

Movements to develop equality



Irving Kristol explained it best when he said, " Democracy and socialism have nothing in common but one word, equality. But notice the difference: while democracy seeks equality in liberty, socialism seeks equality in restraint and servitude" (SearchQuotes). The government wants America to be a dystopian society similar to that found in Harrison Bergeron, so that the officials will have complete management over Americans. The government does this by the ever-changing meaning of words over time to suit their desires. Additionally, they also do this by convincing the folks that the whole of society is more vital than the individual. This control stays hidden and disguised as " equality" when it really is a type of socialism referred to as Marxism.

Merriam-Webster outlines " Equality" as the quality or state of being equal: the quality or state of having the same rights, social status, etc. (Merriam-Webster). The government efforts to achieve economic equality include enhancing opportunities through tax policy, subsidized training and education, redistributing wealth or resources, and preferential treatment of those historically treated unequally (Merriam-Webster). This is stated as affirmative action and it was meant to counteract the lingering effects of generations of past discrimination (Merriam-Webster). " Sameness" is outlined by Merriam-Webster as the quality or state of being alike (Merriam-Webster). Sameness is additionally listed as a synonym of equality. Being " equal" has no similarity to being the " same". To make everybody the " same" the government would need to either pull most of the folks up to a far better level, or push a number of folks all the way down to the common. This reeducation of society is the principle that Marx advocated. Marxism is

defined as a theory and practice of socialism as well as the labor theory of value, dialectical materialism, the class struggle, and dictatorship of the proletariat until the establishment of a classless society (Merriam-Webster). In today's society, one example remains shown in things like not keeping score in little league baseball games (House). They tend to take it even further and all of the kids get a reward at the end of the championship game, regardless of if they won or not (Geist). There is no distinction between the winning team's trophy and the losing team's trophy because they say that they do not wish the kids to possess a reminder that they lost the big game (Geist). This is precisely what exists within the story Harrison Bergeron. The reeducation of society, that everybody is a winner, that no one person is better than anyone else is (Vonnegut). As an example, the state imprisons Harrison, once he refuses to be re-educated (Vonnegut). Although his reeducation fails, the point and propose behind his reeducation was to brainwash him into thinking that he was no better than anyone else was (Vonnegut). This reeducation was in conjunction with the physical burdens placed upon him (Vonnegut).

There is a contemporary movement referred to as the Ninety-Nine Percent (Wikipedia). The Occupy protesters' expression, " We are the 99%", asserts that the " 99%" pay for the mistakes of the " 1%" (Wikipedia). The One Percent being the rich folks in America. The ninety-nine are saying that it is not fair that some have more than others and that all assets and cash ought to be divided equally among all the individuals. This movement resulted in the proposal of the Buffet Rule. It was a part of a tax plan projected by President Barack Obama in 2011 (Wikipedia). The tax plan would apply a

minimum rate of thirty percent on people making more than a million dollars a year (Wikipedia). According to a White House official, the new tax rate would directly affect 0.3 % of taxpayers (Wikipedia). Again, this harkens back to Marxism and Harrison Bergeron because it would cause class struggle and it would negatively influence job creation and investment. "Class warfare also known as class struggle is the tension or antagonism that exists in society because of competitive socioeconomic interests, needs, and desires between folks of various classes" (Wikipedia). In the story, everyone is instructed not to compete as it results in greed and imbalance which nobody should have more than anyone else does.

"I mean-you don't compete with anybody around here. You just sit around."

"If I tried to get away with it," said George, "then other people'd get away with it-and pretty soon we'd be right back to the dark ages again, with everybody competing against everybody else. You wouldn't like that, would you?" "I'd hate it," said Hazel. "There you are," said George. The minute people start cheating on laws, what do you think happens to society?" ... "Reckon it'd fall all apart," said Hazel. (<http://www.tnellen.com/cybereng/harrison.html>)

Another book that shows this Marxist idea is *Anthem*, a dystopian fiction novella by Ayn Rand. Written in 1937, this novel is extremely similar in respects to Harrison Bergeron, having concepts completely different from those around them carries a death penalty. During this story by in this, *Anthem* is written as the diary of Equality 7-2521, a young man living in a future during which folks have lost all knowledge of individualism, to the extent of not even knowing words like 'I' or 'mine.' Everybody lives and

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works in collective groups, with all aspects of existence determined by councils. Once he is assigned to a menial job cleaning the streets, Equality 7-2521 rebels against collectivism by conducting secret research, that eventually leads him to re-create the electric-light bulb (Lawrence). Once he presents his discovery to the Council of scholars, they condemn him for daring to act as an individual and threaten to destroy his creation (Lawrence). He flees into the uncharted Forest, his love, a woman referred to as Liberty 5-3000 joins him. They come across an ancient house, a relic of the unmentionable Times before collectivism. There they discover the lost language of the self. They rename themselves Prometheus and Gaea, and Prometheus vows to use his new information to create a society based on individual freedom (Lawrence). This can be somewhat shown in Harrison Bergeron once Harrison takes over the ballet and tries to point out the corruption of the handicapper General. Where the hero in Anthem succeeded, Harrison fails and is killed.

Another novel that shows this same plan, *The Giver* is a futuristic science fiction novel set in a utopian society written by Lois Lowry. Within the community, there are no feelings, hunger, inequalities, and no pain. Everything and everybody is required to be "equal." each family unit is uniform and prescribed consistently with the community leaders. Every member of the community has their profession assigned when they turn twelve and Jonas is to become the receiver of memory. While he is training with the Giver, he realizes the reality of the community he lives in. The folks of the community do not get to feel love, true happiness, or any of the nice qualities of life. On the opposite hand, they have eliminated pain, strife and

therefore the impractical by converting to “ Sameness,” again the same underlying theme of making everybody equal by forcing them to be identical. Those who do not live up to the standards of this Utopian society are quickly “ released”. Jonas later finds out that this release process is an equivalent to that of death (Jordan). He decides that it is up to him to return what freedom to the members of the community (Jordan). With the assistance of the Giver, Jonas escapes, with Gabe, from the community, in hopes to unleash all past memories back to the community. This memory release causes the community members to experience-unfelt feelings of pain, loss, famine, war, as well as human differences, love, and happiness. Social promotion is at the very core of this “ sameness” technique of control. Kids that do not have any business moving on at school receive automatic promotion to the next grade (Wikipedia). This promotion is so that children do not have their feelings hurt, and their parents do not feel insulted. The administration says that it is enough that the student tried, that they participated, they did their best and what they do not understand this year will be tutored to them once more next year (Wikipedia). Just like in Harrison Bergeron where the main goal is for everyone to be no better than anyone else can be as seen here,

“ Only, if I was Handicapper General, you know what I would do?” said Hazel. ... “ I’d have chimes on Sunday-just chimes. Kind of in honor of religion.” “ I could think, if it was just chimes,” said George. “ Well-maybe make ’em real loud,” said Hazel. “ I think I’d make a good Handicapper General.” “ Good as anybody else,” said George. “ Who knows better than I do what normal is?” said Hazel (Vonnegut).

Some schools in today's world think this is healthy to tell children that it is ok if they do not win. Even better, do not attempt to be the best; simply attempt " your best". Again, more wording from the book simply do " your best" that is all anyone can ever do.

The television program was suddenly interrupted for a news bulletin... For about half a minute, the announcer tried to say, " Ladies and Gentlemen." He finally gave up, handed the bulletin to a ballerina to read. " That's all right-" Hazel said of the announcer, " he tried. That is the big thing. He tried to do the best he could with what God gave him. He should get a nice raise for trying so hard" (Vonnegut).

With this is mind, one can see why Kurt Vonnegut's Harrison Bergeron, Ayn Rand's Anthem, and Lois Lowry's The Giver, are to not be used as a road map to political success. These books are dire warnings to the folks of America. These books have be analyzed repeatedly and more and more connections to today's government and society are found in their pages. With the meaning of words ever-changing, depending on what political cluster uses them and therefore the collective being told that the entire of society is more vital than the singular; one can see why the government is getting away with this socialist reign. The United States government needs this precise variety of thinking, this kind of control, to keep the voters complacent just like the " same" sheep that they are turning into already. A scaling tax to penalize hard work to show the futility of being greedy and wanting more. Welfare to take from the rich and give to the poor to make it fair. Mandatory health care is not the free medical benefit that the government glorified it to be at the beginning. It has created the

impoverished more dependent upon the government for subsidies within which they use to pay for their necessities. The government is dumbing down America and stringing them along when it involves getting the necessities required to survive. Society is permitting this to happen without realizing it is happening. These authors are attempting to offer a warning to the folks. To notice the corruption and greed, to stand up and say that enough is enough. Although just like the stories they write, anyone that goes against the government is discredited and unheeded. Which ensures that things continue the way they are and therefore the government stays in power.

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