

**There can be no such thing, in law or in
morality, as actions forbidden to an individual
but permitted to a mob.”** **Ayn Rand**

Mob mentality refers to the **behavioral tendency** of people (or other social animals) **to act in unison with the group of which they are a part**. This is an evolutionary adaption that provides the mechanism for collective intelligence, but also explain how morally reprehensible, consensus can form **behaviors ranging from beatings to extermination of an entire group**.

Human beings tend to *exhibit* very **unique behaviors** or habits **once they're in a group**. Some sociologist call it "*herd behavior*" but it is more often described as "*mob "mentality."*" Interestingly, it's not just humans that behave this way. Flocks of birds and herds of animals have all exhibited similar behavior.

The word "mob" has many negative connotations. One imagines a *wild and aggressive crowd*, feeding on each other's *panic* (hence the other alternative term "*crowd hysteria.*"). Certainly, sociologists and psychologist studying mob mentality have often focused on things like **violent demonstrations or even the madness that can often ensue in evacuations, stampedes, and crisis situations**. There are also famous cases of people **growing violent in something as mundane as a shoe sale**. Thus, mob mentality has often become attached to the idea of human *selfishness* and *competitiveness*. Sometimes it is **linked to desperation**, such as *people who will fight tooth and nail to access relief supplies or rioting in the streets because of total terror, or social justice*.

However, mob mentality goes far beyond the study of "*crazy crowds.*" It studies, for example, the difference when people are in small crowd or big crowds, and what these social scientists have found is that the behavior is subject to several influences. The information they gathered has been quite useful in creating safety strategies or even studying and predicting the stock market (i.e., the response of shareholders when viewing an erratic market shift). It has also been used to study political or cultural phenomena, such as the rise of Anti-Semitism or the genocide in Rwanda, allowing governments and other organizations to take measures in preventing such kind of movements from occurring again.

<http://brainz.org/what-mob-menatality/>

1. What is mob mentality?
2. What types of behaviors does a mob exhibit?
3. What do sociologist and psychologists tend to focus on when studying mob mentality?
4. What is mob mentality attached and linked to?

“The Monsters are Due on Maple Street”

The Twilight Zone

<http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x3be9ej>

1. What are the first signs that something strange is happening on Maple Street?
2. How do these signs start the conflict among the neighbors? What does Tommy suggest?
3. How do the people on Maple Street single out Les Goodman in act 1?
4. What did he do or not do to cause this reaction?
5. What does he say he is guilty of?
6. What do they accuse Steve of? What reason(s) do they give?
7. What does Steve say about a *scapegoat*?
8. Why does Charlie shoot Pete Van Horn? What does the crowd’s response to the shooting suggest about how well they are thinking?
9. Who accuses Tommy after the shooting AND why?

10. How does the neighborhood react in the end? What are they feeding on?
11. Where do you see evidence of mob mentality?
12. Who are the monsters? How do you know?
13. What did the aliens learn about the humans on Maple Street?
14. Who is the most dangerous enemy?
15. Think about the quote from the Narrator at the end: “The tools of consequence do not necessarily come with bombs and explosions and fallout. There are weapons that are simply thoughts, attitudes, and prejudices— to be found only in the minds of men.” Explain how thoughts, attitudes, and prejudices, can be deadly weapons.
16. What is the final irony?
17. What is lynching?
18. Look at chapter 15 in *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Where do you see evidence of mob mentality? Explain.
19. What stops the mob? Why? What does this say about them?