If the boys were still in their "civilized" uniforms, they might well have retained their individuality and their consciences. It is the group's anonymity that permits the boys to act without thinking of the consequences. The combination of underdeveloped moral reasoning, the sociological implications of "groupthink," and the "costume" of war paint gave them both literal and figurative protective cover. Lord I or Lord II, played entirely in suits and ties, would have been more horrifying because the boys would have looked more mundane. When the boys are dressed as warriors, the killing is almost inevitable. If the boys had been dressed as "little gentlemen," the killing would have created too much cognitive dissonance. Of course, in the real world, killers dress as gentlemen about as often as they dress as outlaws.

The Role of the Single-Sex Society

Just as we can't imagine a director choosing to dress the actors in suits for the entire duration of the movie, we can't imagine Lord of the Flies becoming Ladies of the Flies. Our gut reaction to the idea of a mixed-

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gender or girls-only race have happened. Little girls.

Carol Gilligan, one of moral development (Kohlberg's), suggests that based on an ethic of justice or an ethic of care. The focused morality constructs, decisions, of conflicting society) [which are] rest standards... The ethic of care is a primary one, whereas the ethic of justice is a secondary one. These two conceptions of males tend to use the ethic of care, although ethically.

The gender difference of boys seems to play. Gilligan.

To Piaget's argument necessary for moral. Lawrence Kohlberg effectively learned that arise in the course of lessons inherent in... Traditional girls' games are taking games, where success does not necessarily end disputes requiring a meeting of most of the girls who a quarrel broke out, a system of rules for the continuation of the game.

Consider the use of their island community by the school's rules. As their before Simon's murder by changing them. Rejects control of the group. E
gender or girls-only recasting of the movie is that the killings would not have happened. Little girls wouldn't do that. 68

Carol Gilligan, one of the most influential writers on the difference of moral development in males and females (and a student of Kohlberg's), 69 suggests that, on the whole, males' moral development is based on an ethic of justice, while females' moral development is based on an ethic of care. 70 As Nona Plessner Lyons explains, the justice-focused morality construes "[m]oral problems . . . as issues, especially decisions, of conflicting claims between self and others (including society) [which are] resolved by invoking impartial rules, principles, or standards . . ." 71 The ethic of care construes "[m]oral problems . . . as issues of relationships or of response, that is, how to respond to others in their particular terms; resolved through the activity of care . . ." 72

Thus, the ethic of justice thinks of individuals as separate and distinct, whereas the ethic of care considers the interrelation of individuals. 73 These two conceptions of morality tend to be gender-related: more males tend to use the ethic of justice, and more females tend to use the ethic of care, although each gender is capable of using both. 74

The gender difference is clear in the choice of games that girls and boys seem to play. Gilligan explains:

To Piaget's argument that children learn the respect for rules necessary for moral development by playing rule-bound games, Lawrence Kohlberg (1969) adds that these lessons are most effectively learned through the opportunities for role-taking that arise in the course of resolving disputes. Consequently, the moral lessons inherent in girls' play appear to be fewer than in boys'. Traditional girls' games like jump rope and hopscotch are turn-taking games, where competition is indirect since one person's success does not necessarily signify another's failure. Consequently, disputes requiring adjudication are less likely to occur. In fact, most of the girls whom [Janet] Lever interviewed claimed that when a quarrel broke out, they ended the game. Rather than elaborating a system of rules for resolving disputes, girls subordinated the continuation of the game to the continuation of relationships. 75

Consider the use of rules in Lord of the Flies. The boys commence their island community by creating rules that are reminiscent of their school's rules. As their community degenerates (and especially right before Simon's murder), they react by rewriting the rules 76 or by changing them. 77 Rejecting the rule of the conch permits Jack to take control of the group. Rewriting history and changing the "rule" that
death is permanent, by claiming that the Beast (in the guise of Simon) is not dead, permits Jack to maintain that control. Jack’s charismatic leadership, and his concomitant reworking of the rules, eventually engenders a situation that allows the tribe to hunt Ralph as quarry.  

If we believe these gender differences, then recasting Lord I or Lord II would result in an entirely different movie. An all-girl adolescent society might well focus more on the interrelationships of all who are stranded on the island: more on creating and maintaining a workable aggregation than on rules that didn’t support such an aggregation. Can we really imagine a Jacqueline telling a Ralphpina that “the conch doesn’t count on this end of the island” as easily as we can envision Jack telling Ralph the same thing? 

Actually, at least one author can imagine just that. In Marianne Wiggins’s John Dollar, the characters (all girls, except for the pilot of the airplane) shoot my theory about rules-based gender differences all to heck. Although the girls do abandon the unworkable rules as some sociologists would predict, I think that it is safe to say that sociologists wouldn’t predict that the girls would practice cannibalism on the sole adult male—especially while he was still alive. (Sorry if I ruined the plot for you.) These girls are Hobbesian in the extreme, going against my intuitive presumption that girls placed in a Lord of the Flies situation might organize a different world. 

Even if we don’t take John Dollar as dispositive, there are other indicia that an all girls society would not be utopia. One of my all-time favorite guilty pleasures is watching George Cukor’s The Women. Not only does The Women have an all-female cast, but rumor has it that there was only one male on the set (Cukor himself): even the art in the sets and the animals in the ranch scene are supposedly all female. The Women is a guilty pleasure for two reasons: first, it plays into traditional stereotypes about the cattiness of women, and second, it displays superb overacting by some of Hollywood’s greatest actors: Norma Shearer, Joan Crawford, Rosalind Russell, Paulette Goddard, Joan Fontaine, and even Marjorie Main (of Ma Kettle fame). If the cast of The Women landed in a Lord of the Flies situation, we might see the characters devolve into a John Dollar world.

Nor would a mixed-gender society necessarily predict a different result. Take a look at a recent movie, Mean Girls, which demonstrates the power of a small clique of teenaged girls on another teenager, who arrives at a high school fresh from another country that places great value on ethical behavior and cooperation. In short order, the “new 1. The views expressed in faculty or administrating Sandra Placek for her (and two of their three dinnertime debate about Vance, and Michaela gestions; Julia McQuillan’s things; Alan Tomkis’s novel John Dollar, see for their help in the research to sit through both my Cukor’s The Women, who still was willing to 2. William Golding, Lord of the
girl" adopts the backbiting, destructive behaviors of her new peers. Perhaps Mean Girls is just a movie, in the same way that a cigar is often just a cigar—or perhaps the observations of gender differences that Gilligan and others have discussed have just too many ramifications for us to be able to say that an all-girls cast of Lord of the Flies (or a mixed-gender cast) would inexorably lead to a different result. Just as Harvard University's president, Larry Summers, found himself in deep trouble when discussing gender differences in engineering and the sciences,87 I don't want to find myself enmeshed in a debate with enormous political implications. Like Summers, I'm just raising the questions, not implying any particular answer.

We end where we began: could Lord I or Lord II have benefited from some serious recasting? Probably not. The whole point of the movie would have been lost if the recasting left us watching a group of girls happily working together to build their own (functioning) society; moreover, if the girls behaved counter to our stereotypes, the cognitive dissonance of the audience would have been so distracting that the point of the story would have been lost.88 It is the descent of normal-looking, normal-seeming boys from society to anarchy, from rules to lawlessness, that makes the story so morbidly fascinating. If we are to endure the story of Lord of the Flies, it might as well be as dark and cynical as Golding had intended.

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NOTES

1. The views expressed in this essay are mine alone and are not those of the faculty or administration of the University of Houston. I wish to thank Sandra Placeck for her invaluable research; Ken and Brenda Vampola (and two of their three children, Kathryn and Joe) for their invigorating dinnertime debate about recasting the movie; Catherine Glaze, Catherine Vance, and Michaela White for their helpful ideas and editing suggestions; Julia McQuillan for helping me see the sociologist's side of things; Alan Tomkins and Vicky Weisz for letting me know about the novel John Dollar, see infra note 80; Susan Hartman and Angela Bassett for their help in the reworking of this piece; and Jeff Van Niel, who had to sit through both movie versions of Lord of the Flies and through Cukor's The Women, which I viewed for comparison purposes—and who still was willing to talk about each of the movies afterwards.

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3. Hobbes could have been describing the island community of *Lord of the Flies* when he wrote: "[N]o arts, no letters, no society, and which is worst of all, continual fear and danger of violent death; and the life of man solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* ch. xviii (1651). Of course, in the case of *Lord of the Flies*, "short" wasn’t so bad.


5. Peter Brook’s *Lord of the Flies* [hereinafter *Lord I*] has been rereleased as a 1999 DVD distributed by The Criterion Collection.


9. As Roger Ebert pointed out, "[t]he reviews of Brook’s 1963 film version were not glowing ('Semiprofessional . . . crude and unconvincing'—Halliwell; 'Patched together'—Kaufman)." Ebert, supra note 6.

10. In *Lord II*, there is an early explanation for why Jack was sent to military school (he was a bit of a delinquent).

11. For example, one of the boys refers to the Outward Bound program in Colorado. Moreover, instead of "tea time," there’s "TV time." The remake also spends less time explaining why the boys became stranded on the island. In *Lord II*, water and swimming for swimming in the South Pacific in the Cold War going on? "captured by Russians," about the scheduling of men starting to wind down by the

12. The acting is better in *Lord I* and rather annoying little engaging.

13. I was intrigued by one other, there is much more pros *Lord I*.

14. The one puzzling part of *Lord I* the boys escape from the runs off from the group, e of the "Beast." In *Lord I* the boys apparently didn’t that the boys in *Lord II* them more vicious because happen upon his body? upon the dying adult in sight of the body under change in plot.

15. In fact, the story shifts mark a former Marine, has poss about the military school anarchy would have take posits that the boys’ mili the highest ranked among taken weeks, if not month.

16. See infra notes 29–42 and infra notes 69–75 and infra Part III and accom
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on the island. In Lord II, the movie starts with the boys already in the water and swimming for shore. And what are the boys in Lord II doing flying in the South Pacific if there's no war (save, perhaps, the tail end of the Cold War) going on? There is some talk in Lord II about being "captured by Russians," but that seems anachronistic, given the talk about the scheduling of modern TV shows. At best, the Soviet Union was starting to wind down by the time that Lord II was released.

12. The acting is better in Lord II as well. In Lord I, Piggy is a slow-talking and rather annoying little fellow. In Lord II, Piggy is quicker and more engaging.

13. I was intrigued by one other difference between the two movies as well: there is much more profanity and much less nudity in Lord II than in Lord I.

14. The one puzzling part of Lord II is the inclusion of an adult male whom the boys rescue from the ocean. The adult is delirious and eventually runs off from the group, only to die and become the physical manifestation of the "Beast." In Lord I, the "Beast" is a downed parachutist, whom the boys apparently didn't know. Why the extra character? Does the fact that the boys in Lord II knew the adult who became the "Beast" make them more vicious because they have less cause for fear when they happen upon his body? That can't be right: in Lord II, Jack happens upon the dying adult in the dim light of the cave, which makes his sighting of the body understandably eerie. There's just no reason for this change in plot.

15. In fact, the story shifts make the plot less believable. My husband, who is a former Marine, has pointed out that, if Lord II were really serious about the military school setting, the boys' descent from authority to anarchy would have taken a lot longer than it does in the movie. He posits that the boys' military training would have caused them to follow the highest ranked among them, and that their discipline would have taken weeks, if not months, to break down.

16. See infra notes 29–42 and accompanying text.

17. For convenience's sake, I'll assume that "adolescent" behavior subsumes discussions of "pre-adolescent" behavior. Thus, if a group of adolescent boys could not have behaved differently from the boys in Lord II, then a group of pre-adolescent boys couldn't, either.

18. See infra notes 69–75 and accompanying text.

19. There is also the issue of how much the situation in which the boys find themselves governs their behavior. Being stranded on an island is much different from, say, being left for a few hours in a shopping mall. See infra Part III and accompanying text.

20. In certain times, under certain situations, I suppose that societies can, quite rationally, be violent (e.g., in self-defense).
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23. Id. at 179.

24. Id. at 180–81.


27. See infra notes 29–42 and accompanying text.

28. "There aren't any grownups. We shall have to look after ourselves."

The meeting hummed and was silent.

"And another thing. We can't have everybody talking at once. We'll have to have 'Hands up' like at school."

He held the conch before his face and glanced round the mouth.

"Then I'll give him the conch."

"Conch?"

"That's what this shell's called. I'll give the conch to the next person to speak. He can hold it when he's speaking."

"But—"

"Look—"

"And he won't be interrupted. Except by me."

Jack was on his feet.

"We'll have rules!" he cried excitedly. "Lots of rules! Then when anyone breaks 'em—"
"Whee-oh!"
"Wacca!"
"Bong!
"Doink!"

Golding, supra note 2, at 33.


30. Yes, this will be an inelegant, simplistic summary of Kohlberg's work. Have patience. The fun is in applying his work to Lord I and Lord II.

31. His studies used male subjects. Daneker, supra note 29, at 54. For a discussion of Gilligan's counter-theories, see infra notes 69–75 and accompanying text.

32. See Daneker, supra note 29, at 54.

33. Id. at 54–55.

34. Id. at 55.

35. Id. at 56.

36. Id.

37. Id. at 56 (footnotes omitted).
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38. Add to their probable stage of moral development the particulars of the situation in which the boys find themselves on the island (no adult authority figures and no rules), see infra Part III, and it's just not surprising that they try, and succeed, in killing each other.

39. In fact, the boys know that Jack is "the most obvious leader" and that Piggy is the most obviously intelligent of the group. But the boys choose Ralph because there was a stillness about Ralph as he sat that marked him out: there was his size, and attractive appearance; and most obscurely, yet most powerfully, there was the conch. The being that had blown that, had sat waiting for them on the platform with the delicate thing balanced on his knees, was set apart.

Golding, supra note 2, at 22.

40. Golding, supra note 2, at 140, 151.

41. For example, Jack steals Piggy's glasses, which are the only proven way of igniting a fire, with no regard for the consequences to Piggy. See id. at 71–72, 168.

42. A fun contrast to all this talk about the boys' stage of reasoning is Susan Daicoff's work on the moral reasoning of law students. See generally Daicoff I, supra note 29; Daicoff II, supra note 29; Daicoff III, supra note 29.

43. See infra notes 69–75 and accompanying text.

44. Their unique situation also complicates things. See infra Part III.


46. [T]he expectation that adolescents be able to identify inner motivations, hold onto emotional conflict internally, be psychologically self-reflective, and have a capacity for insight all implicate the cross-categorical capacity to experience the self in relation to a given set or category rather than as the set or category itself.

Id. at 27 (footnote omitted and emphasis added). I don't know whether the problem is their moral development, their situation, or their physical brain chemistry, but the fact is that they simply aren't capable of functioning as adults stranded on an island would (might?) have.

47. Id. at 27–28 (footnote omitted).

48. Is it the hunt or the kill that fascinates them?

49. One possible way to recast the film, then, is by using males who presumably have reached at least a Stage Four (law and order) reasoning level. Stage Four males would probably sustain a society (or maybe two competing societies) long enough to be rescued. Of course, then there's no real conflict between angelic faces and devilish innards as there is in the book.

50. Special thanks go to literature and theory professors for reading my paper and pinpointing my mistakes.

51. Cf. Julia McQuillan & Anne of Gables id. at 17, 19 ("In an attempt to argue further that sociologists have argued about experience in the world, sociologists argue about experiences in the world.

52. See id. at 18 ("Gender Vertigo, which science researchers, individual, interaction, gender as a structure").


54. One of Milgram's later works set the stage for a "comparison lines" study of the "Lord of the Flies" setting from Yale to another town. See id. at 27–28.

55. Id. at 56–57.

56. Of course, that is the whole point of the movie.

57. Lord I makes the killing.

58. Whether private school or public.

59. In Lord I, most of the boys rely on body paint to make themselves look like savages. In Lord II, the protagonist has to rely on body paint to make himself look like a savages. In Lord II, the protagonist has to resort to such methods to place much earlier in Lord II.

60. Obviously, I'm not saying there is no such thing as uncivilized style of dress has a whole new meaning.

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then there’s no real cinematic excitement with that casting: no contrast between angelic faces and devilish behaviors.

50. Special thanks go to Julia McQuillan, who guided me through the literature and theories in her field.

51. Cf. Julia McQuillan & Julie Pfeiffer, "Why Anne Makes us Dizzy: Reading Anne of Green Gables from a Gender Perspective," Mosaic, June 2001, at 17, 19 ("In an attempt to explain variation within sex categories, sociologists have argued that external social structures (our actual experiences in the world) organize our behavior more than socialization (how we've been told to behave)").

52. See id. at 18 ("Gender theory, as conceptualized by Barbara Risman in Gender Vertigo, which builds on the work of other contemporary social science researchers, offers different conceptual levels of analysis—individual, interactional, and institutional—that are all influenced by gender as a structure").


54. One of Milgram's later variations on the study involved changing the setting from Yale to an inner-city, run-down, suspicious-looking lab in another town. See id. at 55. He recorded approximately the same results, no matter the setting.

55. Id. at 56–57.

56. Of course, that is the way that a lot of real societies start out.

57. Lord I makes the killing look much more accidental than does Lord II. In Lord I, the cinematography is, literally, very dark. In Lord II, the scene is much lighter, and Simon is approaching the group while carrying a sort of neon light-stick, which illuminates the scene as well.

58. Whether private school uniforms or military school uniforms.

59. In Lord I, most of the boys shed their shirts but retain their shorts and rely on body paint to signify their membership in Jack's tribe. In Lord II, the boys' shorts transform into loincloths, and the transformation takes place much earlier in Lord II than in Lord I.

60. Obviously, I'm not saying that "primitive" = "bloodthirsty," "uncivilized," or anything of the sort. But Hollywood has its many conventions and stereotypes, including its portrayal of certain non-Western cultures as "uncivilized."

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Flugel suggested that styles of dress and elements of appearance act to summon distinct feelings that enhance role performance. One's sense of importance is increased when "different parts of the whole, body and clothes, fuse into a unity."

*Id.* at 7.

62. In his study of uniforms Nathan Joseph (1986) pointed out that uniforms are a device used by organizations to distinguish members from nonmembers and inform the actor and the audience of what behavior to expect. A uniform exerts a degree of control over those who must carry out the organization's tasks, encouraging members to express the ideas and interests of the group rather than their own and thus enhancing the group's ability to perform its tasks.

When an organization authorizes an individual to wear its uniform, it certifies that the person has acquired relevant values and skills and that the group will assume responsibility for the person's conduct.

*Id.* at 67 (footnote omitted).

63. *See* Ross & Nisbett, *supra* note 53, at 28–30 (discussing the Sherif and Asch experiments). Had even one boy dissented from Jack's leadership, it is more likely that other boys would have followed suit. *See id.*

64. In times of war, the Hageners use body painting, facial designs, and accessories to transmit the message of fierceness and aggressive power. Their bodies are charcoaled to a deep black hue. Among the ornaments they wear is one shaped like wings of a particular bird whose presence is seen as an evil omen. Gathered together and identically adorned, the Hageners appear as an overwhelming force.


65. Even the irony of Ralph's rescue—most commentators point out that Ralph is exchanging one warrior tribe (Jack's) for another (the real military)—depends on costuming for effect. In *Lord I*, Ralph is rescued by very proper British naval officers, dressed in knee socks and white shorts. It's hard to get the feeling of irony with officers dressed as if they were simply heading out for an afternoon of boating. The rescue in *Lord II*, on the other hand, is effected by a man wearing camouflage and heavy black boots.


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68. Or would they? Movies do construct *Instinct* (Tristar Pictures looking little girl killer—valuable). *Vampire Chronicles* (Warners), it's far too easy to simplify too into gender essentialism. *Essentialism in Feminist Lit.* Obviously, gender is more.

[Phrases such as “the inherent difference” or “gender is actively constructed” in *Time* or *Newsweek* appear such questions as “a question already presented which everyone needs to note the consequences of.”

McQuillan & Pfeiffer, *supra* note 14, to note the consequences of.

Sex-role theory has an explanation that is based on gender. It teaches children to be the same (which usually also severely limits androgynous adults who will do what comes their way will treat them. It valued more than they are great for violating norms gets particularly con examined together. Behavior can cost in of Matthew Shepard.

*Id.* at 23.

69. For an excellent discussion: *Carrie Menkel-Meadow, Feminism, and Legal Eth.*

70. Gilligan (1977, 1982) and their own real-life re
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Metro, at B1; Constantine Angelos & Peter Lewis, “Principals Shaken by Eckstein Incident,” Seattle Times, Dec. 16, 1987, at E1 (students at high school trying to imitate the behavior of gangs).

67. But see infra notes 80–88 and accompanying text.


It’s far too easy to simplify gender differences and compress our analysis into gender essentialism. See, e.g., Angela P. Harris, “Race and Essentialism in Feminist Legal Theory,” 42 Stan. L. Rev. 581 (1990). Obviously, gender is more complex a concept than it at first seems to be.

[Phrases such as “Boys will be boys” and comments about the inherent differences between boys and girls ignore how gender is actively constructed. Covers of magazines such as Time or Newsweek and special news programs frequently ask such questions as “Are boys and girls really different?” The question already presupposes two distinct categories into which everyone neatly falls.

McQuillan & Pfeiffer, supra note 51, at 22. McQuillan and Pfeiffer go on to note the consequences of violating social norms of gendered behavior:

Sex-role theory has tremendous appeal. It provides a social explanation that is benign for explaining social organization based on gender. It also holds out a hopeful solution: stop teaching children to be different, and they will grow up being the same (which usually means more like “men”). Yet it is also severely limited. [It] does not explain how these androgynous adults will know what to do: what type of job, who will do what chores, or how others not raised the same way will treat them. It also does not explain why one role is valued more than the other, nor why the consequences are so great for violating normative role behavior . . . . The picture gets particularly complicated when sexuality and gender are examined together. In fact, violations of gender/sexuality role behavior can cost individuals their lives, as we see in the cases of Matthew Shepard and Brandon Teena.

Id. at 23.


70. Gilligan (1977, 1982), listening to women’s discussions of their own real-life moral conflicts, recognized a conception of
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morality not represented in Kohlberg’s work. To her, women’s concerns centered on care and response to others. Noting too that women often felt caught between caring for themselves and caring for others, and characterized their failures to care as failures to be “good” women, Gilligan suggested that conceptions of self and morality might be intricately linked. In sum, Gilligan hypothesized (1) that there are two distinct modes of moral judgment—justice and care—in the thinking of men and women; (2) that these are gender-related; and (3) that modes of moral judgment might be related to modes of self-definition.


71. Id. at 35.
72. Id. As Daneker explains:

In her book “In a Different Voice,” Professor Carol Gilligan constructs an alternative theory that she claims more accurately reflects feminine moral development. According to Gilligan, women approach moral problems with a distinct language that centers around the obligation to care for and the desire to avoid hurting others. According to Gilligan, the feminine resolution of moral dilemmas has less to do with “abstract moral conception than with the collision between two lives.” As Gilligan states:

The moral imperative that emerges [for women] . . . is an injunction to care, a responsibility to discern and alleviate the “real and recognizable trouble” of this world. For men, the moral imperative appears rather as an injunction to respect the rights of others and thus to protect from interference the rights to life and self-fulfillment.

Daneker, supra note 29, at 57 (alteration in original) (footnotes omitted).

73. Lyons, supra note 70, at 35.
74. D. Kay Johnston, “Adolescents’ Solutions to Dilemmas in Fables: Two Moral Orientations—Two Problem Solving Strategies,” in Mapping, supra note 29, at 49, 60–61 (“Thus, by at least eleven years of age, most children indicate knowledge of both orientations. This shows that the gender difference does not reflect knowing or understanding only one orientation, but rather choosing and/or preferring one over the other as a solution to a moral dilemma.”).

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75. Carol Gilligan, In a Women's Development
Jack have elaborated
ladies are socialized.

Recent women and boys play groups, often whose interaction is comparison, boys some competitive with winners are attack,” to enter
cooperate with part in 
boys emotional games reinforce feelings, and country, girls play role.

Rand Jack & Dana Alternatives,” 57 Ford.
76. In Lord I. Jack tells Rain
the island.” Lord of

77. In Lord II, Jack tells Rain
of the Flies (MGM/UA)
78. Jack's community of boys outsiders as the “Bea

[B]sform education for the Nazi able to use multi considered a “m
us that the perpe part, not out of loyalty to their norms, or as h
totalitarian conformity eventually genoci

Betty Bardige, “Things Adolescence,” in Mapp
79. See also supra note 49.
80. Alan Tomkins and Vick in to a novel that, esse John Dollar (1989). I enjoyed Lord of the Fl
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75. Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women’s Development* 10 (2d ed. 1993). Rand Jack and Dana Crowley-Jack have elaborated on this theme in their studies of how women lawyers are socialized in early childhood:

> Recent work on children’s play confirms that at an early age girls and boys interact differently. Girls choose smaller play groups, often consisting of two or three “best friends” whose interactions are based on shared confidences. By comparison, boys’ groups are larger and tend to center on some competitive, goal-directed activity with clear rules and with winners and losers. Boys learn to “depersonalize the attack,” to enter adversary relationships with friends and cooperate with people they dislike. Whereas team games teach boys emotional discipline and self-control, traditional girls’ games reinforce nurturant skills, expression of personal feelings, and cooperation rather than competition. In summary, girls play more than boys; boys “game” more than girls.


78. Jack’s community of hunters evokes another community that considered outsiders as the “Beast”:

> [F]ormal education was a necessary but not sufficient condition for the Nazi Holocaust. Physicians who must have been able to use multiple lenses poisoned healthy children; this was considered a “medical matter.” [Hannah] Arendt (1963) tells us that the perpetrators of the Holocaust acted, for the most part, not out of fear or passion or even self-interest, but out of loyalty to their organizations, in conformity with prevailing norms, or as builders of a state whose ideology demanded totalitarian control, “language rules” (euphemisms), and eventually genocide.


79. See also supra note 49.

80. Alan Tomkins and Vicky Weisz, at a dinner party in July 2000, clued me in to a novel that, essentially, is “Ladies of the Flies”: Marianne Wiggins, *John Dollar* (1989). I can’t say that I enjoyed this book any more than I enjoyed *Lord of the Flies*; stylistically, it’s just not my cup of tea.
81. *John Dollar*, supra note 80, at 132.
82. *Id.* at 207.
84. *See* <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0032143/trivia> (describing the all-woman, all-female-animals, all-female-art theme of *The Women*).
86. Don’t get me started on the complications of cross-cultural interactions on these issues. I’m sure that there are huge effects based on what individual cultures train their citizens to value.
88. Malcolm Gladwell describes some very interesting research stemming from the Implicit Association Test (IAT), developed by Anthony Greenwald, Mahzarin Banaji, and Brian Nosek. “Malcolm Gladwell, *Blink*” 77 (2005); *see also* <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/> (the IAT itself). The IAT shows how hardwired some of our cultural assumptions are—demonstrating, among other things, that experimental subjects’ ability to link emotional attributes (happy, sad, etc.) with photographs of people of different ethnicities will speed up or slow down depending on whether the attributes are considered “normal” for people of a particular ethnicity. *See* *Blink* 77–88. Extrapolating from the work based on the IAT, my guess is that *Flies III*, cast with all girls or with a mixed-gender group, would provide an extra frisson of discomfort.

Among all the American films of the 1960s, the ones that really stand out are *Man in the Middle* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Everyone interested in the Civil War is interested in these movies, which have never been seen on cable or satellite, and everyone interested in the Civil War is interested in these movies.

*Man in the Middle* (Paramount 1963) is directed by Otto Preminger, produced by Walter Seltzer, and scored by John Barry (with Orchestra). *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Crown International Pictures) is directed by Robert Mitchum (with Orchestra). *Man in the Middle* is a superb movie about the Civil War, and *To Kill a Mockingbird* is a superb movie about the Civil War. In several senses this film is even an American work at War II and most of it was shot.