

Amina do not want to  
be treated the

Government



Amina Malik Professor Emily Rodgers UCOR 10126 November

2017 Totalitarianism in Animal Farm Have you ever tried changing something for the better, but instead made it worse? George Orwell's award winning novel, Animal Farm, pursues that concept. When Mr.

Jones, the farmer, is overthrown by the animals, the animals of the farm do not want to be treated the way he treated them. Instead, the animals take over the farm and propose to treat one another without abuse. The animals are representing humans and their rights for freedom and power. Orwell was positive that a system where "All animals were equal" would solve most problems, but he also knew that some animals would abuse power with a changed theory that "All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others." Readers are engaged with the concept of socialism that is evident throughout Orwell's novel.

Orwell presents many themes such as language and meaning, truth and falsehood, class conflict, God and religion, human rights, and politics throughout the novel. Out of these motifs, human rights, truth and falsehood, and class conflict are seen as crucial in today's society. The Soviet Union had a totalitarian government; today, totalitarianism is seen vividly in North Korea. Early in the novel, the animals wrote the seven commandments as a guide for their community. The seventh and most important commandment was "all animals are equal" (Orwell, 22). In Animal Farm and in today's society, the issue of equality is a big contributor to the topic of human rights. Human rights are rights that are inherent within the human soul.

Originally, the animals used Old Major's plea that all animals are equal. As time went on, little by little, the pigs decided to rewrite the seventh commandment as, "all animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others" (Orwell, 112). The new concept is unreasonable since equal means equal; therefore, an animal can not be more equal than another. In writing this new commandant, the animals broke a law of nature. Naturally, the characters in Animal Farm and all human beings have rights. In an ideal world, rights can not be added or taken away.

However, in reality, this is not the case. For example, Jones, the owner of the animals, "exploited" them like any other farmer would. He raised animals to earn his living. The concept of exploitation leads the animals to unite to fight for a common cause. They want to be free. They do believe that the seven commandments will protect them from further exploitation from humans. Unfortunately, the seven commandments do not protect them.

As the novel progresses, more and more animals are exploited by the pigs. Pigs are more intelligent than other farm animals. The pigs used their intelligence to take advantage of others on the farm. They were very manipulative.

The two powerful pigs, Snowball and Napoleon, frequently dominate the situation. If the other animals show signs of anger or frustration, another pig named Squealer talks to the animals, telling them what they would like to hear. Since, "All orders were now issued through Squealer or one of the other pigs" (Orwell, 57), it is clearly evident that the other animals on the farm are getting manipulated. Squealer is the only animal they can get in

contact with. They have no way to criticize or question information he presents to them. Throughout the novel, the pigs increasingly subordinate the other animals to the point where the pigs have become equally exploiting of their fellow comrades as the humans once were to them.

In today's society, the human rights belief is simple. It states that "individuals have rights because it is morally right to protect humanity" (Human Rights). This basic ideology is shown in George Orwell's novel, *Animal Farm*. In his novel, he presents the belief that all humans (and all animals) deserve equal treatment and individual freedom.

However, even the most positive purpose can be destroyed when one takes power. A world that was supposed to be full of positive changes can become worse than before. Napoleon and Snowball abused their power to take control of the other animals. Abuse of power is occurring daily. A recurring issue in today's society would be police abuse. Since police do have more power, they believe it is okay to use "considerably more force than is necessary to effect an arrest" (Police Brutality). Another example of excessive police power is verbal and psychological abuse. "Verbal and psychological abuse takes the form of taunting or ridicule during an arrest." (Police Brutality). This is a clear example of when power is taken over, human rights are violated. While human rights is a major issue in modern society, the conflict between truth and falsehood is debated as well.

In our society, the truth is a fact and a lie is a false statement. However, in *Animal Farm*, a statement that guides the pigs is the truth and something

that contradicts the pigs is a lie. In the beginning of the novel, the animals are fighting for equal rights. Every single animal agrees that Mr.

Jones is abusive towards them. To fight this, the characters take over the farm. For a while, the animals are getting treated equally. They establish the seven commandments in attempt to have an equal society. Eventually, the pigs take control because they believe they are better and more intelligent than the other animals.

They slowly, but surely change the seven commandments to benefit the pigs' thirst for power. Several commandments were made by the animals such as " No animal shall sleep in a bed" (Orwell, 21), " No animal shall drink alcohol" (Orwell, 21), and " No animal shall kill any other animal" (Orwell, 21). The pigs take advantage of the animals by changing the commandments to " No animal shall sleep in a bed with sheets", " No animal shall drink alcohol to excess", and " No animal shall kill any other animal without cause" (Orwell, 21). The pigs changed the ends of the commandments for their own benefits. They manipulate the animals into thinking the laws are not changed by tweaking the commandments. Where it would have been illegal to kill, it is now permissible and changed as society progresses. Rules are bent to benefit those with power.

This is relevant in modern society with the idea of tax evasion. Tax evasion occurs when a wealthy individual stores money into investments and falsely reports their income and expenses. By storing their money into investments and savings, they know they will not have to pay tax on it. For instance, " Abie Moskowitz, 56, admitted that he did not pay the income tax while he

was half-owner of Sea Jet Trucking, a shipping company in Carteret” (Tax evasion and Fraud). He “ pleaded guilty yesterday to failing to report more than \$1. 9 million in income he received between 1998 and 2001” (Tax evasion and Fraud). This individual knew that they are supposed to tell the TRUTH, but instead tried to manipulate the government into thinking they made less money than they actually had by hiding it.

Bending laws or finding loopholes to benefit oneself is an attempt to change a lie into the truth. Although truth and falsehood is a major theme in Orwell’s novel, he also deals with the idea of class conflict. In Orwell’s generation, most parents sent their children to boarding school.

At boarding school, Orwell realized the differences between the upper class and the lower class. He experienced different class conflicts. His experiences at St. Cyprian school contributed to class conflict issues in Animal Farm. In one of the animal’s commandments, it states “ whatever goes upon two legs is a enemy” (Orwell, 8). This is referring to the animals, who have four legs, being equal. In other words, humans were the enemy. In the beginning of the novel, Mr.

Jones knew he was a higher class than the animals so he believed he could torture them. The animals realized they were in a lower class and had no say. Eventually in the Battle of the Cowshed, the animals overthrow Mr. Jones and take control. At that point, all animals are equal and have control.

The pigs, Napoleon and Snowball, are originally leaders of the farm, but compete for leadership. Napoleon eventually takes control when Snowball is off the farm. Napoleon decides a committee of pigs will now rule farm. This <https://assignbuster.com/amina-do-not-want-to-be-treated-the/>

creates the upper class, the pigs, and the lower class, all the other animals. The pigs are able to manipulate and trick the other animals into believing they are still equal to the pigs. As the novel proceeds, the other animals become more aware of the class difference. However, they are not smart enough to fight back. This common issue is seen in India's caste system.

The caste system is "designed to create an ordered society in which all essential functions were fulfilled by people who performed tasks for which they were adequately qualified, the caste system was divided into four distinct classes: Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras" (Hinduism). There is even a class lower than the Shudras called the Untouchables. They suffer extreme abuse constantly. This is because of the class system. India's caste system continues in today's society.

The upper class is able to treat the lower class any way they desire because they know the lower class can not rebel. This issue is similar to the situation Orwell creates in Animal Farm. Although the animals acknowledge the abuse they experience, they are unable to change their circumstances.

In a totalitarian government, absolute power is held by its leaders. The citizens are loyal to their particular leader, since they do not know any better. They are blinded from reality and living in ignorant bliss. This is similar to Napoleon's abusive domination of the ignorant animals of Animal Farm. Although Animal Farm was formed as a democracy with good intentions, the pigs took advantage of the less intelligent animals and used propaganda to manipulate them.

Once the pigs have complete control of the farm, their treatment of the other animals eventually evolves into slavery. For example, Napoleon sent Squealer with the following message: “ Day and night we are watching over your welfare. It is for YOUR sake that we drink that milk and eat those apples. Do you know what would happen if we pigs failed in our duty? Jones would come back! Yes, Jones would come back! Surely, comrades” (Orwell, 102). Squealer’s behavior serves as an excellent example of how propaganda can effectively control individuals. The totalitarian society of Animal Farm is comparable to the communist state of North Korea. The dictator of North Korea, Kim Jong Un, uses the idea of fear to take full control of the citizens. Any citizen who questions Kim’s authority is imprisoned and then tortured to death.

The North Korean society is completely separated from the rest of the world. The citizens live in their own “ bubble” in a similar way to the animals being isolated on the farm. No one is allowed to know what goes on beyond North Korea’s borders. An example of this would be the execution of Kim Jong-Un’s uncle. It is shown that “ Kim Jong-un, the North Korean dictator, reportedly ordered the execution of his uncle and mentor in December 2013 after learning that Jang Song-thaek had proposed to China that it support a coup to replace Mr Kim with his half-brother, Kim Jong-nam” (Telegraph). Kim Jong Un started to fear that his uncle was seeking support from China to overthrow him and put his half brother into power. Once Kim Jong Un realized that his uncle had overstepped his bounds, he took matters into his hands and got rid of his uncle.



In *Animal Farm*, Benjamin, the donkey, is smarter than many of the animals on the farm. He realizes that the windmill project will not succeed and strongly advocates for his beliefs. However, he notices that his opinion is worthless after his friend, Boxer is killed.

In today's society, totalitarianism exists in several locations. Not only do people in these governments live in fear, they are also influenced by propaganda. The citizens in North Korea are fully convinced by their leaders that they live in a wonderful society.

They believe that other countries circumstances are far worse than their own. In these states, power is held completely within the highest levels of government. This is relatable to many situations in the novel, *Animal Farm*. Orwell's novel, *Animal Farm*, explores the ideas of human rights, truth and falsehood, and class conflict as an allegory of a totalitarian society. Although the animals attempt to create a perfect society for themselves, they fail because of unjust treatment by the pigs. The abuse of power guarantees that a society will never be able to uphold the basic rights of all citizens. In an ideal world, everyone would be treated equally, but an ideal world cannot exist with an imbalance of power.