

Utopia or Dystopia

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All through life humanity tries to obtain a world in which one can live with enjoyment, equality, fairness, and happiness. Many great writers have created utopian worlds that the reader can consider and explore. To create a perfect place compels the writer to write novels that deal with utopia. People see them selves in a place where it is fun and enjoyable. Writers see today's world not as the "good place"(Hermon, Holman). The world today has many wars, diseases, and world wide hunger. It takes many steps to produce a utopian world and is why creating a Utopia is no easy task. Other type of world that is opposite of Utopia is dystopia. Dystopia is a place where in literary meaning would be a, "bad place"(Snodgrass). Novels such as Brave New World, Fahrenheit 451, and 1984 are dystopian novels. In Aldous Huxley's Brave New World, takes the Individuality and has made happiness and enjoyment of life in to an artificial feeling with the constant presence of soma. Hope of achieving utopia humankind in this world obtains dystopia by mass cloning that destroys humanity. In Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451, the controllers of this world try to achieve utopia but in turn reach dystopia were knowledge is gone. In George Orwells 1984, achieve dystopia by the inner party who strive for domination by controlling love and the individual mind. In Once and Future King, T.H. White creates a utopian world where the idea of equality, peace, fairness, and happiness appears as a result of King Arthur's influence. Novel shows how one individual tries his whole life striving to achieve utopia. The novel shows that the life time of one person is not enough to obtain this utopia as King Arthur has to past his ideas for the future generations. In Edward Bellamy's Looking Backward, constructs the perfect utopia where the individual, love, and knowledge are practice unlike the other worlds. Looking Backward, and Once and Future King, did what the other novels did not; it strives for utopia and reaches it. Novels that reach utopia keeps and works the ideas of individualism, love, and knowledge into the society; whereas the dystopian novels eliminate such ideas believing it will lead to utopia. George Orwell presents a world to the reader where there is no chance for a utopia whereas the citizens see this world as a utopia due to telescreens, propoganda's and brainwashing that leads to a society of no desires or thoughts. Citizens are not allowed to have personal

thoughts or feelings due to the telescreens that destroys the individual mind. Telescreens is a design that is a two way interacting television set that the Party uses to keep people from thinking. The telescreens are monitored by a force called the Thought Police. "Thought police plugged in on any individual wire...-in the assumption that every sound you made was over heard"(Orwell 7). We see how this is forced greatly on the people when Winston has to hide himself from telescreens just to write down some of his thoughts. Huge posters with big eyes reminds the people that Big Brother is watching them. This is the constant brainwashing the citizen go through as they are attached at a young age to love Big Brother and once hooked the party controls them for the rest of their lives. All the brainwashing of constant propaganda's and telescreen turns the people in the society into drones with only one desire, to love Big Brother.

In 1984 the society obtains true power and maintains dystopia by controlling the power of love both filial and romantic. Children are brainwashed at a young age not to love, but spy against their parents thus destroying the filial love. The children are raised to grow up and love only Big Brother. Party has made the affection of making love to another as a sinful act. "The aim of the Party was not merely to prevent men and women from forming loyalties which it might not be able to control. Its real, undeclared purpose was to remove all pleasure from the sexual act.....The party was trying to kill the sex instinct by distorting it and dirtying it"(Orwell 57). Understanding that sex was apart of love it was made to believe to be a sin, but seen right by Party to have sex to gain new members. The Party still had other measure to control love for it is the force that makes their true power.

The party uses the Ministry of Love that implements torture to keep control of love to achieve complete domination. Pain of torture is too much to bare as it can strip love and force one to betray as one would do anything to stop the pain. "I don't care who it is or what you do to them. I've got a wife and three children... You can take the whole lot of them and cut their throats in front of my eyes, and I'll stand and watch it. But not room 101!"(195). Here is an example of a prisoner who has been tortured for a long time by the Ministry of Love and does not want anymore. Due to this excessive pain he is willing to see his own spouse and children killed in front of him for the love of the party and not for his family. This is the same process that Winston and Julia went through as they betray each other.

Winston and Julia severe torture destroys the romantic love and leads to their mutual betrayal as they turn to love Big Brother that made them believe the society they lived in was perfect. This is

power that the Party obtains and controls in this dystopia. "Never again will you be capable of love, or friendship, or joy of living, or laughter, or curiosity, or courage, or integrity. You will be hollow. We shall squeeze you empty, and then we shall fill you with ourselves"(211). Through immense torture leads to the betrayal of Winston and Julia, "I betrayed you" she said baldly. "I betrayed you..."(Orwell 240). After they were drained of the love for each other they were filled by love of Big Brother. This is reason why the people of Oceania are not capable to love on their own but made to love Big Brother through the power of torture. With this in mind this society controlled by party sees it as utopia whereas it truly and sadly a dystopia in readers eyes and will remain an dystopia. All dystopian worlds are alike such as Brave New World, were their too contains like qualities and opposite qualities to 1984.

Brave New World shows the individuality striped from its people who are forced to live brainwashed, segregated, and unfair without them knowing of it; the people of this futuristic world see it as utopia whereas the reader can clearly see it has dystopia. In this world they have mastered genetics and are able to form identical beings by the dozens that destroys individuality. This process is called Bokanovsky's Process, "Bokanovsky's Process is one of the major instruments of social stability!(Huxley 5). Result of the Bokanovsky process is mass cloning which is not social stability it is the destruction of humanity. No longer the individual exist, the term individual has a small meaning in this world of similar faces. Controllers of this world are still not done as they strip more of human nature away.

In quest for utopia the controllers of Brave New World have created a caste system were at birth many human natures are taken away; the controllers act as god and decide who gets what from birth. One must wonder how a world is equal when it comes to labor? Who gets to decide who becomes a garbage man or a company president? In this society their jobs are chosen before they are decanted from their artificial birth. Society creates different levels of humans so that the lower the class the lower quality of being. This is truly unjust as one group of humans lose their human nature to grow both physically and mentally. Higher classes are not identical for they are made different but are only a small percentage of the total population. The higher class is the one that coordinates society while the true labor backbone comes from the lower class. To maintain this caste system the controllers must take great efforts to keep happiness and pleasure for the castes groups so they do what they are made to do.

Happiness in Brave New World is artificial with lots of conditioning and the company of the

drug called soma. All the people in this society go through conditioning. Conditioning takes away free will to knowledge as it makes the citizens to learn whatever they are conditioned. If a certain group has to pick up garbage they will love to pick up garbage. There is no room for the individual mind because the conditioning does not allow the mind to mature in its own way that is why children were decanted and not born. "For you must remember that in those days of gross viviparous reproduction, children were always brought up by their parents and not in State Conditioning Centre"(Huxley 23). The happiness that condition brings to the caste works efficiently. Sometimes this artificial happiness needs a boost for the members of this society. The higher and lower caste can sometimes see their misery which is not intended by the controllers so these people are given soma. Soma induces pleasure in great amounts and clears the mind of bad feelings. Conditioning and soma satisfies all pleasures so there is no need for love.

In this world's advances to achieve utopia cost them many valuable items such as love both filial and romantic. Decanting was the loss of filial love because in this world there are no mothers or fathers. Citizens are not able to see romantic love because the controller encourages and conditions them to have sex with many different people within their caste. No love is possible in this society because true love is not wanted. People of Brave New World see the love between a mother and child disgusting. "The spectacle of two young women giving breast to their babies made her blush and turn away her face. She had never seen anything so indecent in her life"(Huxley 111). Without love for another death is not seen. The only way they can see love is when they go to the savage lands. The savage land is where John is from and through his eyes the reader can truly see this world of dystopia.

The reader of Brave New World can see that the society has not reached utopia as can John the Savage, but ironically the people of the society think otherwise; citizens believe they have reached a state of living that many dream of. The people of this world can not see this dystopia whereas John can. Society disgusts John because he is able to see clear without the conditioning and soma. "'O brave new world that has such people in it.'...But the Savage had suddenly broken away and was violently retching"(Huxley 63). The society does not understand John's reaction other than that they see him as a savage. Society sees their world as a utopia and try to show John. "Bernard and Hemholtz show off Utopia to John. He is more disgusted and moody with each passing day"(Carey 13). It is ironic that John is called the savage when he truly is not. "But the central irony in Huxley's evocation of the Noble Savage idea is that although John Savage, as he

comes to be called, fits the romantic prototype in that he has a natural dignity and intelligence, he is not a savage" (Guinevera 76). This shows that Brave New World to a regular person is not seen to be a utopia; it is seen to be a dystopia. Another novel such as Fahrenheit 451 reaches up with dystopia.

Ray Bradbury in Fahrenheit 451, shows a society that creates a world of happiness without the cause of pain and confusion that leads to a world with no thoughts. The society believes that pain was causing dystopia along with confusion. So this society began to strive for complete happiness believing that utopia would soon be reached. To rid pain they made devices to continuously pump in happy thoughts. Such devices were television sets that completely surround the room on all four sides and headsets to calm you down and put in happy thoughts. "...in her ears the little seashells, the thimble radios tamped tight, and an electronic ocean of sound, of music and talk and music and talk coming in...of her unsleeping mind" (Bradbury 11). Shows how the society tries to keep everyone happy and free from pain and confusion. This device is not enough for the human brain has many thoughts so the society has to try to keep the mind free of any thoughts other than happy thoughts.

This world believes that knowledge from books causes too much controversy, confusion, and pain so eventually they became extinct. Society wanted the people to be happy and not ask why. In order to do this society had to take away the individual mind that forms from the knowledge it receives. The source of knowledge that the society looks upon to be bad was books. At first they did not burn books as they thought they could just shorten them. "Classic cut to fit fifteen-minute radio shows, then cut again to fill a two-minute book column...whose sole knowledge, as I say, of Hamlet was a one-page digest in a book claimed: now at last you can read all the classics; keep up with your neighbors." (Bradbury 50). By shortening books they believed it will cause fewer thoughts thus leading to less controversy that leads to less confusion and finally less pain. It is the thoughts that put questions inside the mind and this is what the society does not want. Shortening books was not enough so they had to take more drastic measures.

In Fahrenheit 451 is a world that does not let the individual express their own thoughts by destroying all the books that help the human mind to form its own unique individual way. In the beginning, we see fire that is used to destroy books. "It was a pleasure to burn. It was a special pleasure to see things eaten, to see things blackened and changed" (3). This shows how fire is to be seen throughout the novel as it destroys books that are knowledge. The destruction of books shows

that destroying books that creates individuality is not wanted by a uniform society that the reader sees as dystopia. As the books burn and become blacken is how the minds of many become, as they no longer think for themselves. Burning books is affective from keeping the minds clear of thoughts but not enough so the society of Fahrenheit 451 speed everything up.

In this so called utopia the society has to be on a fast past so they have no time to think or question; just be happy. Everything in this society is practically speed up. "One column, two sentences, a headline! Then, in mid-air, all vanishes! Whirl man's mind around about so fast under pumping hands of publishers, exploiters, broadcasters that the centrifuge flings off all unnecessary, time-wasting thought!"(Bradbury 50). Even the teaching of knowledge is speed up. "School is shortened, discipline relaxed, philosophies, histories, languages dropped, English and spelling gradually neglected, finally almost completely ignored"(Bradbury 51). This society keeps going ahead, no time to see what is wrong.

The society Fahrenheit 451 keeps pushing themselves so they can be happy and no pain; they do not look back and see their dystopia whereas Montag does as Clarisse makes him think.

Montag has been pushed along with society until he met Clarisse. It took a question from Clarisse, "Are you Happy?"(Bradbury 9), and an old lady who burned with her books to change Montag's views about the society he lives in. Montag soon became a rebel and went against the ways of the society. Controllers of this world kills Clarisse since she was a loose cannon of thoughts to the society. This is what the society has come to as it will due anything to preserve their little thoughts of happiness. Montag is an example of what thoughts and books can due to a citizen in this futuristic society. The power of thought can open the eyes and truly see how the society really is; in chaos. In Once and Future King shows a novel that is unlike this dystopia for it creates a utopian place.

T.H. White's, Once and Future King brings a utopia in which King Arthur constructs from his childhood lessons from Merlin, but is in danger by the teachings of Toirdealbhach to Arthur's ill made son and the Orkney boys. These lesson that King Arthur experienced in his childhood is when he became a fish, an ant, and a goose. As a fish he learned that might right, but learns from this lesson that might is not right. When the young wart was an ant he learned that war was wrong and not worth it. As an ant he saw just how important the individual mind is. When wart took the skies with the geese he learned about territories and boundaries and learned when to fight and when not to fight. Arthur's son and the Orkney boys were thought the old ways that will be the downfall of Arthur. Still with all the lessons taught by Merlin Arthur was able to create his

utopian society.

King Arthur creates the utopian society as he pictured in his mind were the individual, thought, and love can be free with peace and equality. Arthur society was booming with people who were free and able to walk around without harm.

Where the black knights had hived,...now any virgin could circumambulate the whole country, even with gold and ornaments upon her person, without the least fear of harm...All the tyrannous giants were dead, all the dangerous dragons had been put out of action. (White 423)

To obtain equality Arthur made the round table so that no one was above the other.

"There will be a lot of jealousy,'...'Knights in this order of yours saying that they are the best one, and wanting to sit at top of the table.' 'Then we must have a round table, with no top'" (White 265).

After creating the round table he had knights flocking to his kingdom. In time King Arthur creates his perfect society.

In this society King Arthur makes new ways of teaching to change old ways that caused the past dystopia.

King Arthur wants his utopia to thrive so he tries to teach the new generations of the new ways, but he has challenge by the Orkney boys who have been thought the old ways. King Arthur wants

to teach the children when they are young so when they get older they are not corrupt. "The most

important thing, will be to catch them young. The old knights, the ones we are fighting against, will

be mostly to old to learn. We must breed up a new generation of chivalry for the future" (White

265). This was Arthur's goal to achieve that will promise him a perfect society forever. However

this did not happen as King Arthur's own son along with the Orkney boys corrupts his society.

Dystopia came upon the society that Arthur tries so hard to maintain. All of Arthur's ideas and

values were at the brink of extinction. King Arthur's last hopes of his society was to pass his ideas

to a young page named Tom before his death. "You see, the King wanted there to be somebody

left, who would remember their famous idea" (White 636). Tom was told of all the ideas of Arthur's

utopia and hopes one day that the society once again will thrive. In Looking Backward present a

world like no other where there is no chance of corruption as in King Arthur's society.

Edward Bellamy's Looking Backward, takes a dystopian world and changes it around to the

perfect utopia were no longer exist hunger, war, and hate but instead knowledge, individual, and love

endures. In the world Julian lives in contains war, hunger, crime, and has many disputes. For Julian

never thinks about this distopic world because he and his family are wealthy. West goes to sleep

one day and wakes up in the twentieth-century after being in a suspended trance. Mr. Leete brings

West out of this trance and becomes his guide to utopia. West learns through Mr. Leete about the past Boston which has change in to the next millennium.

Boston in the twentieth-century takes care of the individuality and allows them to form in their individual way. This utopian society expects the people to do what best fit them too do and mature in their own way. "The most delicate possible test is needed here, and so we leave the question whether a man shall be a brain or hand worker entirely to him to settle"(Bellamy 137). This shows that society does not push ideas on to the citizens. Citizens are allowed to strive within their own talents. "Public policy is to encourage all to develop suspected talents"(Bellamy 138). If one wants to be a writer he or she can be a writer. No one in society will tell or make one do something against their will other than to participate in society. Each citizen in the new Boston is taken care of, "The nation guarantees the nurture, education, and comfortable maintenance of every citizen from the cradle to the grave"(Bellamy 149). The society treats their citizens as equal were no one gets more than the other.

New Boston is a utopia where the citizens can see themselves as equals whereas in the past old Boston was filled with unequal social status. Minds of the citizens in New Boston do not know what is non equal and West questions Mr. Leete. Mr. Leete response is, "It is precisely because we are all social equals whose equality nothing can compromise"(Bellamy 168). Mr. Leete tells West that all of the citizens get a year credit of 4 thousand dollars no matter where they work. West asks how workers are paid the same if one worker produces more than the other. Mr. Leete responds by, "The right of man to maintenance at the nation's table depends on the fact that he is a man, and not on the amount of health and strength he may have, so long as he does his best"(Bellamy 179). The society sees effort applied by the citizens as equal no matter how smaller or greater. In new Boston society give everyone equal status and does not divide or split among caste groups that is displayed in dystopian worlds.

Splitting up groups by castes or social class leads to dystopia and is why it has been removed in new Boston. "There are no privileged few, no overpaid managerial class, and no sexism or slavery delegating dreary jobs to women, nonwhites, or an overburdened subclass"(Snodgrass 324). This quotation shows the benefits of not having class and can be seen in true utopian worlds. Having such classes create dystopia as it did in Brave New World. "It is the worst thing about any system which divides men, or allows them to be divided, into classes and castes, that it weakens the sense of a common humanity"(Bellamy 195). In new Boston the people are seen to be more social

due to the fact that they are all equals. As everyone is equal there is no hate between people and crime has been made to nothing by eliminating money.

Utopia strives to correct what is done wrong from the past so they have taken money that causes lust, greed and temptations away from the society. New Boston has figured out that eliminating money will rid their societal problems dealing with crime. "Result from the inequality in the possessions of individuals; want tempted the poor, lust of greater gains...money was the motive of all crime, the taproot of a vast poison growth"(Bellamy 225). Without crime new Boston is in peace and harmony, "As with other utopias, the Boston of A.D. 2000 is a dream world that suffers no anarchy and subsists in harmony and peace(Snodgrass 325). Knowledge in this world is available and gladly given.

New Boston maintains utopia by not forcing certain knowledge to the children in schools, but offers abundance amount of knowledge. Children acquire knowledge in certain areas of professions and arts. Society gives the young citizens till the age of twenty-one to learn in the area they best wish. This process is affective because the knowledge is not being force to them that causes them to take in less. "According to Edith, because of the efficacy of public education in skills and tastes...Art flourishes. Libraries continue to stock English classic"(Snodgrass 325). In this utopia knowledge is fluent and the thought of each individual is wanted.

Love prospers in new Boston as it shows Edith expressing herself towards West. After waking up in new Boston West has been feeling lonely ever since. West has feelings for Edith but does not tell her for he is shy. Due to freedom of expression in new Boston Edith does not feel shy as she expresses her love to West. Edith tells West that she would have told him sooner but was afraid to shock him.

I know girls were expected to hide their feelings in your day, and I was dreadfully afraid of shocking you. Ah me, how hard it must have been for them to have always had to conceal their love like a fault. Why did they think it such a shame to love any one till they had been given permission to fall in love?(Bellamy 293) This shows how the society feels openly about love. New Boston has no restrictions on love and therefore maintains utopia. With all this great changes that are made from the past from old Boston to the new Boston can be seen as the journey back to the garden of Eden; the very first utopia.

In a higher note Bellamy's Looking Backward, is society that maintains utopia where citizens are becoming more and more innocent and thus in biblical terms are going back to the Garden of Eden were violence, greed, and inequality does not exist. As West was in this garden like society he

was force to leave when he went to sleep and dreamed he was in old Boston. While back again in old Boston West sees true dystopia of corruption, crimes, greed and inequality. West wants to go back to new Boston; wants to go back to the garden of Eden. When West once again awoken he is back in the future and is so happy he cries, "I was gasping. The tears were streaming down my face, and I Quivered in every nerve"(Bellamy 310). At the end of the novel Bellamy puts a picture in the readers mind were West and Edith represent Adam and Even in the garden of Eden. "Edith. fresh as the morning, had come into the garden and was gathering flowers. I hastened to descend to her. Kneeling before her, with my face in the dust, I confessed with tears how little was my worth to breath the air of this golden century"(Bellamy 311). This shows that new Boston will continue to be a utopia.

Hubris is excessive pride that the closed minded societies have shown in 1994, Brave New World, and Fahrenheit 451 where they only see utopia when they take away knowledge, individuality, and love which in turn causes dystopia. The quest for Utopia was found in all the novels, but only two made it and the rest became dystopia ironically still believing it was utopia. When great societies tries to obtain utopia they become blind not seeing that they have caused dystopia. This is not just seen with utopia as this is true for any great substances such as getting the American Dream or getting one million dollars. People and societies get wrapped up in trying to reach too far with their hands and end up losing their bodies. This is why TH. White's Once and Future King and Edward Bellamy's Looking Backwards were able to create their utopian societies. King Arthur's society did not eliminate all the things that caused dystopia but mixed them into his society by the new ways and old ways. In new Boston they achieve their utopia by not just eliminating but reconstructing their society from the wrongs of the previous society. All the novels have dreams of utopia and that may be their success or downfall.

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