

Is utopia really possible?



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There is not a person on earth that can say they live in a utopia. As hard as countless governments have tried to create a perfect society, they have only been able to succeed for short periods of time. From the time the idea of a utopia was created, it has been synonymous to both an ideal society and also one that does not exist anywhere (Ollman, NYU).

Every nation that has ever existed has had a flaw that is impossible to overlook. There does not seem to be a way to create a government that can make all its citizens happy. There is always a group that is oppressed or neglected in some way. The question is, is it possible to create a nation that can overcome the common problems societies face? In order to create a utopia, a society must avoid oppression and corruption by allowing everyone to be viewed as equal, restricting the power of the governing body, and insuring a good quality of life for all citizens.

It seems impossible to keep corruption and oppression from ruining a utopia. It is human nature to abuse power. Utopias are built on this idea that all citizens will do what is deemed good by society in order to better the civilization. After all, majority of people desire, or think they desire, to do good in the world. The downfall of the society comes when national leaders and important public figures turn selfish. They stop caring about what is best for the population. As hard as leaders may try to remain society-oriented, they all inevitably fail. While their views are largely biased, many religions believe that everyone has a deep desire to only do what is beneficial to them. Religious groups have publicly stated that no matter how hard people may try to be virtuous, they will never escape the basic nature within [them] that holds [them] in its grip (Bradford, United Church of God).

It is human nature to force people to bend to one's own will when given the opportunity. When people manage to obtain unlimited control over a population, they will manipulate the general public to fill their own desires. Governments largely suffer from the stumbling block of humanity. Officials become corrupt and force the society to reflect their personal beliefs. This idea is the driving force behind the novel 1984. The highest level of officials completely reconstructed the language and thought patterns of the society, so nobody could possibly challenge their ideals. Anyone who did not succumb to the acceptable mentality were kidnapped, abused, and brainwashed until they thoroughly loved the governing body. People who accepted the ideas they were fed were rewarded with positions of power and life without fear of the government.

The reality of human nature also leads to oppression. For example, in the Hunger Games series, the officials in the Capital used teenage kids as pawns to intimidate and distract the citizens of Panem so they could do whatever they wanted with their unlimited power. The elaborate ceremonies, watch parties, and victor tours that stemmed from The Games allowed people to shift their focus from the severe oppression they faced to supporting the competitors from their district. So long as the people were distracted there were no rebellions because nobody cared that they had no freedom. The citizens of Panem were placid as they worked their entire life to please the Capital, while capital members lazily lived lavish lives. Oppression this severe will eventually lead to the downfall of society. The oppressed will join to overthrow the government.

To avoid oppression, a utopian society must view everyone as equals. A certain demographic begins to dominate a society when they convince a majority of the population that they possess the most desirable characteristics. A common example of this is the white-male supremacy through the twentieth century. Many utopias suffer because they do not see men and women as equals. The acceptance of gender equality is relatively new in America. It is still a distant dream in many countries. Despite this, women across the world have proven they have just as much to offer as men. Plato, the man who first wrote about the idea of a utopia, acknowledged that there should be no difference between the work of men and the work of women. He believed that men and women should have similar educations and that women [should] participate in all that men do including exercising, even in war (Godwyn, Plato's Republic) because the two genders have the same capabilities. A society has to see the equality in men and women to survive as a utopia. They also must place importance on social equality. Everyone needs be given the same rights, no matter how rich, poor, able-bodied, or disabled they are. If people are not allowed basic rights because of their social status or mental and physical incapability, discontentment will grow over time. Eventually, a rebellion will take place in hopes of obtaining equality. When the government is overthrown, the society will fail. Everyone needs to be heard and accepted for a society to be considered perfect.

The only way to stop corruption in a utopia is to find a perfect balance of restriction of power. There are many examples of governments that were hoping to create a utopia failing because the elected officials were given too

much control. Part of the problem is the political leaders' beliefs that their ideals will create a perfect world for everyone. In reality, there are no two people that think of a flawless society exactly the same way. For example, some think a nation should provide welfare while others believe citizens should work for a living. As long as the general population can come to a consensus on what they want the society to look like, the nation will continue to thrive. When political leaders try to force their beliefs on everyone and ignore what their citizens want, they lose trust. It does not take long for a group of disgruntled residents to lead a revolution that overthrows the government. Then, they will create a new government that reflects their ideals. They will survive as a nation until another group of people that feel ignored start another revolution. This cycle will always continue when a government uses their power to force their ideas on others. This pattern has made itself evident throughout history as millions have died and suffered as the direct consequence of ruthless political movements (Hodgson, Political Economy of Utopia) led by people who forced their ideas on the society. In order for a utopia to succeed there have to be limits on the government's ability to decide what is important to the nation they are serving.

Finally, an ideal society must have rid itself of poverty, lack of resources, and child neglect. Elimination of poverty will require work from both the government and the citizens. The government has to provide enough jobs with a high enough pay to support basic living. They will also have to be willing to offer support to people who can't work. In return, the public has to be willing to work in any way they can. Nobody will be able to stay at home idle. There will be plenty of resources for everyone to thrive. Nobody will go

hungry or without clean water. The nation will have to place importance on agriculture so there will be enough food to eat. Water will have to be regulated so it is not abused by some more than others. There will also have to be plenty of space for people to live. Shelter is essential. Children will also be well educated and so well taken care of favorable to populousness (Wallace, Population and Utopian Government) so they can grow into productive members of society. Orphanages and foster care systems have to be well regulated, so they operate with the kids' best interests in mind. Schools need to focus more on the welfare of the children rather than their reputation. When all of these aspects come together, the citizens will have a high quality of life, which is important when it comes to creating an ideal society.

Creation of a utopia requires a great deal of work from both the government and the citizens. People in positions of power will have to overcome human nature to ensure the government does not become corrupt. The government and the citizens will have to form a perfect relationship so there will not be any oppression of any group of people. Everyone will have to be held equal in the eyes of everyone else. Society will bear the burden of ensuring that children well taken care of, both at home and at school. Current education and welfare systems would have to undergo great reform to be acceptable in a perfect society. The number of components, and the amount of work, that go into creating a utopia is overwhelming to even think about. The probability of all of them being executed in one society and having long-term success is incredibly slim. There will never be a day that a perfect society is created.