UTOPIAS AND DYSTOPIAS: THE RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES OF
CITIZENS IN (DYS)FUNCTIONAL NATION-STATES

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…you must not forsake the ship in a tempest because you cannot rule and keep down the winds.

-Sir Thomas More

_Utopia_
The purpose of my thesis is to explore the fundamental ideas behind a “perfect” state where there exists a balance in the private, social, and political lives of citizens. This research first considers basic biological and psychological needs of humanity. Then, it considers some of the fundamental political, utopian philosophies regarding the organization of people into an ideal society. After that, dystopian fiction provides a contrasting viewpoint to explore the needs of the individual. By contrasting utopian and dystopian genres, readers might better understand the difference between utopian theory and practice scenarios posed by dystopian novelists. There are some fundamental discrepancies between utopian thought regarding the perceived needs of the body politic and the needs of the individual citizen, and while attempting to reconcile these differences, this thesis uses utopian and dystopian works to lay some foundational principles that propose how one person might best thrive within a larger community.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a collection of musings that reviews one of the most difficult, impossible solutions to the age-old question: how can all men and women thrive together peacefully? Works of utopian philosophy do not answer all of our questions undisputedly. They merely pose scenarios that authors see as the most fitting way to organize a social order. The creators of some of these works might not be entirely sincere in the practical applications of their political thoughts, but, at the very least, they create a dialogue where other people can test these theories by posing counterarguments which discredit the original premises of their ideas.

Exploration of the utopian discipline has edified one aspect of utopian creation that I had initially taken for granted. I had not fully defined my own ideal before I began my research, and, of course, utopian ideals change depending on the cultural values, era, and the intent of the author. Each one of these utopian and dystopian thinkers creates his own society with a specific agenda. The ultimate opinion of their work does not necessarily coincide with the opinions or even practicality of other people or cultural groups.

Most modern works that question utopian ideals are dystopias which criticize the inflexibility of the former. For this reason, dystopias serve the same function as utopias. They both attempt to drive at basic inalienable rights that all people or groups of people need for happiness and or freedom. Utopias set the conditions of an ideal order by taking a macroscopic perspective on a fully functioning society. They look at the overall collaboration of a group and what it needs to facilitate a fully functioning, healthy social order. Utopias allow for “...a free play of imagination in its indefinite expansion measured only by the desire, itself infinite, of happiness...” (Marin 403). At the same time, optimistic utopian thinkers can often neglect the more insidious idea that utopias are a “...closed totality rigorously coded by all the constraints and obligations of the law binding and closing a place with insuperable frontiers that would guarantee its harmonious functioning” (Marin 403-4). Especially in light of the social climate of the mid-twentieth century, authors began to
explore utopian themes with an antecedent approach. With their closer investigation, they can reveal certain faults with utopian thought through their dystopic scenarios. Utopias and dystopias, therefore, have a yin and yang relationship. Each one needs the other to create a balance and to get closer to a somewhat harmoniously practicable answer.

Dystopias take the rules established for the sake of the group, and look at them from a microscopic perspective—through the eyes of one person—to see why certain premises that work for a group do not serve an individual in the same way. Dystopias also look at the private life of an individual to determine whether life is worth living in the socio-political-economic climate imagined by utopian philosophers.

I begin this research with the idea that every person has basic needs like food, shelter, and clothing which higher powers must safeguard. People regardless of social class have a right to their bodily necessities. While conducting this research, I kept in mind Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. The bottom two tiers of his hierarchy pertain to the sheer survival of a human being. If a person has a right to life as More and Rousseau argue, then the items in the lower-most categories must be guaranteed to every person. Both physiological needs and safety needs should be the highest concern of a responsible government for its citizens—laws and those in charge of a group of people have a responsibility to ensure that every person has security in employment, resources, and property because people must share all of these things with one another.

In his studies of healthy psychological individuals, Maslow noted that “[h]uman beings have an innate tendency to move toward higher levels of health, creativity, and self-fulfillment” (Maslow xxxv). Once people no longer have to worry about basic needs, they naturally seek to satiate mental needs, ascending the hierarchy until they have created a life where they feel physically secure and mentally confident. As we will see throughout this thesis, most utopias and all dystopias fail to provide for the needs of their people by obstructing the path to higher fulfillment. Dystopic governments generally commit this error because they have misplaced priorities, stunting the development of their citizens for the sake of a one-dimensional, group-oriented way of life. As a result, these citizens develop certain neuroses, which “...may be regarded as a blockage of the tendency toward self-actualization” (Maslow xxxv). In light of these neuroses, the struggles of oppressed citizens outweigh the benefits of a government which only provides for their physical needs.
Beyond the initial needs of food and shelter for which utopian governments often account, a person tends to consider personal desires and goals. The work completed by Professor Gordon Mathews best explains how a person relates to the top-tier psychological needs of Maslow’s hierarchy. Mathews’s work pertains to the idea behind the Japanese word, ikigai for which there is no direct translation into English, but it comes closest to what we would call, “that which makes our life most worth living.” It represents one’s meaning of life (as defined by the individual) rather than The meaning of life (which pertains to the purpose of a larger group of people).

People who begin a self-actualization process tend to want goals that pertain to their higher purpose in life. Through his studies, Mathews narrows down these goals into four categories: religious, career, familial, and creative. His book, What Makes Life Worth Living?, studies one Eastern culture, Japan, and one Western culture, the United States, to show how one can find the aforementioned four basic drives cross-culturally. People in most cultures (if not all cultures) dedicate themselves to something that falls into one of these four categories. The ability of an individual to achieve goals within his life-pursuit (ikigai) affects his sense of satisfaction within a community. A government which regulates or attempts to rid its people of the importance of any one of these categories does its citizens a disfavor because that action stunts the personal growth of the individual within the group. To the same effect, if a government limits the individual’s ability to choose and change his ikigai, then the person will also suffer because, “…it is not the end, but the very beginning of the pursuit of a life worth living” (Mathews 6). Family and social situations generally channel an individual into valuing one particular ikigai over another. Over one’s lifetime, his priorities and passions change, and so he needs the fluidity to change according to his own needs. Generally, utopian and dystopian governments try to pigeonhole someone into a single role.

Having set the intellectual underpinnings pertaining to the needs of people and for a fluid social life, the rest of this thesis is divided into two sections, one which focuses on prominent utopian works and the other on dystopian fictions to foil the social arrangements created in the first section. Then it concludes with what I have gleaned from a comparison of philosophy and fiction, reviewing their successes or failures while associating them with the fundamental and existential needs of humans.
CHAPTER 2

UTOPIAS

To best understand the needs of the group, a “...utopian writer looks at the ritual habits of his own society and tries to see what society would be like if these ritual habits were made more consistent and more inclusive” (Manuel 39). Surely, one cannot separate the writer from his contemporary, socio-political atmosphere. However, regardless of the differences between now and the times of classical utopian writers, their works remain relevant to current scholarship because utopian writers seek to transcend certain political, social, and economic realities by responding to them in a creative manner (Shiviah 305). How can we best cooperate to attain what we all need? To what extent should people cooperate with one another? What is fair within the context of their cooperation?

For the sake of this thesis, I study traditional utopias which laid the foundation for most subsequent utopian thought. The following works I present in this section come in chronological order since some of the philosophical ideas influence later works. First, I begin with Plato’s Republic, then More’s Utopia, followed by Rousseau’s The Social Contract. These three works focus on the political philosophies that best govern groups of people. Next, I use Francis Bacon’s New Atlantis, where society uses technology as the central means of maintaining peace and fraternity. All of these works focus more on the dynamic of the overall government without concerns for the specific actions of the individual, but more recent works began to shift attention to the lives of people within the group (Collins 356). Finally, I incorporate B. F. Skinner’s twentieth-century work, Walden Two where he focuses on behavioral psychology imposed on individuals as a means of creating an ideal state.

2.1 Republic

One of the precursors to subsequent utopian novels is Plato’s work, Republic, written in 380 BC where Socrates, on his way home from a festival dedicated to the goddess of Arston, stops at the house of Polemachus to discuss philosophies of justice with other philosophers. The young philosophers want to know if it is truly rewarding to be just for
justice’s sake or whether an unjust person, who lies, steals, and murders, might feel at least as happy as a truthful person. Socrates creates a city with the perfect environment for the honest individual with strong guardians, content tradesmen, and enlightened philosophers. It is a state where society recognizes and rewards virtuous individuals. A just man has all he needs to survive while the group dynamic fuels order and justice for all, and “[t]o fulfill its ideal, Plato makes his Republic immune to change: once formed, the pattern of order remains static, as in the insect societies to which it bears resemblance” (Manuel 7). In his Republic, Plato prioritizes a homeostasis by creating cultural norms and laws that maintain his prescribed social order, which perpetuates a warrior class at the expense of self-determined individuals and cultural evolution. (As I will discuss later while investigating dystopias, the nature of a static society like this one can actually impede the individual’s ability to develop as a healthy social being.)

To form his ideal unchanging Republic, Socrates elaborates to include certain embellishments—not only drink, but good drink, not only food, but good food. He justifies that men need to conquer surrounding territories to furnish their desires. Socrates, therefore, only creates a citizen who seeks to satiate his own basic needs, which means that a citizen in his Republic, “…seems to think that his good is the satisfaction of his desires and tries to make his choices accordingly” (Santas 68). Socrates only acknowledges a person’s material desires and belittles the importance of any others. Bearing this in mind, it would seem as though the justice in Socrates’s Republic can only be of a type where people recognize their immediate needs and seek to satiate them regardless of the resources available within their own state’s boundaries.

One might find it surprising that Socrates would, even in his fantasy, create a world where pleasures and desires necessitate war. Socrates recognizes a scarcity of resources within his society, which the authors of many subsequent utopian works choose to neglect. By its own means, Socrates’s city already cannot furnish its citizens with their desires. Thus, his city needs an army (or guardians rather) to expand its frontiers, collect more resources, and to protect the citizens. Socrates in Plato’s Republic does not exclude war from an ideal society. Instead, he elevates it to an imperative part of his city where a government of philosopher-kings manipulates guardians and other citizens by controlling their free will and access to knowledge so that they become ideal warriors.
Through an education based on exclusion, the philosophers want to create a curriculum where the guardians grow up fully devoted to the state. Most citizens have an education that “… has two divisions, gymnastics for the body, and music for the soul” (Plato 62). Of course, Socrates cares about the health and physical fitness of his citizens, but for their mental development, he intends that music (which consists of more than songs and lyrics) should account for the rest of a person’s education. Socrates’s curriculum seeks to create a perfect guardian—one who does not question the motives or imperfections of his city and its people. Thus, the state does not permit its citizens to hear stories that would make them see any fallibility in gods, the state, or in their fellow men. Guardians must only see their world through arts which portray it as perfect and unwavering providing the state with an ideal mode of indoctrination. With an education limited to propagandistic and passionless stories, people easily succumb to the whims of their state without question. By these means, the state can easily condition fierce warriors who fight any war without hesitation.

Though the group takes precedence over the needs of the individual in this case, as we will discuss later, Socrates still provides individuals of his state with some basic pleasures like food and drink while he denies them other ones. It seems arbitrary, here, that Socrates would deprive most of his citizens the pleasure of intellectual pursuits while providing them with extra bodily pleasures like good food. By this reasoning, he prioritizes the right of every man to nourishing, luxurious foods, but he seems to believe that only a few people should have access to higher intellectual stimulation. Limiting education also limits the horizons of individuals as it prevents them from attaining any interest in a discipline other than the one they perform. However, if curiosity is innate in a healthy individual, as Maslow states, providing pleasurable foods and certain luxuries to individuals at the expense of intellectual pursuits does citizens a disservice because it still deprives them of a natural need to explore.

The state limits the scope of an individual’s education not only in the warrior class but in most others. In Socrates’s society, a man must have education and training according to his only function. Each person only learns one specific trade, for, in a just society, a man focuses on one duty:

And this is the reason why in [his] State, and in [his] state only, [Socrates and the others] shall find a shoemaker to be a shoemaker and not a pilot also, and a husbandman to be a husbandman and not a dicast also, and a soldier a soldier and not a trader also… (Plato 90)
Ideally, one man with one art functions at maximum efficiency. The reader can find a just state in the simplicity of a person’s contribution to the efforts of the whole, whereby a person serves as a single, functioning component in a group of other men who each serve complementary functions to fulfill the needs of the whole state. By Socrates’s logic, a citizen may not have any other pursuits than his own vocation so that he may live without conflicts of interest that arise from learning new arts or disciplines. With respect to the city, this rule determines the fate of the individual and keeps him in one social stratum for the entirety of his life. Therefore, the will of the group overpowers the individual because “… [the] aim in founding the State [is] not the disproportionate happiness of any class, but the greatest happiness of the whole…” (Plato 116). Just like a puzzle that fits together, every man functions as a small piece of the whole, and, though every piece is important, it only fits in one place and nowhere else.

Socrates expresses here that a society which attends to the basic needs of man has no express freedoms or inclination for the happiness of a single person. Socrates perceives that giving any priority to the desires of the individual conflicts with the interests, health, and function of the entire group, and, as we will see later, this actually hinders group function. As long as farmers are farmers and not soldiers or metal workers, then his theory works within the conventions of a clearly defined social order; the society Socrates creates is not convoluted with the shifting desires of citizens as singular entities. Unfortunately, his state does not maintain the happiness or self-determination of the individual since it assigns men a specific role, mechanizing their actions much like later dystopic societies.

With people who do not deviate from their ascribed duties, Socrates structures his society with the intention that no class gains unwarranted wealth or power over other classes since such disproportionate allocations of wealth could disturb the established, peaceful order just as knowledge does. Socrates bases the order of his society on the respective disciplines of three occupations within his city. The philosopher-kings, the guardians, and the craftsmen all perform a particular role to ensure internal peace of the Republic. Gerasimos Santas, like other scholars, believes that one can divide the functions of a person’s soul into individual similar parts that reflect the functions of the entire city. The philosopher kings represent a person’s ability to reason. Guardians represent a person’s high-spiritedness, and the craftsmen represent the desire to provide for one’s own needs. By necessitating the rigidity of
a person’s role within a city, Socrates limits the respective functions of the soul as well. If a person’s soul shifts out of balance in favor of any particular trait over another, the result will be an inordinate pleasure-seeking tendency. For this reason, readers might best err on the interpretation of scholars like Nicholas Smith, who believes that Socrates’s analogy of the soul and state is quite fallible in its development. One cannot easily distinguish how a man’s desires fall into three distinct parts of a person’s soul, since an individual can usually have multiple motives for fulfilling a desire.

When people seek excessive pleasures, for whatever motive, they also tend to covet power. This tendency generally affects that person’s ability to participate in a society where justice and virtue comprise integral parts of the foundations of government. As some people attain wealth, they

... grow richer and richer, and the more they think of making a fortune the less they think of virtue; for when riches and virtue are placed together in the scales of the balance the one always rises as the other falls. (Plato 276)

By extrapolation, Socrates seems to reason that people who desire wealth and power in many cases end up governing the state. Thus, they gain an interest in acquiring wealth instead of ruling justly. They could even use their power to skew the existing balance of his established order. Socrates draws upon the idea that virtue and wealth have an inverse relationship where scales that tip in favor of wealth lead to the corruption of an ideal state. Certainly, any man who becomes too greedy loses one of the primary traits that every honest citizen needs in this Republic—temperance. A person who lives in moderation has a balanced life without excessive addictions or greed, which corrupts his soul, and, if individual citizens have more virtue than wealth, the larger social order maintains a balance.

To reinforce the fragile, static balance of his state, Socrates accounts for the legislation of his state which brings us back to the question: which laws regulate justice? Socrates answers this question by saying,

...when men have both done and suffered injustice and have had experience of both, not being able to avoid the one and obtain the other, they think that they had better agree among themselves to have neither; hence, there arise laws and mutual covenants; and that which is obtained by law is termed by them lawful and just. This they affirm to be the origin and nature of justice; it is a mean or a compromise, between the best of all, which is to do injustice and not be punished, and the worst of all, which is to suffer injustice without the power of retaliation... (Plato 40-41)
The agreement made for their greater good gives individual citizens reasons for covenants and social orders so that they do not need to worry about helplessness on the occasion when others take advantage of them. The state that a government constitutes, then, defines justice, and the people agree upon a definition for the sake of a greater good. Laws and mutual covenants come from large groups of people who desire a common understanding and a definition of fairness. By defining fairness, the group can make rules according to precedents, so when a specific person breaks a rule, he also faces a designated consequence for transgressing the order, a principle that certainly falls under the purview of justice.

But the power obtained by a governing body does not ensure that it rules justly, enabling the state to function in its best capacity. A conglomeration of people necessitates some form of legislation, but laws do not sufficiently solve all potential problems in a society. Though these people might want to make more laws specifying their intent for the state, more rules do not always do as their creators intend. It seems that governments

… are always fancying that by legislation they will make an end of frauds in contracts, and the other rascalities… not knowing that they are in reality cutting off the heads of a hydra… (Plato 124)

Laws, in a perfectly formed state, naturally flow from one to another whereas a disordered state must constantly create new laws without addressing the root of its citizens’ propensity for defying previous ones. Whenever a government creates laws, even if they restrict the occurrences of injustice, the new laws can create even more loopholes, which do a disservice to the quest for a just society. However, in an orderly state, each rule only slightly alters the one before it, and the citizens do not have any problems following the laws created within a perfect society. Laws and covenants, thus, remain simple and minimal. The government cannot force its people to follow every law, but a culture can condition people against a propensity to defy laws. Then who rules and conditions people in Socrates’s state?

The philosophers do. They get to ascend from the cave where idealistic lies created by the state bind citizens to a dark, truthless world of shadows. This experience forms the philosophers into the best ruling class because their desire for knowledge, truth, and fairness outweighs their interest in tyranny and hunger for power. However, as seekers of truth, who have no interest in power, they have no internal drive to descend back into the cave: “…they must be made to descend again among the prisoners in the den, and partake of their labors and honors, whether they are worth having or not” (Plato 230). Though the philosophers have
the privilege of studying arts (they get to “see the light” to which Plato’s cave allegory alludes) even they, as administrators, do not have the right to pursue a life of purely scholastic ends.

Philosopher-kings must live among the citizens of the state—constantly observing them and controlling the lives of the people—so that the state operates according to the norms that Socrates creates. The quest for knowledge by a minority thus factors into the societal ideal and serves as a function of maintaining the original construction of the city. Socrates seems to rely on philosophers to rule because he assumes that the quest for knowledge and truth gives them the ability to see a bigger picture where they can control the actions of the citizens, engineering conformity that reinforces the foundation of the state that does not and cannot change because this state thrives in a delicate balance that perpetuates the harmony of the group.

In general, the citizens are not truly or intellectually liberated in Socrates’s city. In Socrates’s mind, this maintains a balance between liberty and slavery because “The excess of liberty, whether in States or individuals, seems only to pass into excess of slavery” (Plato 283). Socrates, through his rhetoric, sees that he has balanced the scales of liberty and slavery. The city, as an extension of the individual soul, must walk a fine line between liberty and slavery because the scales could easily tip in either direction on a whim. When they do, the citizens become slaves to their social order which is why Socrates’s society only functions as long as men maintain a hive-like mentality. Thus, it would seem that no single person, by himself, attains a type of sentient happiness. Perhaps most citizens live in happiness simply because they are ignorant and most do not want more than their prescribed lot in life. The state stunts their personal growth in such a way that the majority of people are not allowed to develop intellectually. Individuals stay naïvely subservient so that

… the happiness [remains] in the whole State, and [the law holds] the citizens together by persuasion and necessity, making [intellectuals] benefactors of the State, and therefore the benefactors of one another to this end [the law] creat[es] them, not to please themselves but to [become government] instruments in binding up the State. (Plato 230)

There exists a balance, then, where the guardians and other citizens do not pursue higher truths, while the philosophers, who preside over them, have the required knowledge which makes them fair rulers. This principle binds all classes together, making their relationship
symbiotic. The citizens need the philosopher-kings to impose fair laws. Meanwhile, the philosophers need the citizens’ support and protection. Therefore, these three classes depend on each other, but people within either class may not cross to the other side.

Through the creation of a symbiotic relationship between all three sectors of his society, Socrates’s Republic neglects man’s propensity to assign a hierarchical status to various roles in a social order. Socrates does not create any system of checks and balances to prevent philosopher kings from abusing their power even though the dependence Socrates orchestrates between the roles played by men shows that he does not want to create any class that is explicitly more important than any other. It seems as though Socrates thinks that philosopher-kings will not become corrupt if they are forced to rule, and since they dedicate themselves to truth, they will not get carried away and abuse their power.

It would seem that among all of the regulations and relationships where the needs of the group weigh down upon the individual, we can at least take solace in the idea that, in a well-ordered state, “…when any one of the citizens experiences any good or evil, the whole State will make his case their own, and will either rejoice or sorrow with him…” (Plato 166). Using the symbiotic bonds of the citizen soldier, the civilian citizens, and the philosopher-kings, Socrates wants to set up a state of honest men, and he wants to make them empathetic to one another. Despite the fact that the entire group holds priority over the individual, people still concern themselves with the feelings of that person.

The operative pillar of Plato’s Republic that prevents it from changing is the lack of self-determination in the individual. Instead, the state treats him as if he is a bee in a hive that must perform his specific duty without question and without consideration for his needs beyond his primary function. True, this society sets a unique precedent among gender equality since it does state that women as well as men can hold public office and fight as guardians of the state. Women may perform any task that men do. In light of gender equality, people can only dedicate themselves to their occupation. They do not have the ability to dedicate themselves to a family life. In Socrates’s state, no one has the privilege of creating strong familial bonds because they might conflict with the interests of the state.

Socrates has arranged the relations of men and women in such a way that more courageous, successful people get more sex than people who do not have those traits. When couples do procreate, they do so by a fixed lottery, which arranges couples according to their
strength. By these means, leaders of a perfect state can use eugenics to create more perfect citizens. To further obscure family ties, the Republic trades children among mothers so that one mother will not know the identity of her own child. Such an abolishment of the family conceivably makes incest possible, so people do not have the freedom to choose their own bonds, either filial or familial, since philosopher-kings secretly choreograph and engineer the relationships people build as well as the knowledge they attain. Many other utopian and dystopian writers elaborate on this idea.

Thus, Plato’s *Republic* largely depends on misdirection to maintain a status quo for the good of a group over the self-realization of the individual. By controlling what they learn and with whom they procreate, the government stifles the abilities of people to make their own decisions, which prevents them from growing on their own terms. Socrates seems to think that a person who can control his own life would ultimately change or undermine his order of society.

Therefore, Plato has constructed his *Republic* so that its rules and norms perpetuate a society that does not change its morals or priorities. By reminding his audience of the shortcomings of the delivery of his argument, “Plato cautions his readers that his arguments must be taken with a grain of salt” (Smith 17). This reasoning would lead his audience to believe that he does not take the practicability of his *Republic* seriously. It is merely an exploration of justice as it relates to people. *Utopia*, by Sir Thomas More, also depicts a society with an established, unchanging social order. More also seems to allude to the impracticability of his state. However, unlike Plato’s *Republic*, Utopia’s citizens enjoy high arts that are not censored according to the whims of the government.

### 2.2 UTOPIA

In 1516, Sir Thomas More published a novel, *Utopia*, which he divided into two books to show his ideal socio-political philosophy where one man, Raphael Hythloday, has traveled to a land very different from his European one. In the first book, Hythloday discusses the conditions of Europe where many men must suffer harsh, unfair punishments and where kings waste money on wars that do not compensate for their fiscal or social costs. It serves as a discourse on the state of European affairs current to More’s era.
Hythloday initiates a conversation where he condemns the punishment of thieves. He reasons that thieves generally steal out of necessity, because they are hungry, which he blames on the creation of private property via the enclosure movement. Hythloday reasons that these men need only a better place in society. According to him, the state must punish its criminals for the sake of their rehabilitation so that they might still have a productive role in society. He also reasons that if a man faces the death penalty or some form of harsh punishment for committing a crime, then the criminal becomes more violent towards his victim and other witnesses. Therefore, by ensuring the right to life for all people, a society can prevent crimes such as murder in cases where the criminal does not intend to physically harm his victim. Lighter punishments make it less likely that citizens commit crimes out of desperation.

More uses the ideas in the first book as a preamble to set a tone, which states a concern for how a government should organize men. The second book of Utopia represents an extension of More’s values: indifference to greed, a fair division of labor, development of the arts, Christian morality/chastity, well-defined consequences for lawbreakers, and an aptitude for warfare. To him, a combination of all these things provides citizens with an ideal society where they can happily thrive.

With his critique of European society in mind, More presents the second book as a detailed work describing the customs of people in the land of Utopia where all of the aforementioned qualities are apparent. It portrays Utopian living situations, how citizens spend most of their time, the punishments of people who transgress the laws, and their stance on money and wealth. The entirety of book two pertains to a land, “utopia,” which translates from the Greek language to “nowhere.” It suggests that More does not take his fantastical Utopia as any kind of reality achievable in the near future. Rather, his work ruminates over the possibilities of his ideal life. Though James Nendza reasons that the specific feelings of More are not clear, especially since he delivers his prose in the form of a dialogue, he also discusses how More intends for his work “to show the limits of reasonable change and especially the dangers attached to the desire for radical change—the danger of what might be called political idealism” (Nendza 430). Nendza reasons that the dangers of political idealism reveal themselves with a close examination of the logistical defects of Utopian society. Among these defects are the complete imposition of function over beauty and the suppression
of high-spiritedness so much so that people do not even slaughter their own meat, which constitutes a major part of their diet.

If the reader wants to look beyond these apparent deficiencies, he must believe in the possibility of two main premises so this society can function in an idealistic manner. First, the reader must understand that Utopia has solved all issues pertaining to the acquisition of necessary resources. (Utopia is an abundant land where people do not worry about their physical needs since the land has enough for everyone.) Because the land has ample resources, every person has a right to what he needs: “…why should anything be denied unto him, seeing there is abundance of all things and that it is not to be feared lest any man will ask more than he needeth?” (More 78). Thus, every person is satiated because the land and the government have the capacity to give citizens enough food, shelter, and clothing. Unlike Plato’s Republic, More does not rely on the conquest of other lands to extract the products needed to furnish a comfortable life for its people.

Secondly, the reader must suspend any disbelief in the idea that people do not desire more than they need. By nature, Utopians are not greedy. Therefore, men likely take no more than they need because they do not fear scarcity. Perhaps More believes that the anxiety caused by scarcity contributes to greed and corruption. When a person does not worry about scarcity, More seems to think that he would not be greedy. Other than this possibility, More does not explicitly detail how citizens of Utopia live a temperate life. However, it would seem to suggest that under the correct circumstances corruption and greed do not occur naturally in men. They can control their desires, pridefulness, and sinfulness. Generally, the men in Utopia

…embrace chiefly the pleasures of the mind. For them they count the chiefest and most principal of all. The chief part of them they think doth come of the exercise of virtue and conscience of good life. Of these pleasures that the body ministereth, they give the preeminence to health. (More 101)

Because every person works, individuals work fewer hours on the whole. They have the ability to live in moderation, without pride, and they enjoy a life where health and leisure take precedence over toiling long hours. The citizens generally spend their free time reading or appreciating high arts like music. More projects onto these citizens a kind of spirit, perhaps not inherent in man, but fostered by their culture through an established culture that enculturates people to desire this way of life. (As I will later discuss, Skinner exaggerates
such enculturation in *Walden Two*, focusing on how planners can use psychology to this end).

Unfortunately, More’s *Utopia* does not explicitly outline the reasons why Utopians tend towards an honest, moderate life. David Bleich, in his book, *Utopia: The Psychology of a Cultural Fantasy*, gives a potential reason for the unexplained cultural norm by deducing that More’s “...humanist impulse became allied with his repressed commitment to orthodoxy in opposition to the brutality and extravagant cruelty of public, political life with all its vicious fighting, intrigue, and foreign wars” (Bleich 22). Since he wanted to draw attention to the excessive cruelties of seventeenth century Europe, More perhaps grazes over the specificities required to condition men into temperate beings. The result of his (perhaps strategic) negligence provides readers with the juxtaposition of the harsh nature of Europe presented in book one with the superficially pleasant way of life of Utopia in book two. One aspect of Utopian society to consider within the context of seventeenth century Europe is the concept of religious tolerance.

Utopians do not have a specific religion, they still believe in a god and in heaven. I have already mentioned that their ample resources perhaps prevent circumstances for excess pride and competition, religion could also provide people with another means of suppressing their excessive desires. When it comes to the specificity of religion, Utopians have the sovereign power to determine how they practice a theistic worship. Utopian government seeks to ensure “…that no man shall be blamed for reasoning in the maintenance of his own religion” (More 129). Of course, More implicitly assumes that every man will have at least some form of theistic religion. Men in Utopia do believe that one can attain a pleasant after-life through virtue. As a devoutly religious man himself, the author imposes religious values on the land of Utopia (Kessler). He perceives both a need for religion and the temperate nature of men under a religious order. Though this state has religious freedoms, More imposes Christian morality on Utopians. The culture still values the chaste conventions of Christianity. Utopia does not allow promiscuity and prostitution. People are by no means sexually liberated, and the government harshly punishes any type of sexual transgression against the social norm. They value chastity and fidelity, often punishing unchaste adulterers harshly. Ironically, Utopia punishes adulterers with death upon their second offense, which speaks to More’s religious values since he seems initially opposed to the death penalty when
used to deter theft (Nendza). His lack of sympathy for sexual deviance leads the reader to believe that he still holds rigid Judeo-Christian beliefs despite his progressive stance on religious tolerance and coexistence. For other crimes, More’s Utopia proposes that the state punishes criminals by compulsory servitude (or slavery) where former criminals do community service in lieu of capital punishment.

However, the natural religious inclination of Utopia’s citizens does not act as its only form of government. They do have a form of government where families elect a representative, and each of these representatives helps to elect rulers while taking care of legislative matters. Aside from their representative government, Utopians live a mostly communistic life. To some extent, people have a sense of ownership; they treat the objects in their possession well despite the fact that lands and houses do change hands often. The citizens in Utopia, while they live in a particular place, make improvements on it so that the majority of the houses have an eclectic aesthetic while they still function well as living quarters.

People in Utopia dress alike in functional, practical materials that muddle the differences between members of different social strata. The single style of dress means that no citizen appears more important than another by means of clothing. More seeks to keep the citizens in Utopia from the type of conspicuous consumption that people would display through their vestments for others to revere. It does not even occur to the people in Utopia that they should differentiate themselves from one another. Therefore, people only use clothing for protection and warmth rather than for any superficial reason.

Aside from their clothing and housing, Utopians share quality meals together in a large eating hall. All of these things make their social life quite communal as they share spaces, styles, and food with one another. More answers Plato’s question, which ponders the formation of a just state, with a sense of community where people live in a just state based on equality and similarity. This leads Hythloday to ask,

For what justice is this, that a rich goldsmith, or an usurer, or, to be short, any of them which either do nothing at all, or else that which they do is such that it is not very necessary to the commonwealth, should have a pleasant and a wealthy living either by idleness or by unnecessary business, when in the meantime poor laborers, carters, ironsmiths, carpenters, and plowmen, by so great and continual toil as drawing and bearing beasts be scant able to sustain, and again so necessary toil that without it no commonwealth were able to continue and endure one year,
should yet get so hard and poor a living, and live so wretched and miserable a life, that the state and conditioning of laboring beasts may seem much better and wealthier? (More 142)

The labor structure of *Utopia* rests on the work of every person. Thomas More has set up an ideal society where all people contribute their labor to the community regardless of social status (though he does exclude clergymen and some women from compulsory labor). Otherwise, More sees it as unfair that men should exploit the labors of other people, creating resources which more privileged people use without contributing their labor to Utopia’s workforce. Unlike Plato, More gives his citizens a little more malleability in what they can do. He allows them the ability to learn multiple trades. More in his *Utopia* has created a place where every man has a right to what he needs, and he can learn other trades as well, while cultural norms discourage greed and idleness because they do not fit in a just state. As long as every man contributes to his community, he has the same privileges as all other people.

People in *Utopia* must each serve their function (or functions) rather than create social classes based on wealth. In fact, wealth, as we see it today and as the Europeans saw it in More’s time, is superfluous to the Utopians. Perhaps one of the most famous passages in More’s *Utopia* discusses how Utopians use gold and jewels where “Utopians devised one of their most ingenious and famous methods of inculcating their culture's values in their citizens: using precious metals only for the most humble, dishonorable, and even disgusting purposes...” (Shepard 846). Children use these as toys, and dressing in these materials displays one’s lower status since these materials do not function as well as linen and wool. However, upon investigation, Utopians, with respect to their notions of wealth, are not significantly different from their European counterparts. Using gold to show one’s low status is merely a kind of role reversal. Accordingly, precious stones and metals are still used to distinguish status, which shows that Utopians have not yet transcended the notion of status in general.

Though they still might have an interest in status, Utopians have, however, transcended the use of precious metals and stones as a domestic monetary system.

For who knoweth not that fraud, theft, ravin, brawling, quarreling, brabbling, strife, chiding, contention, murder, treason, poisoning, which by daily punishments are rather revenged than refrained, do die when money dieth? Yea, poverty itself, which only seemed to lack money, if money were gone, it also would decrease and vanish away. (More 144)
Since people have a right to what they need, and because they receive shelter from the government, they do not have a necessity for money. By ridding the Utopians of a monetary burden, More seems to rid this society of the dangers which go along with a monetary system. By his reasoning, people avoid most undesirable interactions when they view money as unimportant. More seems to think that money causes many heinous crimes like murder and treason. Therefore, Utopians only use money in foreign policy as a means of trade or help in warfare. With respect to warfare, Utopia uses the utmost tact in dealing with its friends and enemies. It uses mercenaries, spies, and any other means to decisively dismantle its enemies so that it has a high chance of winning without losing men in battle.

Utopia, as a land of surplus resources and happy, content people, establishes these traits of an ideal society where religious values serve as a backdrop. Sir Francis Bacon’s *New Atlantis* also has content men who want for not. Instead of exclusively valuing religion and art though, the government primarily focuses on science and technology to motivate the goodwill of the people. Unlike More’s *Utopia*, Bacon’s *New Atlantis* still has a “... Christian theme of conversion to Christ [that] is reconstituted into faith in progress” (Faulkner 118). Whereas More still alludes to a religious society with Christian values, Bacon first acknowledges religion, but he then displaces it with science.

### 2.3 NEW ATLANTIS

In 1624, Sir Francis Bacon completed his work, *New Atlantis*, which tells the story of a European ship, once lost at sea, that finds a utopian society, Bensalem, which “…is a combination of Hebrew words (ben, shalem) meaning ‘son or offspring of peace, safety, and completeness’” (Bacon 46). The name itself reflects the virtues within Bensalem (peace, safety, and completeness). Bacon uses European narrators emphasize the hospitality of their hosts, who have rescued them and nursed them back to health.

On the surface, Bacon’s society is a Judeo-Christian one that also holds scientific discovery and reason in high esteem. Because they are such a peaceful and well-organized state, they have many resources which they share with the foreign, wayward sailors in need. With respect to resources, *New Atlantis* parallels *Utopia* since both have more than enough to provide their citizens with nourishment. Bacon’s *New Atlantis* mirrors the excess optimism of enlightenment principles where the author relies on logic, scientific reasoning, and
technological developments to create goodwill towards men. Therefore, “Bacon turns the hope for water of paradise to a chemical compound and away from holy water” (Faulkner 131). Though his work mentions a reverence for God, and though Bacon credits his search of enlightenment to a religious quest, evidence in his plot and diction shows his obvious preference of science over religion.

Science is to Bacon as religion is to More. Science holds Bacon’s community together and pushes it forward. Since Bacon comes from an age where scientific discovery often undermines people’s views on religion, he includes a love of God in his work to maintain his religious audience. Thus, New Atlantians have no conflicts with exploring the nature of their environment since the knowledge they acquire reveals the beauty of the things they assume were created by God. Bacon bypasses the conflict between religion and science because he wants to emphasize the importance of technological development in his ideal society.

What little government exists in New Atlantis presides over its people with benevolence and good will. As a technocratic society, and not a specifically political or religious one, Bacon explains few laws in New Atlantis which dictate the rights of the people. Bacon does not define how a benevolent form of government was created, but one of their founding kings set a standard of brotherly love and honesty because, “This king had a large heart, inscrutable for good, and was wholly bent to make his kingdom and people happy” (Bacon 56). When the king is not corrupt, his court and the citizens of the state are less likely to follow suit. A king, being only concerned with the well-being of his people, sets a strong foundation for New Atlantis based on science, which strengthens his subjects as well as the state so that it might last for thousands of years. “...the government that operates efficiently behind the scenes...The government is not rulers however, so much as an institution fixed by fundamental law” (Faulkner 135). Unfortunately, Bacon never addresses how a government maintains its fairness and benevolence. What little clues he gives seems to rely on the precedent set by the first king, but the book in its current state shows a preoccupation with the pursuit of an ideal society through scientific discovery rather than through political or religious development. Aside from the lack of political development, two basic ideas provide readers with evidence that leads to this interpretation.
First, the expressed value system within Bacon’s *New Atlantis* shows European visitors that:

[They] maintain a trade, not for gold, silver or jewels; nor for silks; nor for spices; nor for any other commodity of matter; but only for God’s first creature, which was *Light*: to have light. (Bacon 58)

Religion to them is the façade of their science. Rather than focusing on church services and prayer, the quest for light dominates the time of New Atlantians. As the noblest foundation, New Atlantis prizes the quest for knowledge as a virtue. Light, as God’s first creature, shifts the paradigm of the seventeenth-century readers of *New Atlantis*. Light is important here because it placates to the perceived need for God in a society while also referring to science. Illumination both by means of religion and by research makes this utopian society unique. The aforementioned passage shows people who have a strong religious foundation that the sciences in *New Atlantis* do not conflict with the rulings of God or with a pious life. In fact, New Atlantis, founded by religious figures just after the purported ascension of Jesus, (which establishes religious credibility) values scientific discovery over their European contemporaries, who valued objects like fine metals, materials, and exotic spices. New Atlantis shares the commonality with Utopia, though, where conventional items which Europeans value do not have the same allure to people in a society where they take precious items for granted, assigning higher value to other endeavors. Specific to *New Atlantis* in this utopian milieu is the quest for knowledge. *New Atlantis* thus represents a knowledge economy where these citizens value information over material wealth.

Secondly, as stated by David Spitz, of the three interactions with the priest, two do not allude to the spiritual well-being of the wayward travelers. Spitz notes that:

...where[as] one might have expected a priest who speaks to men who have been twelve months or more on the seas to inquire of their spiritual needs, to offer them communion and mass, to concern himself with the salvation of their souls, this priest addresses himself to none of these things. (Spitz 53)

Bacon’s true intentions behind *New Atlantis* show in when the priest interacts with the men. Even though he utilizes a priest to meet the men as they come to shore, and even though the men see a cross as they approach the island, the priest neglects the formal religious rituals when greeting these men. Instead, he prefers to discuss knowledge and achievements of New Atlantis, seeking first to satiate their mental curiosity rather than any religious needs.
Their discoveries pay off in the end because their technological innovation theoretically allows them to fabricate anything they might want. They use science

… likewise for the imitation of natural mines; and the producing also of new artificial metals, by compositions and materials which [they] use, and lay there for many years… [they] have also means to make divers plants rise by mixtures of earths without seeds; and likewise to make divers new plant, differing from the vulgar; and to make one tree or plant turn into another… [they] have also helps for the sight, far above spectacles and glasses in use. [They] have also glasses and means to see small and minute bodies perfectly and distinctly. (Bacon 72-74, 78)

They can fabricate plants and metals as they desire, which demonstrates that scientific discovery can potentially solve any problem that arises. It would seem as though the technological discoveries made by these people have lead them to master things like alchemy and botany. With advanced knowledge, they have attained an ability to increase their natural resources, perhaps granting them a surplus which they can share with guests. Thus, New Atlantis, like the island of Utopia, has ample resources, which means its citizens can live without anxieties regarding their basic needs. Scientific innovation makes it possible for all of the people in *New Atlantis* to live comfortably.

On top of the scientific discoveries they have made, the New Atlantians have created a means to further investigate and make new discoveries through the use of optics and light. After the scientific discoveries Bacon mentions in *New Atlantis*, he discusses all of the things that people of Bensalem have. They have stones, houses, perfumes, etc., etc. *New Atlantis*, in its incomplete state, operates on the principle that people in these societies must have some fundamental necessities and pleasures to thrive happily, honestly, and peacefully. Once men have satiated their needs, their temperament becomes cordial, peaceful, and generous rather than greedy. This principle also correlates with Utopia. More and Bacon thus seem to think that by providing citizens with many things, novel and necessary, people will not seek more goods. Bacon’s reverence for discovery, and the resulting possessions that people glean from it, demonstrates how:

In the New Atlantis, technique is king: men speculate primarily to exploit and “conquer.” Nature and this exploitation and conquest almost automatically lead to better men and women. It is as if many characteristics of the Fall of Man had been erased: applied knowledge becomes power, but only for good. (Sibley 262)

Even though they have the ability to create resources they need and to manipulate nature according to their whims, they still seek more knowledge. Science manipulates the citizens in
New Atlantis by providing a focal point which makes them subservient and dedicated to development. Science, here, has the same function as religion does in Utopia. Despite technological discoveries, the social order of New Atlantis does not seem to have the propensity for social change. Citizens in this state are so occupied as researchers that they do not seem to have or need outlets in any other social sphere. Bacon presents his society to readers as if it has always been a technocratic society that constantly makes technological advancements as its sole virtue.

Men in these societies are not inclined to want more than they possess because they have so many things already much like More’s economic model of surplus demonstrated in his *Utopia*. One of the representatives who visits the Europeans displays a benevolent, honest disposition exemplified when he notes that “He was a priest, and looked for a priest’s reward: which was our brotherly love and the good of our souls and bodies” (Bacon 46). None of the citizens who visit their guests seek any kind of monetary reward which shows two aspects of the nature of New Atlantians. Firstly, citizens of New Atlantis have no interest in taking anything from any of the men since the citizens already have what they need. Secondly, they genuinely concern themselves with the health of their guests. The priest’s visit demonstrates an act of friendship and peaceful diplomacy.

Even though it is technologically advanced, New Atlantis retains some purity due to its isolation from other lands, which the reader notes when the narrator says, “We well observed those his words, which he formerly spake, that this happy island where we now stood was known to few, and yet knew most of nations of the world” (Bacon 50). New Atlantis manages to stay isolated enough from other countries so that other foreigners do not adulterate the peace of New Atlantis. It has access to other lands, especially their knowledge and technologies, but it retains a kind of virgin pristineness. Bacon’s society shows that people, when dedicating their lives to the quest for knowledge, can live together in prosperity. This fantastical world represents an ideal, perhaps one of the things that many explorers sought while traveling the world: technologically advanced, kind, and religious people who live on lands rich in resources.

As in all other utopias presented in this thesis, all citizens have ample food, clothing, and shelter. With scientific principles established as a core value of the state, Bacon’s rulers do not interfere with other aspects in society. New Atlantians have a religious tolerance, not
common in Europe during the writing of *New Atlantis*, and, with respect to one’s private life, the state does not interfere to the extent that it tells a person how to worship a higher being. The state rarely interferes with the family life of the individual, but if the parents do not approve of a marriage between their children, the state can intervene. The state does heavily subsidize its individuals to ensure that each person has the food and shelter he needs. By focusing on science and discovery, Bacon assures that the fantastical discoveries made by these citizens in *New Atlantis* have provided them with the resources to satiate their needs, and, thus men can live in peace under benevolent rulers.

As J. Weinberger mentions, “Bacon...makes no mention of the human good and the human virtues in connection with the virtue of knowledge in general or natural science in particular” (Weinberger 867). His focus is not on the individual citizens themselves. He seems exclusively interested in technological contributions to mankind in general. Bacon’s *New Atlantis* may not detail how people attained social stability and peace. However, it shows how people under a long-lasting, benevolent government can coexist. But how does a government ensure honesty and benevolence among its rulers? Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *The Social Contract* lays the foundation for how a government and its people can live happily in a fair and free state.

### 2.4 The Social Contract

*The Social Contract* was written in 1762 by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, to propose an ideal, political community with clearly defined rights for every man. Throughout his piece, Rousseau analyzes the relationships between individuals and groups while he compares and contrasts the pros and cons of various forms of government. He also states the importance that each kind of government must safeguard the freedoms of citizens. This section explains that practical applications of *The Social Contract* elude implementation because Rousseau’s reasoning best resembles a snake eating its tail as many cyclical, paradoxical covenants ensure the freedoms of all men. However, unlike *Republic* or *Utopia*, Rousseau’s social order fosters the evolution of culture and a government since it calls for constant evaluation and participation of its citizens and legislative bodies.

Unlike Plato and other political philosophers, Rousseau believes that man is fundamentally a creature of desire, one of “perfectibility.” As Rousseau saw humanity,
people solve problems as role players who will act a part to get what they desire. Operating under this belief, Rousseau wants to find a way that mankind can best live together despite the pleasure-seeking tendencies that cause conflict. Because he believes in the more primal, somewhat selfish nature of a single entity, he sought to wed the individual to the group in such a way that men can be both free and governed civilly because “… the social order is a sacred right which serves as a basis for all other rights. And as it is not a natural right, it must be founded on covenants” (Rousseau 50). There exists no universal, natural social order where men come together to form a perfectly functioning state. For this reason, Rousseau explains that men, when they live in close proximity, need to form agreements designating their ideal conduct so that everyone feels satisfied. Therefore, a government must make agreements and concessions to maintain a fair state and the freedoms of its people. In a review of Rousseau’s ideas, David Hart and Jeffery Thompson state that the social contract theory presumes some set of understood societal obligations by institutions and the people who inhabit them, but does so without examining how people actually construct and make sense of their relationships with one another, with organizations, and with society…. (Hart and Thompson 229)

Rousseau’s negligence in developing his theory with respect to interpersonal relationships within a larger group creates the possibilities for his readers and critics to interject paradoxical relationships between citizens and their form of government. To better define the nature of social contract theories, Rousseau’s argument would have to define the origins of specific relationships that people have with each other within a group. With respect to his deficient exploration of interpersonal relationships, Rousseau’s theory only alludes to constant change according to the needs and desires of the people, but it does not show how the covenants between these people change.

In the context of these covenants, he wonders how humanity relates to men: “… it is doubtful whether humanity belongs to a hundred men or whether these hundred men belong to humanity…” (Rousseau 51). Does the group dynamic (culture) define the natural state of humanity, or does the group always reflect human nature? The Social Contract addresses potential solutions to restrain greed and the pleasure-seeking traits that tyrannically govern people’s actions. He believes that people inherently have these traits, but he also thinks that a series of compromises can help control people so they realize the ideal social climate for all. The covenants created by man belong to the group, but the group also belongs to the
covenants they create. As conventional forms of unfair government exist, or as they have existed, men within a state are dependent upon the whims of their despots rather than the agreements they make with one another leaving them subservient to the unfair dictums of the state.

If a government does not reflect the needs of an individual, the individual’s actions become insignificant. Since he is not the master of himself, “… if you take away all freedom of the will, you strip a man’s actions of all moral significance” (Rousseau 55). Therefore, with freedom comes moral validity and moral responsibility. People, when forced to submit to others, abdicate their freedom, and, thus, have no morality since they do not control their own actions. These thoughts correlate with the introductory sentiment which Rousseau uses in the beginning of this book; it states that people are naturally born free. Only one’s status in his culture gives and takes his natural freedoms according to the rules of the established government.

But Rousseau’s *The Social Contract* has paradoxical reasoning. How does someone maintain his overall sovereignty while living together peacefully with other people? Rousseau’s answer to this question involves the creation of a “general will”: “…since each man gives himself to all, he gives himself to no one… each one of us puts into the community his person and all his powers under the supreme direction of the general will; and as a body, we incorporate every member as an indivisible part of the whole” (Rousseau 61). This appears to parallel the thoughts of Plato, who says that an ideal society retains its sensitivity to the needs of the individual, for every person comprises an integral part of the just state.

In Rousseau’s philosophy, a person must abdicate himself and his freedoms to the group (i.e., the general will). He lives peacefully alongside his fellow men and receives his freedoms back from his state.

Rousseau's problem thus takes the form of an apparent paradox: any sensible idea of moral virtue must be one which “conforms to our nature”; and yet, as stated most forcefully in the ...the Social Contract, a man can only be virtuous if he...has learned to subordinate his natural inclination toward private pleasure to whatever virtue might prescribe as a guide to action. (Salkever 33)

True, the citizen must give himself to his society and not to any man in particular, neither a king, nor a legislator. Instead, the individual dedicates his life to fellow citizens, who do the
same in return. Then, his citizenship grants his freedom based on the reciprocal relationship of caring exchanged by all other members of society. A person is free as long as he abdicates his power to the group. However, conflicts can undoubtedly arise if a person’s pursuit of a private and virtuous life does not correlate with the needs of the general will. Rousseau does not state a precedent of one over the other; instead, he assigns great importance to them both without addressing their relations with each other. Therefore, his writing upholds classical platonic ideals where he leaves out the extensive investigation of potential instances which create issues within an ideal society.

Overall, for the general will to function, the citizen must always consider the needs of the entire population, often foregoing action on his desires. He must act according to the general will (problematic though it may be). In return, the needs of the group do not explicitly alienate the needs of the single citizen because “[e]very man has a natural right to what he needs…” (Rousseau 66). According to Rousseau, the covenant of a group ensures the material needs of every person. The right to these resources also helps the citizen to stay alive and healthy because no person should suffer for want of any basic necessities. At the very least, a man who subscribes to Rousseau’s hypotheses has his basic needs accounted for. However, his actions beyond the interest of the group (which might go against the general will) receive no protection from these agreements.

In such an instance, Rousseau’s “...aim is...to show how the necessary constraints of political society can be legitimate and thereby compatible with, if not natural freedom, then an essential human freedom nevertheless.” (360) Regardless of the paradoxes in Rousseau’s ideals pertaining to the relationships between individuals and their governments, he wants to justify and protect the ideal freedoms of individuals within larger groups. By extending power to a legitimate government, he seeks to ensure the freedoms of an individual, so the group reflects the interest of the individual who reflects the interest of the group.

Therefore, Rousseau ultimately intends for the covenants created by citizens, with respect to the *Social Contract*, to best serve the needs of the individual because

…the social pact, far from destroying natural equality, substitutes on the contrary, a moral and lawful equality for whatever physical inequality that nature may have imposed on mankind; so that however unequal in strength and in intelligence, men become equal by covenant and by right. (Rousseau 68)
At first glance, giving up one’s natural rights to the general will would seem to restrict the individual from realizing his inherent freedoms. However, the social pact acts as a mode of fabricating a cultural morality where every man has official rights within the state. Within his work, Rousseau compensates for people born without excellent privileges or intelligence. This compact entitles every person to the recognition of his worth as a free human being within the conventions of the state.

Since the freedoms of an individual necessitate the peaceful cooperation of everyone in a group, the group creates a government to conform to its needs rather than having the group conform to the laws of the government because “[i]n a well-governed state few are punished, not because there are many pardons but because there are few criminals” (Rousseau 80). This idea correlates with Plato’s idea where culture and government should be conducive to minimal legislation. A state should only make necessary laws which it intends to enforce since too many pardons would lead citizens to question the resolve of the government. However, on the other end of the spectrum, a government ought not to make too many laws and rigidly enforce them because that would oppress the people. In fact, if a state makes too many rules which citizens often break, then the laws do not cater to the nature of the people which keeps government simple since convoluted laws create confusion among citizens.

By this standard, a government has to reflect the needs and actions of the people. Such a unifying principle closely weds the people to their government. Therefore, Rousseau seems to justify the idea that a government derives its power exclusively from citizens. It is not exclusive of them. Unfortunately, there is a fine balance which society needs to achieve since,

The difficulty is to find a method of ordering this subordinate whole [the government] within the greater whole, so that it does not weaken the general constitution while strengthening its own, and so that its private force, designed for its own preservation, shall always be distinct from the public force, designed for the preservation of the state; in short, so that it will always be ready to sacrifice the government to the people and not the people to the government. (Rousseau 106)

Though Rousseau places much importance on the general will, the government must never become separate from the will of the people because it should only reflect the needs of the people it represents. Rousseau’s reasoning sets up a balance between the powers of
government and the powers of people by ensuring the interaction between the two. If a
government becomes isolated from the will of its people, it usually pulls power away from
them, tipping the scales toward a privileged few at the expense of a general population. If a
state’s power falls out of alignment with the general will, it could potentially attempt to
divert more power from the people. Therefore, the needs of the citizens must always govern
the actions of their rulers.

According to the social pact, individuals, whether acting in governments or as private
citizens, should not become too greedy because greed for wealth or power (as in *Republic*)
affects the fragile balance of the group. With respect to this, Rousseau states that

…luxury is either the effect of riches or it makes riches necessary; it corrupts both
the rich and the poor; it surrenders the country to indolence and vanity; it deprives
the state of all its citizens by making some the slaves of others and all the slaves
of opinion. (Rousseau 113)

Excessive and conspicuous consumption affects how a society uses resources, diverting some
from certain people while others live in luxury. Individuals with high demands create social
classes where they rest at the top and others must suffer on the bottom. The people in the
lower strata, then, not only labor as “slaves” to produce the goods that a luxurious life
necessitates—goods that they cannot themselves consume—but they also admire the lives of
the people in higher social strata. Accordingly, luxury makes slaves of all people, not only
people who produce the objects, but even the envy created by luxury enslaves people in the
higher social classes as they become so enthralled by fashion or opinion that it controls what
they wear, what they do, and how they live. Luxury, therefore, affects an economy adversely
as it diverts attention from a citizen’s freedoms and well-being to the whims of the economy.

In his writing, Rousseau sets a precedent which denies the congruency of slavery with
basic rights which all people have at birth. He shows his readers that,

…however we look at the question, the “right” of slavery is seen to be void; void,
not only because it cannot be justified, but also because it is nonsensical, because
it has no meaning. The words “slavery” and “right” are contradictory, they cancel
each other out. (Rousseau 58)

No man has the right to enslave another man. Likewise, the individual should never give his
rights up and become a slave. Rousseau wants to establish the basis for a social order which
rejects slavery especially since the government ensures the natural rights of men. By his
reasoning, a person who has given away his freedom to another man becomes a slave and has
abdicated his moral humanity and thus no longer fits within the social order created by his pact. True, Rousseau’s semantics tend to blame the victim since he thinks that men ought to have the strength and self-determination to retain their powers as free men regardless of their environmental factors. Rousseau’s work shows a deficiency in protecting potential victims who cannot help their circumstances.

Building upon his idea for the abolition of institutionalized slavery, Rousseau dictates that all men should have the sovereignty to agree to live together peacefully. Every person must freely choose to endorse this social agreement since,

> This is the social pact: for the civil association is the most voluntary act in the world; for every man having been born free and master of himself, no one else may under any pretext whatever subject him without his consent. (Rousseau 152)

The validity of the government originates from the willingness of the people to cooperate with one another as peers. It also comes from the idea that all people, born free, ought to have the ability and clout to determine if they have confidence in one another and in their government that they can express through voting and their general will. Perhaps the two most difficult obstacles in realizing a political utopia are the muddled relationships between the individual and the general will as well as the relationship between the general will and legislative implementation of laws. Rousseau does not specify what happens when the general will irreconcilably conflicts with one’s personal will, which makes it difficult for practitioners to ground his theories in a practical manner. One can say the same for the general will and legislation, because, according to Rousseau, the legislation reflects the general will but often must rule without assessing it. Legislators take care of most details since citizens do not have the time to rule themselves.

The general will does not preside over all of the logistical specificities of lawmaking. In Rousseau’s opinion, citizens mainly function by expressing their confidence in their government through a vote. If people mistrust their lawmakers, they do have the power to select new representatives who compose laws that cater more to the desires of the citizens. Such a practice makes it difficult to apply his governmental structure to a society with a large population since larger groups of people cannot vote every month in a practical manner.

Whereas political philosophies of Rousseau necessitate constant involvement and change in a government, it still does not ensure that men will live together in peace and fairness. B.F. Skinner, in *Walden Two*, attempts to create a social order that is easier to
sustain while its citizens live a perfectly balanced and contented life. By focusing on the mental and behavioral development of individuals, he makes a social order that focuses on interpersonal relationships instead of on a person’s relationship with his government. Where Rousseau focuses on a kind of top-down theorization of relationships, Skinner forms a government from the individual up to higher groups.

2.5 WALDEN 2

B.F. Skinner (inspired by the work of Thoreau, Walden) explores the ideal communal climate for people in his utopian novel, Walden Two, written in 1948. B.F. Skinner, as a psychologist, seeks to employ scientific principles to determine how individuals can feel most satisfied in organized groups. Skinner’s dedication to science relates to ideals in Bacon’s New Atlantis. However, while Bacon focuses on the importance of technology, Skinner relies on psychological discoveries to socialize the members of his community. Walden Two builds upon Bacon’s faith in science to eliminate the unwanted desires and feelings of men. Focusing on psychological practices, Skinner’s elaboration on Baconian principles shows that excessive reliance on science and technology deprives individuals of their free will, not censoring their knowledge, but altering how they perceive and absorb it.

In Walden Two, two former military servicemen, Steve Jamnik and Rogers, come into the office of a Professor Burris to discuss the concept of a utopian society. Having heard of an experimental community established by Burris’s colleague, Dr. Frazier, the students tell Dr. Burris that “[they] want to find what people really want, what they need in order to be happy, and how they can get it without stealing it from somebody else” (Skinner 8). This does not pose the question of how utopian communities prioritize the needs of the individual within a group, which Skinner’s character, Frazier, later answers. Initially, it would seem as though Skinner worries about both—the cooperation of the whole, and the satisfaction of the individual.

The second half of the young men’s question seems to deal with the notion of economics. How can everyone get his fair share of what he needs to be happily contented? The solution pertains to the distribution of resources in a fair manner so that every person feels satisfied. As Frazier answers the question in a letter to Dr. Burris, he also refers vaguely to the idea of economy in response to the concerns of the two young men when he states that
Any group of people could secure economic self-sufficiency with the help of modern technology, and the psychological problems of group living could be solved with available principles of “behavioral engineering.” (Skinner 14)

The answer Frazier gives in his letter provides the belief in the possibility that men can live together peacefully and receive everything they need to attain happiness. With technology, humans can use land and labor more effectively than they had once used it in previous centuries. An institution can conceivably stretch resources to fulfill every man’s basic needs. If men do not have to worry about resources, then according to Skinner, what is the real issue? Creating a society where all men are happy goes beyond organizing resources so that men each get what they need to survive. True, the world does have the resources to assure that no one ought to go to bed hungry, but the nature of economy, as it exists now, facilitates the unfair distribution of wealth where some people have too much and others not enough. Skinner’s book then poses a solution to the distribution issue. When people feel the inclination to consume more than they need, problems between citizens arise.

Since some people grow up wanting more things, leaving others with minimal resources, Skinner creates an ideal society by organizing individuals and controlling their desires. In his community, the state conditions people from birth onward to learn self-control and satisfaction that raises many questions as to the morality of psychological engineering, which Frazier views as the best way to create a happy society. By means of behavioral engineering, Skinner seeks to eliminate the most commonly occurring negative feelings within the individual, leaving him feeling far freer. He seeks to condition out greed, competition, and avarice since most negative feelings come from these sentiments. Skinner reasons that “…sorrow and hate—and the high-voltage excitements of anger, fear, and rage—are out of proportion with the needs of modern life, and they’re wasteful and dangerous” (Skinner 102). Frazier expresses his primary concern here, which seems to form a functional economy within a group of people. Ideally, no one wastes resources or energy. Such “high-voltage excitements” are not productive in the city of Walden Two, and, therefore, the government must eliminate these sentiments from the individual through a lifetime of conditioning. When a person becomes impassioned from anger, it could disturb the peace and make other members of the community uncomfortable, so Skinner’s concern with negative feelings stems from some concern with how they deplete a man’s energy and subvert existing order.
Skinner’s ideal of a “modern” society also has importance with respect to his reasoning for focusing his attention on ridding people of anger. Technology and modernity, in the author’s mind, eliminate the need for rage and anger because men now conceivably have the means to fix problems that arise. With modernity and ability to produce more goods, competition, “survival of the fittest,” becomes unimportant. Thus, the residual tendency of humans to be competitive hinders the group because “When one man gets a place in the sun, others are put in a denser shade” (Skinner 169). By this reasoning, glorifying one person could potentially disparage the efforts of another. It seems that Skinner looks upon competition unfavorably because it tends to create a hierarchy either in skills or of the value of the individual which goes against the foundation of his socially engineered ideals which dictate that every person ought to be equal.

With respect to the elimination of competition, the readers of Skinner’s work might find it difficult to compel members of his community to work hard without a generous reward system either created by social esteem or accumulation of wealth. For this reason, Frazier in *Walden Two* conditions people from infancy onward to live without avarice or need of gratification. With significant developmental involvement, a person could grow up as a fully functioning member in a social order where

A laissez-faire philosophy which trusts the inherent goodness and wisdom of the common man is incompatible with the observed fact that men are made good or bad and wise or foolish by the environment in which they grow. (Skinner 273)

Skinner’s community becomes heavily involved in the rearing of their children so that it can create the most favorable environment for developing the desirable personality traits within humans. With regards to the “nature” vs. “nurture” debate, we see that Skinner truly believes that applied behavioral psychology, when utilized from infancy, will make all people more “good” and “wise.” This premise ignores any genetic propensity for a person to act “badly” or “unwisely,” which Robert Epstein states when he notes that, “Skinner's work focuses on the effects of various interventions on ongoing behavior; it says little about where that behavior comes from in the first place” (Epstein 362). Though people still dispute the innate nature of an individual, Skinner takes for granted whether situational conditions can really motivate even the most imbalanced person to feel contented in a group. He assumes psychology can solve all potential issues with a person’s interpersonal interactions which means that his writings and his process belittle the internal development and thoughts of the
individual (Stillman 203). These social conditions do allow for a more anarchical government in Walden Two. In this community, people have the freedom to work how and when they want, eat when they want to, and spend most of their time in a leisurely fashion. Because their conditioning has molded them into docile people who do not act out, they have no desire to do or think in any other manner than what their cultural norms already dictate.

With a few basic principles set in place since infancy, government becomes less important in the life of an adult. Because Skinner’s system does not involve competition, the competitive nature of government that organizes men in a hierarchy to maintain control is not conducive to his communal state. With social engineering, Skinner desires to drive out the need for power from the members of Walden Two. He reasons that,

> As we use the term these days, government means power—mainly the power to compel obedience… The techniques of government are what you would expect—they use force or the threat of force. But that is incompatible with permanent happiness—we know enough about human nature to be sure of that. You can’t force a man to be happy. He isn’t even happy if he is forced to follow a supposedly happy pattern. He must be lead into it in a different way if it’s to be satisfying. (Skinner 194)

Force and forced obedience affect individuals in a detrimental way. If Frazier wants to make his individuals most happy, he must find a way to impose peace on his people without force. The use of force would mean that a governing body must threaten the citizens of Walden Two with an overt and unpleasant consequence for undesired actions which undermines the social conditioning of subtle child-rearing methods.

Along these lines, government as it exists today, socializes and conditions people like family, friends, and other social institutions. Governments use laws and regulations to affect the actions of citizens. However, Walden Two conceivably has no real need for laws because individuals have neither dangerous feelings nor greed. Thus,

> [t]he leaders in such a world exist in a verbal, material, social community in which the major emphasis is on control, manipulation, relationality, efficiency; in such a community, the possibility of countercontrol may simply be absent because the material and organizational assets of the countercontrollers are insufficient. (Watts 232)

The control and manipulation of individuals stifle any possible dissatisfaction that would potentially lead to a counterculture or any counter-government groups. Thus, an explicit government becomes unnecessary to maintain the people. Skinner’s character, Frazier, does manage to create a loose type of government to oversee the community, Walden Two. The
legislative body consists of managers that serve mainly as overseers for this community. The managers organize jobs throughout Walden Two and arrange for members to fill these jobs. But, when his visitors question why he does not form a democracy, Frazier denies the necessity for a government by the people because “[v]oting is a device for blaming conditions on the people. The people aren’t rulers, they’re scapegoats. And they file to the polls every so often to renew their right to the title” (Skinner 266). In a sense, Skinner shows a lack of faith in democracy and voting because it does not ensure a citizen’s sovereignty. Giving citizens minimal participation in the election process means that the group can blame voters rather than government officials for any mismanagement of the community.

Even though his communal system does not allow for the suffrage of individuals, one might wonder how Frazier seeks to ensure the freedom of his people within this community. However, with regard to freedom, Frazier “den[ies] that freedom exists at all. [He has to] deny it—or [his] program would be absurd. You can’t have a science about a subject matter which hops capriciously about. Perhaps we can never prove man isn’t free…” (Skinner 257). As a person who fully believes that the developmental conditions of people shape all of their future actions, Skinner shows that conditions and environments manipulate the actions of individuals. They do not live freely, nor will they ever be free, so Walden Two values “[f]reedom [a]s a necessary enabling condition, not an end in itself” (Erickson 10). By this reasoning, if a minority of people with a clear vision can engineer a larger group during the formation of a community, they can condition the feelings of citizens so they still feel free without being free because the nature of conditioning and socialization focuses on channeling people into giving up their freedoms.

The relation between conditioning and government to engineer the feeling of freedom makes Skinner’s ideal community unique as compared with preceding utopian thought. Laws and covenants between people have become less important in his community. However, some of his problematic ideas rely too heavily on conditioning to regulate the actions of citizens of Walden Two, which could create potential issues that Frazier does not foresee. To have an institution so exclusively involved with the rearing of infants and children, Walden Two places great power on the government.

Some of Skinner’s ideals seem poorly formulated when looked at more carefully. At one point in the novel, Frazier explains to Dr. Burris that members of Walden Two do not
abuse drugs because people do not have anxieties from over-exertion or stress. He reasons that people only turn to alcohol and other drugs to unwind. This does not fully account for the fact that some people use alcohol and drugs recreationally not for the purpose of eliminating stressors, but for other reasons. For instance, many people become connoisseurs of wine or beer because it pertains to their personal interests. It then becomes a hobby or art like music and painting, which citizens of *Walden Two* already often do in their ample spare time. Thus, eliminating someone’s stressors does not necessarily eliminate the curiosity or propensity to use or abuse drugs.

To further ensure the success of his conditioning, as in Plato’s *Republic* Skinner has deconstructed the nuclear family in hopes that every citizen gets equal love, attention, and appreciation from other members. He has removed the taboo of childbearing in one’s teens, reasoning that people in their late teens bare healthier children. He prioritizes the propagation of healthier children by setting conditions that encourage people to reproduce at a younger age. Within Walden Two, people do not need financial security or emotional maturity to give children an ideal life because parents do not exclusively raise their children.

Beyond these changes and beyond conditioning, people have many privileges as well as the right to food, clothing, and a shared or private space. As in More’s *Utopia*, they have no monetary system within the community, which helps combat corruption and over-consumption. They actually use a type of labor credit to pay for their keep. Each person must work a certain amount of time over the year to pay for things like room and board. Depending on the desirability of the work, the labor load amounts to roughly two to four hours a day for the individual, which leaves him with more time to do things like garden, write, play instruments, read, or make art for all to enjoy in peace and happiness.

### 2.6 Utopias Overview

Through the five utopias mentioned in this section, we see that theorists focus extensively on how institutions such as religion, technology, and politics preside over individuals. The material life of people, as well as how the state provides for it, are two central considerations in all of these works. For instance, Socrates, in Plato’s *Republic*, creates his state around the idea that citizens constantly seek to satiate their material needs. More shows a preoccupation with wealth and resources in *Utopia*. Bacon creates a veritable
laundry list of technologies in *New Atlantis*, and B.F. Skinner spends much time explaining how people have all they need when it comes to food, shelter, and clothing. Skinner does begin to touch upon the intellectual pursuits of members in his community. However, the power of his state controls people significantly in this respect. All of these societies seem to rely heavily on the state to administer desirable living conditions for their people. Beyond these ideals, dystopias begin to ask the question: how do people transcend the environment created by their state?

By attempting to create a rigid, planned social system, authority and norms become a powerful force in conditioning people. Utopias, therefore, have two relationships to authority: “[i]n one utopia is a central aspect of totalitarianism; in the other utopia is a central aspect of freedom” (Sargent 582). In the latter case, authority ideally will enable the individual to do as he pleases as he seeks to fulfill his needs. These utopian worlds provide people with security in resources and in social position. Unfortunately, with excessive emphasis on enforcing order, authority tends to overtake people.

With classical utopias, since Plato’s time, and especially in the early twentieth century, optimism with technology and social theory permeate the worldwide intellectual atmosphere. Intellectuals including political theorists began to think that a new, peaceful world order was largely attainable in the near future, but with World War I and World War II, the optimism shared by many waned as people realized that, “… the distance between the positive ideal and the negative one was never so great as the advocates or admirers of utopia had professed” (Manuel 9). Technology and mechanization had not eased the workload of mankind. In fact, new social planning ideas attempted to shift principles of technology and production onto individuals, which created more stress than they alleviated. If one could easily engineer machines, groups of people would conceivably likewise succumb to the same regimentation. Dystopian thought shifted the focus onto the troubled individual as he struggles to fit into a social order created by optimistic thinkers who place too much faith on totalitarian power and the mechanization of humanity.
CHAPTER 3

DYSTOPIAS

To counter some of the ideas presented in the previously mentioned utopian philosophies, dystopias provide readers with the novelization of people inside a clockwork society where the group receives priority over individuals. The basis for utopian literature generally lacks the kinds of character-oriented conflict that dystopias have, which makes the dystopian genre a useful means of questioning utopian philosophy where dystopian thinkers speculate that “[t]he price of utopia...[is] total submission to a central authority, forced labor, lifetime specialization, inflexible regimentation, one-way communication, and readiness for war” (Manuel 17). This section explores six novels that illustrate all of the aforementioned prices exacted for the government at the expense of the individual.

“The dystopian genre...” serves an important function because it “...serves as a locus for valuable dialogues among literature, popular culture, and social criticism that indicates the value of considering these discourses together and potentially sheds new light on all of them” (Booker 174). Where some intellectuals and politically influential people might take ideas from utopian thought and attempt to put them into practice, dystopian works serve as much needed counterarguments to raise awareness about potential undesirable effects of utopian practices.

The first three novels represented here are, We, 1984, and Brave New World, show how a protagonist can come to feel isolated from other members of his oppressive state. In all three cases, external factors inspire these dystopian protagonists to lead unsuccessful coups curtailed by their governments, which, in turn, force assimilation upon the rebels. All three of these novels are “Appalling in their similarity [as] they describe nightmare states where men are conditioned to obedience, freedom is eliminated, and individuality crushed; where the past is systematically destroyed and men are isolated from nature; where science and technology are employed, not to enrich human life, but to maintain the state’s surveillance and control of its slave citizens” (Hillegas 3). The cost for the social order created in We, 1984, and Brave New World outweighs all the perceived benefits that citizens receive. The
centralization of power thus becomes the focal point in these novels as it imposes a great burden on individual people who might otherwise not have as many problems with contention in life. Under the pressure of the government, however, characters in all of these novels must find passionate pleasure in things deemed unfit for the needs of a group.

The next three books discussed in this section focus less on the atrocities committed by a completely centralized totalitarian state. However, they do focus more on how individuals in futuristic, more technologically advanced societies force uniformity on one another. The fourth book I examine in this section is *Player Piano*, where technology plays a major role in the reasons why people feel unfulfilled. Then *Fahrenheit 451* highlights the importance of maintaining an appreciation for the arts in a futuristic, organized world. Finally, I use *The Lathe of Heaven* to explore what happens when a single person has the power over the greater population. All three of these works take place in a futuristic American city where citizens and non-governmental forces alter the government to make it more totalitarian.

3.1 We

*We*, a novel completed in 1921 by a Russian writer, Yevgeny Zamyatin, tells the story of a highly regulated society from the point of view of one mathematician, D-503. This society, named One State, is on the cusp of completing a machine called the Integral, which One State seeks to use to travel space and spread the despotic values of One State. D-503’s journal entries, which narrate the entire novel, record his excitement and enthusiasm for his life in One State.

Through the exposition of Zamyatin’s work, we see that the excessive intervention of One State in the lives of its citizens inflates their confidence, which ultimately deprives them the means of dealing with questions that do not have simple answers. Since the strength of the government comes from the superficial comfort of its people, it can only ensure its power by taking a citizen’s ability to realize and enjoy the unique world that lies beyond calculation.

Initially, the novel’s protagonist, as a mathematician loyal to the beauty of One State, takes pleasure in the uniformity of his fellow citizens. He states:

> Each morning with six-wheeled precision, at the exact same hour, at the exact same minute, we, the millions, rise as one. At the exact same hour, we uni-millionly start work and we uni-millionly stop work. And, merged into a single-
handed body, at the exact same Table-appointed second, we bring spoons to our lips, we go out for our walk and go to the auditorium, to the Taylor Exercise Hall, go off to sleep… (Zamyatin 13)

With this imagery, the reader can easily visualize the motions that a single person in One State does throughout the day, and then multiply that by the millions of people. No one has the liberty to make his own schedule. The reader gets a sense of how D-503 feels awed and happy with uniformity where the government attempts to make every member of One State the same person. He does not seek any kind of uniqueness that will differentiate one person from another. In fact, he sees his daily life rather like a dance. It is minutely choreographed; down to the detail, it even dictates how many times a person must chew his food. He reasons with his audience that there is a beauty in this dance because

\[ \text{… it is non-free movement, because the whole profound point of this dance lies precisely in its absolute, aesthetic subordination, its perfect non-freedom… the instinct for non-freedom, from the earliest of times, is inherently characteristic of humankind…} \] (Zamyatin 6)

This dance does not originate from one’s expression of passion or dedication. Instead, its pervasive, compulsory actions become a routine that individuals perform without feeling. People take the dance for granted because the Time Table mandates all of these actions. They see this dance as an inalienable part of human nature whereas the government has actually engineered it. Ironically, this “dance” for D-503 has taken on a completely opposite meaning from the definition that other people associate with the word “dance.” While some would consider dance free and liberating, D-503 sees it as something controlled and precise. True, a dance can be either rigid or unplanned, but in One State the former always holds true.

Because D-503 sees every person constantly doing the same thing, because he sees people acting predictably, he begins to believe that the whole world reflects what he sees. He conceives that his world mirrors the outside universe in its uniformity. He thinks that every person is so wonderfully like all others that D-503 begins to understand the world as if he was a god.

When one reads D-503’s musings on such a notion, the reader begins to see how he embodies the ideals of One State. It regulates people by making everyone visible to others with transparent walls and floors. One State eliminates mystery and individuality because everyone has the same uniforms, spaces, and motion. With all of these regulations, the government dehumanizes its citizens by the deprivation of privacy and by giving them
alphanumeric names. Based on that principle, citizens within One State do not wonder about their differences. They feel as though they can explain everything around them. People have a sense of control because their universe follows a predictable path, never deviating from a figurative straight line.

Within the walls of One State, the government must maintain control and order. Unfortunately, one cannot easily explain or predict the motions or composition of the universe. Not all people fit into a simple, uniform canon, and in D-503’s eyes, discrepancies blemish his perception of the universe. He does not like the barbarous look of his hands, for one thing—this variability of genetics disturbs him. However, his discomfort with unperceivable things becomes most apparent when he explains irrational numbers in mathematics. At one point, he recalls a time in school when an automated teacher he calls Pliapa introduced an incalculable number to him:

One day, Pliapa explained ‘irrational numbers’ and I remember I wept, I beat my fists upon the table and wailed: “I don’t want √-1! Take √-1 out of me!” This irrational root had sunk into me, like something foreign, alien, frightening, it devoured me—it couldn’t be comprehended or diffused because it was beyond ratio. (Zamyatin 36)

He flat out rejects the idea of numbers which cannot reflect whole, conceivable, measurable things. Here, he shares with us one of the first moments in his childhood when incalculability shakes the foundations of his beliefs. Because he does not know how to deal with complexity, he reacts emotionally. Even after many years, imaginary numbers haunt him and resurface throughout his writings as some sort of nagging detail that alludes to discrepancies in his world view.

D-503’s difficulty in coping with the inconsistencies of numbers demonstrates how the excessive pragmatic involvement with perfection distracts people from enjoying the nuanced complexity of an environment. Zamyatin uses D-503 to show the value of differences and even of errors since they “...‘are more valuable than truths: truth is of the machine, error is alive.’ However, truth can never really be fixed and mechanical, for ‘today's truths become errors of tomorrow’...” (McCarthy 123). Zamyatin shows that errors reflect individuality and, therefore, ought not to be deplored or avoided to such an extent. His idea shows that even truth is evanescent as it changes with new knowledge. One State’s rule, however, attempts to negate this idea.
In its regulations, One State has made it difficult for its individuals to deal with spontaneity or with the more complex things outside of their immediate environment. Because One State has over-extended its powers so excessively, it has made its people weak when conflict and unpredictable events occur. But, despite the intentions of the state, people by nature tend to have an insatiable curiosity.

Even when presented with predictable behaviors, their minds are likely to branch out and draw new connections as a manifestation of some subconscious desire to expand their horizons beyond the things they see. D-503’s insatiable propensity towards curiosity appears when he notices the uniqueness of I-330. Though he seems to dislike the thought of inconsistency, he cannot ignore its presence. He continues to think about it until he finally begins to relish the idea of differences. Whereas D-503 can adamantly deny the idea of infinity and imaginary numbers as they plague his confidence, I-330 opens his eyes to so many more discrepancies in the world which also spark his curiosity. In a sense, so long as people have curiosity and creativity somewhere within their being, One State attempts to attain the impossible goal of snuffing it out, keeping citizens minutely regulated indefinitely.

As an example, when citizens in One State must vote to renew the term of their Benefactor, readers see how unpredictable occurrences disturb everyone in this society. On this day, when everyone gathers to participate, one nay-sayer throws the whole society into chaos, which shows readers that D-503 is not alone in his tensions with life’s imperfections. Diversity of thought makes people question their own order that One State superficially imposes. The next day, One State issues a statement to quell the insecurities of its citizens. It states that:

> It is clear to each of us that taking their voices into account would be as ridiculous as taking the accidental coughs of sick people in a concert audience as a part of a majestic heroic symphony… (Zamyatin 131)

To maintain order and power, the Benefactor must struggle here to lessen the significance of any disagreements among his citizens—belittling the “accidental” actions of the few who do not fit with the rest of the “majestic symphony.” He equates them with sick people, which would lead his audience to believe that the government needs a cure for the sickness of discord. Since the government reacts in such a way, it shows that “Zamyatin's primary interest is not science, but the threat of collectivism and rationalism to man's humanity” (Collins 353). A member of One State becomes lost in the crowd as it pressures unanimity,
which dehumanizes the individual in his self-determination. Dehumanization and subsequent belittling of any dissonant voice put One State in a precarious place where “sickness” potentially lurks in every individual.

But what happens when one person does not fit in with the greater hoards of people? What is the value of the individual in One State? D-503 best sums this up when he explains his notion of “rights” where he says,

… take the idea of “rights” and drip acid on it. Even the most adult of ancients knew: the source of a right is power, a right is a function of power. Take two trays of a weighing scale: put a gram on one, and on the other, put a ton. On the one side is the “I” on the other is the “we,” the One State. Isn’t it clear? Assuming that “I” has the same “rights” compared to the State is exactly the same thing as assuming that a gram can counterbalance a ton. Here is the distribution: a ton has rights, a gram has duties. And this is the natural path from insignificance to greatness: forget as though you are a gram, and feel as though you are a millionth of a ton…  (Zamyatin 102)

Here, Zamyatin’s statement exemplifies the agenda of the government where One State devalues the desires and needs of the individual in order to preserve the continuity of the state as a whole. The individual, alone, has no rights. He has a function. When facing the potential debilitation of self-importance, a person can only find solace in the idea that he has rights solely in the context of the group. As a single entity, the individual is not important enough to have any self-determination. The idea that no man, when he stands alone, should have rights also corresponds with how D-503 deals with the perception of liberty, which he describes in scientific terms, using a simile to negate the importance of freedom. As he puts it,

“Liberation?” Astounding: the extent to which this criminal instinct is deep-rooted in humankind. And I consciously say: ‘criminal.’ Freedom and crime are so indissolubly connected to each other… When the velocity of the aero = 0, it doesn’t move; when the freedom of a person = 0, he doesn’t commit crime. This is clear. The sole means of ridding man of crime is to rid him of freedom.  (Zamyatin 33)

Thus, rights and freedoms within the context of the individual’s life hold no importance. D-503 expresses this idea by relying heavily on mathematics to mirror humanity so much that it becomes an infallible method of rhetoric to justify the insignificance of one person, whose body only contributes one-millionth to the ton. They are insignificant. He does not realize the fact that people do not always heed laws of their state. D-503 reasons that more laws make it easier for people to know what to do; however, in practice, we see that the inverse effect
usually occurs. With the creation of many laws, people have a greater likelihood to transgress the government more often. In light of this fact, One State goes against the theoretical principle which Rousseau sets up in *The Social Contract*, where fewer laws exemplify an ideal government. More laws potentially mean more outlaws, and having too many laws means that a government opens itself up to a higher probability of defiance on the part of its citizens. People are thus more likely to question its power because they have come into conflict with the rules of their environment. We see the significance of this when we note that D-503 has trouble sleeping after an encounter with I-330 which shakes his beliefs.

D-503 eventually comes to realize that life has no uniformity, and he struggles with the acceptance of this fact. The struggle proves to be incompatible with the regulations of One State. Thus, he finds himself breaking rules, which leaves him feeling ostracized from his society. When he has stopped doing *exactly* what the rules prescribe for him, every curiosity becomes a gateway to do something more disobedient, and eventually his subconscious need to ruminate over uniqueness and unpredictability leads him to act out against One State and against the Benefactor.

Fortunately for One State, it gains the ability to make people more subordinate to their demands by solving the sickness of “imagination.” The government uses a type of lobotomizing surgery to take out what they call imagination. In an effort to get citizens to voluntarily take the surgery, they say that imagination

… is the worm that gnaws black wrinkles onto your forehead. This is the fever that chases you, and you run off into the distance even though this “distance” begins where happiness ends. It is the last barricade on the path to happiness. (Zamyatin 158)

Superficially, the government ascribes the importance of lobotomies to their concern with the happiness of the people. Of course, the surgery becomes necessary because they have placed such importance on uniformity, making it a pillar of their society, so the government must use a surgical procedure to cure differences that make people think differently from one another. If the government can control what makes a person think differently, they can easily control what makes a person act differently or defy the rules of the state. The body to One State along with the brain inside of it represents a mere commodity which it can manipulate regardless of the individual’s wishes. The state views the imagination or “soul” as a liability to the solidarity of the state.
One State forces human nature to fit into a mold where it doesn’t belong. With finite, simple answers, one omits part of a greater picture. By taking away the soul, imagination, and feelings of people, the government makes its citizens more compliant and happier on the surface because every tendency for deeper thought has been removed. D-503, with respect to this, draws parallels between the citizens of One State and angels in heaven.

They have wanted someone, anyone, to tell them once and for all what happiness is—and then to attach them to this happiness with a chain… what are we now doing, if it isn’t this? The ancient dream about paradise… Remember: in paradise, they don’t know desire, they don’t know pity, they don’t know love. There, angels, the slaves of God, are blissful with surgically excised imaginations…

(Zamyatin 187-188)

Without desire, pity, or love, people do not have any drive to satiate emotional hunger. This statement reiterates to us, as his audience, that people need negative feelings to create the positive ones. Without the drive to pursue an unsatisfied hunger (physical or metaphorical), people have no means of better enjoying the positive aspects in life. The attempts by One State to stop all feelings pose as a solution to the problematic inclination of citizens to pursue self-actualization. Eliminating passion and love makes people more like robots which serve the whims of One State.

With respect to their sex lives, the government also relegates how often they have sex, and they say that “Each cypher has the right to any other cypher as sexual product” (21). This theoretically takes away the ability of a person to deny an undesired partner. Sex becomes compulsory since the state examines the libido of each citizen and then schedules when that person may have sex. One State has essentially taken all freedom and spontaneity from the sex act as it attends only to the bodily desires of the individual while ignoring the sexual self-determination of the mind.

While Zamyatin was writing _We_, the Russian government and its people were attempting to reconstruct a more ideal society, which included sexual liberalization and pushes for a more mechanized workforce. In light of the social changes Russia began to implement,

Zamyatin’s novel is at heart a protest against the sterile and rigid concept of a final revolution, or a static society—against a world, that is, ruled by a mechanism rather than by the human spirit. It is against this idea that man should emulate the machine—not against the machines themselves, but against the ascendancy of
technology over the imagination that created it—that Zamyatin very effectively directs his satire. (McCarthy 127)

Generally, Zamyatin’s novel mirrors some of the prominent political thoughts of the early twentieth century where many communists looked toward science and Taylorism as models for the rest of society. By simplifying individuals into mathematical entities, and by subverting existing sexual morality, political thinkers wanted to impose a new way of life on citizens of the state, reducing them to simple, machine-like labor beings that served the state, ate, slept, copulated, and defecated. More passionate emotions to extreme Marxist totalitarians were not necessary for citizens of the state (Booker). Zamyatin’s *We* questions these principles with the experiences of D-503. Zamyatin places the value of suffrage back on the individual and not the group.

As we see, One State in *We*, in conjunction with totalitarian thought, controls the minds and bodies of its citizens by regulating the exact time and movement of all its citizens. Similarly, Orwell in *1984* has created a state that seeks to control the mind and actions of people. Winston Smith, like D-503, struggles to attain independence in Oceania where the government uses constant surveillance to control the people.

### 3.2 1984

In 1949, novelist and journalist Eric Blair, under the pseudonym George Orwell, wrote a dystopic novel, *1984*, which depicts a highly regulative oligarchical society. This novel focuses on the life of one Winston Smith, a man who works in the Ministry of Truth. He lives as a member of the Outer Party in the nation of Oceania, which wages a perpetual war with one of two other world super-powers. Oceania continually watches and records its citizens, looking for a possible coup that members of the state could ignite. Orwell’s *1984* perfectly exemplifies the problems that arise when a government prioritizes its needs over the self-determination of its people. The government has to fabricate and rigidly enforce reality causing turmoil because it dictates the evolution of society instead of relying on citizens to do so.

The Party, through planting the seeds of distrust within the family and by attempting to take pleasure away from the act of sex (another pervasive practice of Oceania), thus tries to take passion from the private lives of its citizens. Oceania undermines the sanctity of the family, causing undue stress on citizens that did not exist before the Party gained the power.
that it has. Oceania has created a domestic life that expands the powers of the government by using zealous children to supervise adults. Adults must therefore fear any misconduct perceived by their children. To the children, the policing of adults seems like a game. This decentralizes the affection in the family, taking away a natural safety net and source of security that people find in familial relationships.

The Party seeks to control the private lives of its citizens because it thinks passionate feelings towards one’s domestic life are not conducive to the desires of the state.

The terrible thing that the Party had done was to persuade you that mere impulses, mere feelings, were of no account, while at the same time robbing you of all power over the material world. When once you were in the grip of the Party, what you felt or did not feel, what you did or refrained from doing, made literally no difference. (Orwell 165)

By robbing their citizens of natural feelings, Oceania deprives them of a fulfilling, happy life where individuals can make strong bonds with others as normal, healthy human beings—as social animals. This action belittles the individual, who exists only as a minute, insignificant part of the group. If a single person wants to have any strong feelings at all, he can only safely direct his passion towards the invasive agenda of the state. Individuals become powerless because their government invalidates their personal life and how they see the world around them. Oceania impedes the “[s]atisfaction of the self-esteem need...,” which, if left to develop naturally, “...leads to feelings of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability, and adequacy... But thwarting of these needs produces feelings of inferiority, of weakness, and of helplessness” (Maslow 21). Ultimately, Oceania seeks to foster the latter feelings within its citizens. All of those feelings, though thoroughly invasive on the individual psyche, enable Oceania to maintain its tyrannical control over the thoughts of citizens.

As a means of subverting people’s self-determination and exaggerating their feelings, Oceania first creates the figurehead, Big Brother. The Party of Oceania then uses group psychology as a form of control over their citizens. They regularly gather people together so the individuals easily absorb propaganda. Using the presence of many people exaggerates emotions within each person. People in this case have become very easily worked up and passionate over something quite abstract. The sentiments of people in these large groups change according to the desires of their ruling state. They could feel happiness or anger according to the diction and tone of the propaganda in front of them. “And yet the rage that
one felt was an abstract, undirected emotion which would be switched from one object to
another like the flame of a blowlamp” (Orwell 14). Thus, the government can easily change
the object of opposition on a whim—which they do when the warmongering political climate
changes. By having such a suggestible audience, the Party can easily change the reality of the
people.

And if all others accepted the lie which the Party imposed—if all records told the
same tale—then the lie passed into history and became truth. “Who controls the
past,” ran the Party slogan, “controls the future: who controls the present controls
the past.” (Orwell 34)

Like group meetings, controlling the past serves as an integral practice in the culture of
Oceania. It places excessive importance on creating a history that mirrors the sentiments of
the present. In fact, they dedicate most of their time and effort to changing the past. The
government controls the information, their posterity, and integrity. It can force its citizens to
act as if history always has continuity. To them, the past must always reflect the ideals of the
present, making people more prone to suggestion, such as hating their enemies and loving
their government. Changing history is paramount to the governing practices of Oceania. With
the power to change history, this state has the power to subjugate its people via fabricated
information which the Party re-feeds into its propagandistic practices. The misinformation
fuels more propaganda.

Since it constantly alters the past, the government can easily make it seem as though
individuals live in a state where their government constantly improves upon their living
standards. It essentially convinces people that they are more prosperous in the present year
than they were last year when, in fact, the quality of their lives decreases over time. The
quality of life for people decreases through rationing of food, and through the deterioration of
family trust.

In this respect, members of the Party seem to represent a more intellectual class. The
power of their thoughts is so important that the state prioritizes their subjugation rather than
attending to the larger population of the “proles,” who generally stayed out of the way of
Oceania’s rule. Intellectuals are more susceptible to the rule of the government since they
actually absorb and consider the information they glean from radios, television, and other
propaganda. The vulnerable members of the party come to reflect the fact that Orwell seemed
to believe that,
...many intellectuals [are] irresponsible and out of touch with ordinary human life. More important, he thought it had been amply demonstrated that they were too often led by their isolation from reality into naive flirtations with fashionable totalitarianism. He believed that, in general, intellectuals were more totalitarian-minded than the average man, more entranced with doctrine and power. (Simms 303)

Perhaps Orwell believed intellectuals were more prone to totalitarianism because they tend to get so caught up in theory that rationality distracts them from practicability. Intellectuals who have the power to change the government, then, either become misinformed, becoming too involved in altering a government to oppress people, or they have appropriate knowledge, but shut themselves off from changing a government for the better. Just like Winston and other Party members, intellectuals succumb to whatever new information is presented to them. However, in the long run, balance and fluidity lead to a happier state rather than an all-powerful government based on rigid theory.

Oceania not only retains its rigid theory and misinformation to subjugate people, but it disrespects solitude and privacy to maintain its omnipresent power. A person can only possess one minute part of himself, his internal thoughts, which he must never speak out loud. As long as the expressions of one’s face do not accurately depict the feelings, then a person can retain the tiniest bit of what he has inside of himself. But retaining one’s innermost thoughts for himself makes the citizen an enemy in this state, and the Party wants to reclaim what a person might mistake for his own—his thoughts. In the case of Winston Smith, the Party demonstrates that he does not have any command over the privacy of his thoughts and his actions. To show their power, they threaten to slowly kill him using rats. Even his biggest fear, which Winston had never explicitly mentioned is privy to Big Brother, who must reclaim all parts of a citizen’s mind in order to ensure the power of the state.

By concerning themselves with the control of history and by controlling the passions of the citizen, the state has the ultimate power to replace the thoughts and feelings of their citizens with whatever suggestion they so choose.

Reality exists in the human mind, and nowhere else. Not in the individual mind, which can make mistakes, and in any case, soon perishes; only in the mind of the Party, which is collective and immoral. (Orwell 249)

The “human mind” presented here represents the collective thoughts and perceptions of the group, and the passive collective of the people comprise the state, which becomes godlike. The government does not make mistakes. Therefore, if the will of the group (as controlled
and influenced by the immense power of the state) is infallible, then might makes right. The individual perishes in the collective, and the group lasts forever. The sole value of this society is groupthink, which the state exclusively influences via fabricated truths and not by the perceptions of the individual.

Oceania sees its rule as necessary because humans need a government because alone they can handle neither liberty nor truth, justifying Big Brother’s presence. The government believes that people need to be controlled. This idea suggests a duality between happiness and freedom where humanity must choose between the two. To maintain the happiness of the group, Oceania must do evil—torture the people, censor the media, and lie—because the government has a duty to uphold the “good.” This concept parallels the Bible, where people can only eat from either the tree of life, or the tree of knowledge. Either people in Oceania learn the bliss of ignorance by metaphorically eating from the tree of life, or they face degradation and pain when thinking for themselves as if they had chosen to eat from the tree of knowledge.

A government can maintain a significant amount of power through torture. Inflicting physical pain on people reinforces fear, which leads them to capitulate under any possibility that they will face harm. We see that:

Orwell knew as much as we do now about torture and cruelty as a systematic form of control. Effective as these are in achieving abject submission, they do not yield total power. For that, rulers must be the masters of language, for it is language that creates thought. (Shklar 11)

Oceania also controls people through Newspeak, where ideally the governmental institution can ensure the subordination of the citizens by altering their language in such a way that it affects how they think. The concept of altering language harkens back to Plato’s Republic where philosophers control how citizens think and act by restricting the kinds of stories they hear. Oceania takes Socrates’s censorship principle one step farther by making it more language specific. As languages naturally evolve, more and more words accumulate to enrich the vocabulary. Newspeak works in the inverse manner. Through the creation of Newspeak, the Party attempts to limit the means of expression—further perpetuating ignorance within its citizens. This misguided attempt at changing language makes words less specific and thus less adequate to define what the individual attempts to communicate. Through the alteration of language, the government wants to make it impossible for people to defy its will.
Unfortunately, Oceania gives its citizens a kind of skewed “happiness” not founded on satiation or contentedness because

[It] is founded upon hatred. In our world, there will be no emotions except fear, rage, triumph, and self-abasement… There will be no love except the love of Big Brother. There will be no laughter except the laugh of triumph over a defeated army. There will be no art, no literature, no science. When we are omnipotent we shall have no more need of science. There will be no distinction between beauty and ugliness. There will be no curiosity, no enjoyment of the process of life. All competing pleasures will be destroyed. (Orwell 267)

Oceania, then, only bases happiness on its wartime successes so it must wage a perpetual war, and the people must always live in fear. First, citizens feel the artificial fear substantiated by Big Brother about war and invasion that they never see. Second, they must feel the real fear that they might face punishment for some sort of thoughtcrime. When the state seeks to eliminate conflicting pleasures, they seek to alter the feelings of the people, to deprive them of their most basic needs as if the government can force individuals to change their fundamental nature, which includes the desire for love and personal gratification.

The government will, therefore, always be a weak one. Even though it has the power to torture and debase it citizens, it will constantly need to watch its people, and these people will always have thoughts that do not mirror the desires of the government. The obedience of the citizens is therefore shaky and will only last as long as the people feel terrified.

Interestingly, this government draws and retains some of its power over the people by contradictory reasoning. Sure, it lies to its people about current events and history, but it also rules by glorifying a non-pleasurable way that they live. The Party states that,

WAR IS PEACE.
FREEDOM IS SLAVERY.
IGNORANCE IS STRENGTH. (Orwell 4)

Because people often repeat this slogan, it hints at three virtues which the Party wants citizens and collective groups to possess. First, since it constantly wages war with other nations, the Party wants to place its propensity for war on a pedestal so that the citizens will prefer war over peace and, thus, always support the actions of their government. War is peace because it is a state at which Oceania has reached a homeostasis. “Freedom” is a trait which they try to debase in their slogan by calling it slavery. Therefore, the reader can deduce that Oceania does not want its citizens to desire freedom since having it will make people less subservient to the tyrannical rule of the government. Lastly, Oceania pushes ignorance on its
people because it seeks to solidify them under a unifying “truth” (which the government fabricates). The government does not want any of its citizens seeking any knowledge that would undermine the edicts of the state. The strength that people draw from their ignorance, then, is power they get from unification under the misdirection of Oceania.

Many citizens in Oceania have trouble assimilating to an over-controlling government. They are visibly nervous when scrutinized but have no outlet for their feelings other than the occasional “victory gin.” World State in Huxley’s *Brave New World* has found a way to make citizens more receptive to relaxed governmental rule so it does not have to resort to torture and imprisonment to subjugate its people. Rather than focusing on constant surveillance, *Brave New World* shows how humans are engineered socially, physically, and intellectually to fit into prescribed identities that facilitate a “utopian” state. However, even Huxley’s universe has deficiencies as the protagonists struggle to fit into this social order.

### 3.3 Brave New World

In *Brave New World*, written in 1931 by Aldus Huxley, the futuristic English society, World State, has done away with the conventional notion of the nuclear family. It is a “civilized state” marked by indifferent sexual promiscuity. The government raises and conditions fetuses in a laboratory where it uses eugenics and psychological engineering to condition each person to accept a distinct, hierarchical social order. World State does manage to sequester most common human suffering through practices similar to those in *Walden Two*. Because it dictates the formation and culture of its people, citizens do not have the strength of character to deal with diversity or with desires for higher self-actualization.

Huxley’s novel, therefore, reflects some of the concerns that many other intellectuals had in the early and mid-twentieth century. With various advancements in technology and in medicine, people began to focus on the prospect of overpopulation and the Malthusian principle which proposed the possibility of depleting resources once a population has surpassed its environment’s carrying capacity. In the *Brave New World*, a densely overpopulated area “...entails more responsibility for the government, and overorganization, characterized by hierarchical systems which concentrate power at the top...” (Schmerl 40). Organization, as a responsibility of the government, is necessary so that people get all of the
things they need. In this case, World State oversteps its power by completely controlling the lives of its citizens from birth to death.

At first glance, noticing the turmoil of individuals within World State, one would suppose that Huxley does not like the implications of eugenics of a population. The reality of this is quite the contrary (Woiak). In his life, Huxley was very interested in population control as well as the health of newer generations. He even hoped to increase the intelligence of a given population by providing desirable pairs of people with incentives to procreate. In light of his personal desires for the advancement of eugenics, *Brave New World*’s critique seems to shift more to the totalitarian views and censorship perpetrated by World State.

With the constant references to Ford as a god, and with the precise manner in which World State propagates its population, the readers see that:

Huxley... is fond of neither mechanization nor the concept of progress. He implies that wholesale industrialization creates men like machines and that too much stress upon progress unjustly sacrifices the here and now for the potentially better tomorrow. (Matter 148)

Huxley deprives citizens of the “here and now” by taking from them the ability to explore and make new discoveries through art and science. Instead, the status quo in World State forces people to live their lives according to a purely consumerist escapist canon where a person must simply perform what is ascribed to him by his government. Then he must consume the products made by other citizens. Citizens, then, become less human and more like robots as they serve as incremental parts of a larger Tayloristic (i.e., Fordistic) process.

World State establishes a clear social order with prescribed roles through a designated hierarchy. This society engineers individuals according to their predestined social position through eugenics, which has become a primary operating module for the propagation of the people. Through excessive conditioning and brainwashing, World State creates a nearly unshakable stability where few question the necessity of the status quo. As one of the pillars of this society, its importance is expressed in “…the World State’s motto, COMMUNITY, IDENTITY, STABILITY” (Huxley 3). World State creates a sense of community because every person has a designated job for which he has been trained thoroughly. In this respect, every person needs everyone else to provide various services which he otherwise would not have the ability to perform. In a sense, World State resembles Plato’s *Republic* where every person must perform his respective duty. World State easily creates the sense of identity in
people who do not question the dynamics of the larger group. For this sake, everyone easily fits into classes coded Alpha, Beta, Delta, and Gamma. Pluses and minuses indicate further means of identification within these classes. The relegation of people into these various categories creates a world where the only way to create

...a stable, utopian world is to engineer inferior castes of menial workers and slavish consumers—the eight-ninths of the metaphorical iceberg that happily lives below the water line and keeps the world running efficiently. (Woiak 116)

The government assigns a person to each class not by his actions; rather, it determines his class by the manner in which it conditions him. Once these people mature, they have no problem with fully associating with their prescribed identity since they have the genetic composition and education of their respective caste. Rather than creating the best possible individuals who all have interests in intellectual pursuits, a Tayloristic society has to engineer individuals who happily perform menial tasks for the rest of the state. The engineering involved in the perpetuation of society then locks citizens into a slavish cycle of production and consumption where they only feel happy, but they are not free. Citizens, trapped in this cycle, have no ability to break out and make new discoveries which could push the society in a new and perhaps better direction. The society thus remains static with clearly defined roles and people who clearly fulfill these roles.

All of these social groups fit well within one another to create a “civilization,” and there is “[n]o civilization without social stability. No social stability without individual stability” (Huxley 42). The basis of World State relies on the idea that an individual should not question his place or identity, but the main characters who have trouble fitting in with their castes, question the values and cultural practices of this society. Despite the overwhelming pressure to make individuals conform, and thus make them uniform, Bernard Marx and John show the conflicts that come from rebelling against these pressures (Schmerl 40). Since Bernard Marx does not garner the respect he thinks he deserves, he seeks out a way to distinguish himself from others. He, as a character who has not matured like other people in his caste, feels a type of alienation from others. “Contact with members of the lower castes always reminded him painfully of his physical inadequacy. ‘I am I, and wish I wasn’t’ his self-consciousness was acute and distressing” (Huxley 64). This sentiment leads Bernard to feel overwhelmingly deficient most of the time. Because of his difference, he tends to desire solitude, which the cultural norms of World State do not value, making
Bernard stand out even more as an oddity. Since he has no means of dealing with his diversity, he acts on a petty chance to cause a disturbance in the collective social order by suing another troubled character, John.

Having come to World State as a naturally-born man, John is only partially socialized through his mother to the customs which all others, through conditioning, take for granted. He toils between two cultures, and he doesn’t fit into either one. Since John has grown up on a reservation, his adolescent environment has instilled him with a value of sexual “propriety” that does not correlate with his new cultural surroundings where “…everyone belongs to everyone else” (Huxley 43). When John sees a beautiful person like Lenina, who explicitly demonstrates her intentions for intercourse, he suffers from culture shock and overreacts.

The established cultural norms regarding meaningless sex in World State intend to strengthen the bonds of the community by making people not only more accessible to one another, but it lessens ailments caused by sexual tensions. Cultural norms also permit sexual promiscuity among citizens because the state wants to maintain a decentralization of family and exclusive relationships.

Similar to Walden Two and Republic, Brave New World has (with the use of labs and conditioning centers to rear children) effectively eliminated the nuclear family. With that, they eliminated the strong bonds that people share within a family, which could potentially divide loyalties or cause emotions disagreeable to the state. Because of their lack of familial ties, people in this “civilized” society misunderstand John, who has different notions of sexual propriety, and who has a great affection for his mother. After John’s mother dies, he focuses his negative emotions on the cause of his mother’s death, soma.

Citizens regularly use soma to feel calm and happy. Thus, “[h]appiness is a kind of bovine satisfaction guaranteed by pills” (Sibley 273). Soma dehumanizes the citizens by suppressing any unwanted, negative feelings the government provides every single citizen with a soma ration. The use of this drug has become not only socially acceptable, but it is a social imperative. Whenever one person feels any type of discomfort, he feels an inclination to take some pills perhaps because of conditioned phrases like, “One cubic centimeter cures ten gloomy sentiments… And remember that a gramme is better than a damn” (Huxley 54-55). These mnemonic devices show how World State propagates its cultural beliefs. The more people repeat these sayings, the more they believe them. People even tend to state these
sayings when they feel initial pangs of anxiety. When the government cannot fully rid people of their stress, existing social orders and mnemonic phrases encourage them to use drugs and escapist entertainment to emotionally run away from aggravating or awkward situations. Despite the fact that continued or over-usage of this pill causes death, the government still pressures people to take since it helps to sequester any type of dissent among citizens. In this action, citizens demonstrate institutionalized deficiency where every person depends on drugs and meaningless sayings to deal with social problems.

John, in a fit of rage, seeks out the ever-important soma with the desire to destroy it, thus curing people of their dependence on it. He sees it as a detrimental thing, and as he throws some daily rations out a window, he yells to the people, “I’ll teach you; I’ll make you free whether you want to or not!” (Huxley 213). This idea also appears in The Social Contract— that citizens who are not free, by the mandate of a social pact, will be forced to be free. Undeniably, the people of World State are bound to their conditioning. They are not free because their ignorance of other options keeps them confined to the things they already know. They have no choice in what they are going to be, and their government and most peers strongly encourage them to act like everyone else. Ironically, John wants to force a condition onto these people, which they also did not choose. When John sought to force his kind of “freedom” on the people around him, he seeks to instill his own values others.

Aside from the excessive use of soma, John also dislikes the forms of entertainment in this state. Soma and “feelies” replace more poignant literary works as the primary means of keeping people in their respective positions. Censorship plays an important role in maintaining the ignorance of the people so creative thoughts do not shake from their conditioning. As in Republic, World State has the philosopher-king, who possesses the knowledge of truth, yet he has descended into the “cave” to rule society. He demonstrates the idea that, “The greater a man’s talents, the greater his power is led astray. It is better that one should suffer than that many should be corrupted” (Huxley 148). He refers to knowledge, here, as a symptom of corruption.

Mond, the philosopher-king, serves his role well by having a comprehensive knowledge of the beauty of science, art, and literature, but he keeps that from citizens in World State because he thinks these arts will corrupt them. Certainly, when citizens become aware of knowledge outside of their conditioning, it questions the infallibility of their
solidarity. It can also destabilize their faith in government because sciences and arts provide individuals with vast amounts of uncontrollable information. If arts, sciences, and literature are allowed in World State, people in Mond’s position would have problems not only with controlling what people read but with how they interpret it. The ideas and self-actualization which people attain from books (if they were interested in books) would empower citizens and make them harder to control. But, Plato’s *Republic* and World State, by perpetuating ignorance create a condition where they could face demise if people ever found out that their government withheld large amounts of information from them. Doubtless, any awakening would shake beliefs so significantly that people would doubt the altruism of their government. By controlling what a person does for entertainment and by taking away arts and sciences, World State succeeds in stunting intellectual growth and critical thinking in its citizens. When the state finds a way to put its citizens in a subjugated frame of mind, then it can tell them that they are happy and that they are free.

In the “civilized” order of World State,

People are happy; they get what they want, and they never want what they can’t get. They’re well off; they’re safe; they’re never ill; they’re not afraid of death; they’re blissfully ignorant of passion and old age; they’re plagued with no mothers or fathers; they’ve got no wives, or children, or lovers to feel strongly about; they’re so conditioned that they practically can’t help behaving as they ought to behave. And if anything should go wrong, there’s *soma*. (Huxley 220)

In effect, World State in *Brave New World*, as in Zamyatin’s *We*, conveys how the mechanization of a totalitarian society robs people of a rich life of passions. The situation presented here regarding the nature of people’s lives within World State also correlates with Skinner’s commune in *Walden Two*. World State has conditioned its citizens so that they no longer have any free will. Also, Huxley recognizes that institutional conditioning probably does not prevent all anxieties which disturb the social order. Psychological technology cannot compensate for the spiritedness of people, so where eugenics and conditioning fail, *soma* provides inept citizens with a way to deal with awkward social situations. Thus, science completely controls the minds of the individual.

John disputes the ethicality of World State’s practices. Since John has not received any conditioning from childhood, he does not fully dedicate himself to the culture and taboos of World State, to which Mond responds,
In fact… you’re claiming the right to be unhappy… Not to mention the right to grow old and ugly and impotent; the right to have too little to eat; the right to be lousy; the right to live in constant apprehension of what may happen tomorrow; the right to catch typhoid; the right to be tortured by unspeakable pains of every kind. (Huxley 240)

His right to be unhappy, as Mond puts it, is also the right to determine his own approach to life without being overtly corrupted by the conditioning of the government. By Mond’s reasoning, and by the government’s actions, the people in World State do not have the right to be unhappy. They do not have the right to fear sickness or death because it might inhibit the work they do for the state. The government limits the individual’s self-determination and anxiety so that people can function at their greatest capacity. Their bodies, just as Zamyatin’s We, merely serve as vessels like robotic automatons. The fact that one’s brain and body have no self-determination outside of cold, institutional regulation shows that the state does not value the rights of individuals. In effect, the state robs people of their natural curiosities (as we see in the case where children were conditioned to dislike books).

Since the state robs people of the natural fear of mortality, they take for granted any cultural appreciation for this natural cycle of life and any ritual or stress associated with it. John gleans masochistic tendencies from the reservation, where religious flogging purges misdeeds. When Bernard transplants him to a “sinful” state, the desire to flog himself escalates as John can only deal with social anxieties through self-mutilation. Even though John, on the other hand, is a character marked by his exaggerated masochism, nonetheless, when he stands up for the right to have negative feelings, he also stands up to have passions which make life worth living.

*Brave New World*, which focuses on efficiency, produces people and culture as if they were products on an assembly line. In part, this novel is an intellectual response to aspects of popular culture that Huxley deemed undesirable. After a visit to the United States, “Americans can live out their lives,” he said in 1927, “...without once being solitary, without once making a serious mental effort, without once being out of sight or sound of some ready-made distraction” (Woiak 113). In many respects, Huxley and Bradbury shared similar notions pertaining to popular culture, and Bradbury illustrates Huxley’s observation in his book, *Fahrenheit 451*. 
3.4 Fahrenheit 451

*Fahrenheit 451*, completed in 1953 by Ray Bradbury, tells the story of a futuristic dystopia set in the United States where people have become so captivated by television that they eventually lose the taste for reading literature. In this society, firemen cause fires to burn offending books that include works of Shakespeare, the *Bible*, and the vast majority of other novels, magazines, and anthologies. With his work, Bradbury reasons that for a true progression to occur in groups as well as in individuals, men must always think critically, considering the thoughts and arts of previous generations. *Fahrenheit 451* demonstrates how large groups that prioritize base entertainment over discovery lose the ability to appreciate their environment.

Similar to Aldus Huxley, Ray Bradbury shows a concern with the post-World War II population boom. Guy Montag illustrates this concern when he thinks to himself, “There are too many of us... There are billions of us and that’s too many. Nobody knows anyone.” (Bradbury 14). Despite the fact that people are social creatures, having larger populations does not necessarily mean that people will foster more relationships. As Bradbury demonstrates, the inverse tends to hold true. With greater populations, people tend to be more introverted than they would be in smaller communities. A social norm has formed in this case where people close themselves off and lose the value of meaningful relationships.

Montag, on the other hand, begins to desire more meaningful human contact as he feels lost in the large population. When overpopulation occurs congruently with the consumption of intellectual property (whether it is a profound novel or a base form of entertainment), *Fahrenheit 451* shows us that Bradbury seems to think that only smaller groups can truly appreciate the kinds of entertainment which demand critical thought. But when the media attempt to pander to a larger audience instead of smaller crowds, they lose some of their intellectual appeal. When “… the world got full of eyes and elbows and mouths. Double, triple, quadruple the population. Films and radios, magazines, books leveled down to a sort of paste pudding norm…” (Bradbury 51). In Bradbury’s proposed scenario of the futuristic America, people lose interest in putting mental effort into the consideration of human nature and their surroundings because the simplicity of television makes them withdraw into themselves. The population simply has grown too fast, and more people have become addicted to the passive observance of watching television rather than the more
intellectual endeavors of reading. Since the population has grown so much, individuals have lost control over the actions and desires of the larger group. The author, thus, drives at the idea that the media proliferated with the population, intending to appeal to greater numbers of people. To do so, the media have had to “level down” or become more low-brow so that people would understand and enjoy them.

In this society, firemen have the means to actively eliminate the threats to their social order which gives readers a glimpse into the value system of the state. In a sense, the citizens of Bradbury’s futuristic U.S. world share similarities with the citizens in We. People in both of these worlds like simple, explainable facts.

... they’ll feel they’re thinking, they’ll get a sense of motion without moving. And they’ll be happy because facts of that sort don’t change. (Bradbury 58)

Without addressing moral and social questions, people feel more secure in simple, factual data. Individuals, thus, get an illusion of deeper thought by giving them non-controversial information. Focusing on trivial facts, people can feel as though they progress intellectually when they do not really think critically. This increases the docility in people and makes them more open to suggestion.

Most seek diversion by their existing form of entertainment so they can ignore imperfection. Thus, books are so hated and feared because

… [t]hey show the pores in the face of life. The comfortable people want only wax moon faces, poreless, hairless, expressionless. We are living in a time when flowers are trying to live on flowers, instead of growing on good rain and black loom. (Bradbury 79)

By the demands of the citizens, they have elected to restrict their own freedoms. Citizens have elected to censor their own media. The larger group here has turned on the rights of their fellow citizens. A citizen explicitly has no right to finer arts; however, the state treats reading most books as a heinous crime punishable by the destruction of property and the imprisonment of the individual. They potentially have done this for two reasons: first, they want the ability to neglect the undesirable aspects of life and all of the difficulties they would have to face within it. In forgetting literature, and by dedicating their time to diverting entertainment, they can ignore things that evoke unpleasant emotions. They can even ignore one another. Second, they feel uncomfortable with a minority of people having the ability to think critically while they themselves do not. The group, which refuses to take the time to
understand the more high-brow arts, thus seeks to eliminate those arts from their view so that they might force a minority to think and act more like they do.

These base programs and radio shows become so superficial and innumerable that people like Montag take for granted that others would compose such works. One might justify this sentiment because base works do not necessarily say anything worth saying. If there is no meaningful plot or dialogue, then writers do not have to invest any feeling into composing television and radio productions. It would seem as though Montag has never had any particular interest in television; however, he finds something of interest, like books, and he realizes his dissatisfaction in life and sees “…that a man was behind each one of the books. A man had to think them up. A man had to take a long time to put them down on paper. And [he had] never even thought that thought before.’” (Bradbury 49). When he incinerates the books, he destroys the legacy of those other authors. By burning books, he burns people.

Booker in his analysis of Bradbury’s novel brings readers’ attention to a division Bradbury makes between high and low culture: “…rather than examine…the possible causes of this phenomenon in the workings of large commercial and state interests, Bradbury seems to suggest that it comes about largely because the bulk of the people simply have bad taste” (Booker 109). He therefore seems to think that the demands of most people for menial entertainment affect what commercial industries create for them to consume. This assumption neglects the more nuanced relationship between consumers and their economy where the economy also has the power to generate demand for the things they create. Bradbury, like Huxley, apparently believes in an intellectual stratification where most people have poor, low-brow taste. This assumption places a value judgment on popular culture of the mid-twentieth century where the majority of entertainment has nothing to contribute to higher social commentary. Bradbury’s character, Montag, then represents a desire to instill cultural values in a larger population from which Bradbury separates himself.

Montag’s zeal for high-brow works isolates him even more from people around him. One scene in particular exemplifies this stark contrast between the protagonist and the general sentiments of his society. As Montag desperately reads in a subway, there are too many distractions which divert his attention from the book he reads.
Montag found himself on his feet, the shocked inhabitants of the loud car staring, moving back from this man with the insane, gorged face, the gibbering dry mouth, the flapping book in his fist. The people who had been sitting a moment before tapping their feet to the rhythm of Denham’s Dentifrice, Denham’s Dandy Dental Detergent, Denham’s Dentifrice Dentifrice Dentifrice, one two, one two three, one two, one two three. The people whose mouths had been faintly twitching the words Dentifrice Dentifrice Dentifrice. The train radio vomited upon Montag, in retaliation, a great tonload of music made of tin, copper, silver chromium, and brass. The people were pounded into submission; they did not run, there was no place to run...(Bradbury 75)

The contrast between the simple, repetitive mnemonic device of repetition and Montag’s efforts to understand the poetry presents readers with the circumstances of his escalating frustration. Montag’s efforts become drowned out by the brainwashing tunes of a toothpaste commercial. The other people in this subway car take the jingle in subconsciously as it fills the silence around them. The people then become a part of the advertisement as they sing along and tap their feet. They have been completely assimilated into the world of sales and artless entertainment whereas Montag does not hear the music as they do. He perceives the music more as a jumble of metallic sounds. The cacophony in his head—the frustration he feels with external noise—weighs down upon him so much that he acts out. The people in the car as a part of the advertisement are more submissive to its suggestive power while Montag has the overwhelming desire to escape.

As a society that spends most of its time watching television programs with no plots, studded with advertisements that address them by their names, this order effectively isolates people from one another. Television becomes a drug for the common citizen like soma in Brave New World. Also like soma, television serves as a means to evade social anxieties, providing people with a way to avoid social situations that involve profound thinking skills. For instance, Montag’s wife, Mildred has become so absent minded that she overdoses on barbiturates so she will fall asleep.

Surprisingly, Montag’s wife, Mildred, has not actually intended to overdose on barbiturates. Montag proposes that she had simply forgotten each previous dose she has taken. His idea, coupled with the commonalities of barbiturate overdoses in this state leads me to believe that the nature of Mildred’s overdose represents the nature of overdoses within the larger population, that the lack of critical thinking—the numbness to life outside of low-
brow entertainment—makes them negligent of their bodies and forgetful of their actions. The sights and sounds of television and radio hinder people’s feelings and memories.

The barbiturates that Mildred takes represent an extension of the metaphor for people’s dependence on technology. Like her dependence on drugs, Mildred overly depends on entertainment. She even keeps the radio on when she sleeps, creating the constant sound which one can associate with the unstoppable stimulus from televisions of Big Brother in 1984, where people could not turn down or ignore the noise. Unlike the people in 1984, Mildred chooses this way of life. She does not want to stop watching television or listening to the shell-like radio receiver in her ear. By proxy, she also relies on the technology of medicine to help her perform the more basic, primal act of sleeping. She has become alienated from people and the natural needs of her body because she only wants to watch television and spend time with her pseudo-family.

Most citizens in this society are simply consumers. They consume television and products without question, and though they have the power to choose what to buy, they still force one another to fit into their consumerist culture where this “...regime... masks its totalitarianism with a façade of material prosperity” (Seed 227-8). Unlike other dystopias, this culture imposes most of the oppression on itself. On the surface, people can buy things and possess things, but underneath they have no way of escaping the need to do so. If they are not allowed to read, and if it is unsafe to walk outside without the danger of being fatally killed by a car, then people must stay inside where their primary means of passing time is consumption.

Ultimately, people want to ignore books, arts, and the world outside to become more introverted. They can better control their own emotions if they do not have acute feelings. They shirk the responsibilities they have to other people. Fire is fitting to use when they get rid of books since

What is fire? It’s a mystery. Scientists give us gobbledegook about friction and molecules. But they don’t really know. Its real beauty is that it destroys responsibility and consequences. A problem gets too burdensome, then into the furnace with it. (Bradbury 109)

Bradbury uses Fahrenheit 451 to show an exaggeration of what people do when they get too involved with technology. He creates a society where people have turned away from the unpleasantries deemed difficult to handle. Of course, people might want to ignore problems
they face, but in doing so, they do not mentally mature at all. They do not achieve any kind of character development from dealing with their feelings, questions, and adversity. Fire might have the ability to destroy everything, even posterity and ideas. It takes away the evidence of “ugly” things which make life captivating.

Despite the fact that Bradbury seems to believe that an overpopulated society will cause the degeneration of culture, he evokes hope in the cycle of culture with the allusion to the phoenix. Throughout *Fahrenheit 451*, fire and rain commonly occur where fire represents destruction and death, and rain represents rebirth and fertility. Firemen (whose symbol is the phoenix) use fire to kill ideas by destroying books, but before firemen burn all the knowledge, curious people retain some of the information as we see at the end of the novel when Montag meets up with other intellectual outcasts.

Peter Sisario mentions in “[a] Study of the Allusions in Bradbury’s ‘Fahrenheit 451,’” that “Through... Granger, Bradbury expresses the hope that mankind might use ... his knowledge of his own intellectual and physical destruction to keep from going through endless cycles of disintegration and rebirth” (Sisario 202). Perhaps with this extreme, unprecedented commercialism, a cycle can be broken by people who have faced extreme oppression; however, I do not believe that Bradbury uses Granger to represent a hope in an end of a cycle. Instead, Bradbury uses Granger to represent a hope that a cycle will always continue despite the larger resistance to an “upward” trend. Even Granger himself refers to imparting knowledge “...until another Dark Age, when [he] might have to do the whole thing over again” (Bradbury 137). Bradbury enforces the cyclical trends in culture as an important theme in *Fahrenheit 451*, and this cycle constantly controls culture regardless of era. It just so happens that Bradbury’s novel takes place at a time where culture has lapsed, which affects all other aspects of social and political life.

Lawmakers leave citizens mostly ungoverned. In a place where drug overdoses occur often, the government makes no attempt to enact programs to help the wavering mental health of their people. The government does not assure safety as the reckless driving and violent tendencies of adolescents kills many people. Death by homicide occurs so often that people take it for granted when a fellow citizen dies. This shows that the media distract people so much that they do not appreciate the life around them. When one person dies, they do not mourn the loss of a life since television (unlike literature) takes away their powers of
empathy. In light of this culture, people successfully evade the fear of mortality, and thus they have dehumanized themselves by ignoring such a fear.

*Fahrenheit 451* illustrates that, “[s]ocial change, so intimately connected with technological change, is not necessarily good; for it may move away from justice and, if seen as a good in itself, violate human integrity or mental and spiritual health” (Sibley 259). Ray Bradbury proposes a dystopic idea by focusing on the effects of constant, mindless entertainment and censorship of individuals, where people isolate themselves from all others, regardless of social class. Their close relation with technology has drawn them into a life subverted by their attachment to technology. As they become dependent, on technology as a form of escape, advancements in technology subvert people in other sectors of society. As we see in *Player Piano*, this American dystopia focuses on the negative economic effects on future Americans as they do not have the ability to find fulfilling work.

### 3.5 Player Piano

While he was working in public relations for General Electric, Kurt Vonnegut saw a new milling machine that would end up replacing many well-paid workers (Reilly and Vonnegut). As he imagined the implications of this machine, he got the inspiration to write his first novel, *Player Piano*, which he completed in 1952. It takes place in upstate New York many years into the future. In this society, corporations use machines as the primary forms of production which leaves the majority of people without meaningful jobs. Dr. Paul Proteus, the protagonist, manages the machines in many factories and is married to a woman, Anita. He feels troubled by the visible divisions of the classes caused by the mechanization of the American workforce where a few managers and engineers have become an elite class while other American laborers have trouble finding work outside of menial government service. In *Player Piano* criticizes the free-market, utopian, economic ideal by showing how capitalism stratifies culture and causes anxiety in individuals by placing value on wealth and technology rather than emotional satisfaction.

Through extrapolation, one sees that U.S. society has come to value mechanization, efficiency, production and machines above the needs of individuals. To operate the machines which have taken over production, a class society has come into existence where managers and engineers have much more esteem than other people who compose a former working class. Self-fulfillment for these lower classes has dwindled since the advent of a fully
mechanized workforce, and the citizens can only rise above this social class by obtaining a Ph.D. and by scoring high on an IQ test.

The standardization process creates tension as people can have adept skills, yet they do not test well on these. As the novel progresses, the reader comes to sympathize with their plight. Vonnegut shows that mechanization and standardization often neglect the needs of human beings, who are not easily classified by tests. Meanwhile, people have no means of supporting themselves with a respectable livelihood.

For generations they’ve been built up to worship competition and the market, productivity and economic usefulness, and the envy of their fellow men—and boom! It’s all yanked out from under them. They can’t participate, can’t be useful any more. Their culture’s been shot to hell. (Vonnegut 90-91)

*Player Piano* takes place within a few generations of what some of the characters call a third industrial revolution, where machines do all the hard labor for man. As a result, people do not have the means to draw importance from a career-oriented life. They do not have any career that can provide them with a sense of self-worth and satisfaction. Machines, which produce goods for people to buy, become so important that only managers and engineers have respectable jobs in this society. The lack of diversity in this economy elevates few people while others become impotent as contributors. At the same time, people receive highly inflated wages for the more esteemed positions. Most other men only have opportunities to work in the army or on infrastructural maintenance. In return for their hard labor, they earn only a fraction of the wages that people in higher social classes receive.

Social division creates a tension between the classes. They begin to resent one another as they are separated not only emotionally, but physically—by a river. Despite the fact that he has always lived in a higher social class, Dr. Proteus feels guilty for his privilege. In a passionate attempt to show his wife the goodness of the people across the river, he takes her there on the night of their anniversary and implores her to disregard the great difference between her and her fellow American citizens. She reinforces her segregation from them and has a sense of propriety—of ownership—with which Dr. Proteus does not agree. When she sees his dissatisfaction with the status quo, she asks him what they could give to make things better. But Dr. Proteus sees a problem with this line of thinking. He says:

You said what else could *we* give *them*, as though everything in the world were ours to give or withhold… things haven’t always been that way. It’s new, and it’s people like us who’ve brought it about. Hell, everybody used to have some
personal skill or willingness to work or something he could trade for what he wanted. Now that the machines have taken over, it’s quite somebody who has anything to offer. All most people can do is hope to be given something. (Vonnegut 184)

Dr. Proteus finds this imbalance discomforting, and because of his social position, privilege, and power, he perhaps feels responsible for the distribution of wealth. Because many people in wealthier positions have easy access to property, privilege, and money, they often take it for granted and assume that it rightfully belongs to them. However, the skewed payment system has provided them with an abundant salary, and, of course most people in higher social classes tend to assume that they, by right of intelligence or shrewdness, deserve far more wealth and satisfaction than other people. Only when these higher echelons have some sort of surplus, then, they can allow others to partake of the wealth. This seems true in more than just a figurative sense since social divisions create rifts where citizens cannot sympathize with one another.

*Player Piano* is rife with social divisions resulting from technological change. The divisions serve as examples to readers as “Vonnegut has simply shown the distressing paradox, in which the utopia of progressive thought, when consummated, may well generate restless discontent and become dystopia” (Sullivan 143). Though theoretically the implementation of machines as cheap labor benefits businesses and makes life easier on many workers, we see that a society that gets carried away with making everything efficient actually diminishes the available work for people. Their labor to find work in this case becomes even more intensive and troublesome than doing the labor-intensive production work of machines. With a smaller job pool, people become more stratified as some find jobs that are very necessary for society while others struggle to make a living.

Vonnegut touches upon pre-existing socio-economic tensions when he writes his novel. However, he exaggerates the tensions by creating a workforce where men no longer comprise an integral part of the production process. Most men have to resort to jobs where they feel unfulfilled by the good or service which they provide. Few people feel passionately in their line of work. It is extremely rare in this world when someone can have his own business or create something that machines cannot. In a way, this book is a little prophetic since people in the U.S. no longer produce goods as they did at the time when Vonnegut wrote it. In contemporary American society, we do see a hyper-inflated system of wealth
where people of certain socio-economic classes work many, long hours in jobs that they find
menial with no benefits while managers and engineers have salaries larger than anyone else,
and we see this as an integral part of a capitalistic system.

Vonnegut’s novel focuses on the importance of consumption within the schema of
capitalism. People must buy the goods that the machines have made because “Machines were
doing America’s work better than Americans had ever done it. There were better goods for
more people at less cost, and who could deny that that was magnificent and gratifying?”
(Vonnegut 52). The low cost means that more people have access to cheaply made goods.
Companies can make these products on a mass scale with a low profit per unit; therefore,
many people, who do not earn high incomes, can buy multiple appliances. Even though
cheap prices make individual products less profitable, selling mass quantities makes up for
the small profit per item. (Interestingly, some people would now call this the Wal-Mart effect
where outsourced, cheap labor makes it possible to produce a high volume of cheap goods. In
contemporary terms, outsourcing has had a similar effect on the American workforce as the
mechanization of production).

Aspects of this novel lampoon many modern, capitalistic business practices. For
instance, the richer classes in Player Piano justify their wealth by alluding to the rising ships
metaphor. They say that people now have a higher standard of living because everyone owns
things like television sets, whereas their predecessors did not. The wealthier classes say that
all people are privileged because they have dishwashers and washing machines and the like,
but they refuse to acknowledge the quality of emotional health and how people must spend
their lives in an unsatisfied, unskilled job. One cannot measure happiness with appliances
and televisions.

Vonnegut takes these arguments into consideration. Instead of focusing merely in the
wealth disparity of the social classes, he also focuses on the disparity of self-worth. The
narrator notes that:

Man has survived Armageddon in order to enter the Eden of eternal peace, only to
discover that everything he had looked forward to enjoying there, pride, dignity,
self-respect, work worth doing, has been condemned as unfit for human
consumption. (Vonnegut 301)

True, consumption is undeniably an integral factor in the daily life of American society. In
this vein, Vonnegut shows that men should not solely value consumption and money. People
might live in a kind of Eden because they have more access to material goods, but when
technology takes the jobs of people in *Player Piano*, pride, dignity, and self-respect do not translate well into the new world order. Going beyond the value judgment that Vonnegut makes about the worth of jobs like factory production, he shows that people can sometimes get caught up in only coveting things that have monetary value in a trade economy. The devaluing of non-sellable virtues makes many people feel unfulfilled in their lives.

In addition to the loss of emotional fulfillment, an overemphasis on the values of products tends to extend to putting a monetary value on people. When this happens, “Life becomes a process of buying and selling; and in our conceptions of ourselves and others, human attributes take on a commodity-like meaning” (Sullivan 52). With the commodification of labor and bodies, a social order can easily assign monetary value to people that will often translate to a person’s worth and self-worth in society. If a state values one person’s labor by paying him generously (like a manager in this novel, for instance), that person will generally feel more confident than a person who is underpaid. In this case, Vonnegut shows a concern that machines devalue people.

In *Player Piano*, machines provide cheap labor, which creates a larger social issue. The workers are at a disadvantage when a company has a large mechanized workforce that does not cost as much as paying people fair wages. Dr. Proteus’s friend at one point says that the machines are in fact slaves and “[a]nybody that competes with slaves becomes a slave” (Vonnegut 281). By a cost/benefit analysis, companies replace wage-earners with slaves (i.e., machines). However, people who coexist must depend on one another to provide goods and services as a function of trade. In a place where numerous people cannot provide for themselves, they become disenfranchised and undervalued, especially since their capitalistic economy has no place for them. By calling machines slaves, Robert Uphaus states that Vonnegut wants to humanize robotics and technology. I, however, disagree. Vonnegut seeks to call attention to the fact that robotics and technology are only things that take humanity away from people. Because technology has such power over society, they get caught up in efficiency and Fordism that many people cannot find satisfying work. This happens to characters like Edgar R. B. Hagstrohm. Instead of having multiple options for earning a living, he chooses to join the Reconstruction and Reclamation Corps so that he can qualify
for the basic government stipend allotted to people who have no other means of support. Hagstrohm, like many people, feels dissatisfied with his occupation.

Even though the government provides all citizens with a job, these state jobs have three main aspects which make them undesirable. First, they dehumanize workers through militarization where most people must live in barracks and supervisors treat them less like civilians and more like soldiers. Secondly, these jobs do not fulfill a citizen’s desire for job specialization where he can use skills. Finally, the rest of society does not hold any esteem for these jobs. All three of these factors contribute to making a person feel degraded when he resorts to government jobs.

The struggle to avoid demeaning government work plagues people. The tension apparent in the scramble to find work persists “...as Vonnegut has his protagonists look for meaning in a world which, since World War Two, had become patently meaningless” (Messent 102). Machines and technology, especially since the advent of World War II, have changed the world significantly. Vonnegut then uses characters in Player Piano to show the struggles that people have when searching for new meaning in life. These represent the kind of people who find their meaning of life in work and derive their self-worth from work more so than anything else.

Unique jobs have diminished rapidly in this state, and in light of the options allotted to most citizens, and how they feel because of their circumstances, Dr. Proteus states that “The main business of humanity is to do a good job of being human beings… not to serve as appendages to machines, institutions, and systems” (Vonnegut 315). In the larger context of government, politics, and the economy, the individual gets lost. Similar situations occur in We, 1984, and Brave New World. In Player Piano, even if the majority of people become dissatisfied with their lot in life, their isolation from privileged classes makes them powerless to orchestrate a timely, peaceful change.

Since the wealthier, powerful classes do not sympathize with the plight of the underprivileged majority, the fraternity of mankind fundamentally breaks down. “Being human beings” here refers to some sort of satisfaction and self-realization which mechanized institutions cannot provide for people. Disparities in wealth, in utopian writings outlined in the previous chapter of this paper, lead societies toward corruption since isolation from one
another leads people to only look out for their own prosperity rather than the general will of others.

Interestingly, a jobless person must register with the police whenever he does not have a job. It seems as though unemployment or living in a household without a main breadwinner is a crime. The criminalization of the unemployed decreases the social esteem of lower classes and puts them under the suspicion of the state because they become more likely to sabotage machines. To combat this, the state has more welfare systems and government jobs available. The fact that private industries do not hire people to work on their production lines means that the government had to step in to provide jobs for their citizens which does not fix the discontent of the people, though, as the nature of these jobs has left them feeling unfulfilled.

As in *Player Piano*, the setting of Ursula Le Guin’s *The Lathe of Heaven* takes place in a futuristic U.S. dystopia. While Vonnegut’s characters illustrate issues with production and the workforce, Le Guin’s novel points out environmental damages caused by overproduction and overpopulation. Unlike Dr. Proteus, Le Guin’s characters have a means to easily alter social order, which means they can evade facing the difficulties of slowly changing a society through activism. Unfortunately, their changes have unforeseen effects that ripple outward uncontrollably.

### 3.6 The Lathe of Heaven

Most of Ursula Le Guin’s works feature utopian thoughts as reflected by a protagonist who visits another world (Huntington 237-8). Unlike her other works, the protagonist never leaves his world. Instead, he creates new ones and wakes up in them. In 1971, Le Guin wrote the novel, *The Lathe of Heaven*, which takes place in post-apocalyptic Portland, Oregon. The very nature of this society constantly shifts because the main character, George Orr, has the power to change reality with his dreams. Set in the year 2002, greenhouse gases have changed the climate, making many environments uninhabitable wastelands while it perpetually rains in other places like Oregon. Initially, overpopulation has created a food scarcity while the U.S. wages a brutal war with the Middle East.

George Orr gets caught abusing drugs in attempts to suppress his reality-altering dreams. Faced with the prospect of imprisonment for such an offence, he elects to go into
Voluntary Therapeutic Treatment with Dr. Haber, who discovers the power of George’s dreams and uses them to alter reality in order to make a more perfect world. Unfortunately, Dr. Haber does not anticipate the complexity of this feat as George’s dreams only create bigger problems. The shifting nature of reality in Le Guin’s *The Lathe of Heaven* demonstrates the negative effects of attempting to control every undesirable aspect of one’s environment. By overtly, artificially forcing change on people, the excessive intervention of a minority over the majority often causes even more unforeseen problems.

Though Le Guin has modeled her dystopian society on existing American practices, some differences persist. For example, people have pharmacy cards intended to regulate their usage of drugs. These cards show a standardization of the drug industry, which demonstrates that many people in this alternate reality have a need for drugs, and it has become a norm for people to use prescription pills. The cards limit how much a person can consume as well, and because George Orr abuses these drugs, the state penalizes him.

This society has also recognized the need to regulate and ration certain resources which are in a short commodity, such as food and protein. Unfortunately, simply intending that every citizen should get a fair share of food does not ensure that every person gets what he needs. Even though the U.S. recognizes every citizen’s right to food, problems like climate change and overpopulation have created a shortage of resources. The government might have the ability to produce drugs for its citizens, but food is in a much higher demand. It has created “Old Cities” and “New Cities” with the intention of solving the food crisis. In reorganizing citizens, the government wanted to solve problems like malnutrition and disease.

And what difference did it make? Undernourishment, overcrowding, and pervading foulness of the environment were the norm. There was more scurvy, typhus, and hepatitis in the Old Cities, more gang violence, crime and murder in the New Cities. The rats run one and the Mafia run the other. (Le Guin 28)

Le Guin demonstrates the dystopic qualities of this society in its obvious corruption and the many health issues that remain apparent among the citizens. The government has no control over crime or basic resources. It does not possess the capacity to give citizens what they need. We see that the government, in practice, does not have the means to properly enforce laws and edicts. Therefore, it cannot actually give each citizen what he needs.
This book deals with alternate realities in order to explore the various outcomes when a few people have the power to change the fates of many people. Since reality fluctuates, the rapid shifts provide readers with sudden contrasts, which they can use to evaluate the progress or regression of the ideal social order. George Orr, who realizes his power, does not want the responsibility of affecting the world with his dreams.

At first, George merely feels uncomfortable with the course of his therapeutic treatment more than he is adverse to Haber’s domineering quest to alter reality. While manipulating George’s dreams, Dr. Haber changes history to solve issues which he sees as major problems. For instance, he asks George to dream of something that would solve overpopulation and greenhouse problems, so George, who cannot control the specificities of his dreams, creates an epidemic that retroactively wipes out millions of people. After these dreams, George realizes that he is

…in the world, not against it. It doesn’t work to try to stand outside things and run them that way. It doesn’t work, it goes against life. There is a way but you have to follow it. The world is, no matter how we think it ought to be. You have to be with it. You have to let it be. (Le Guin 140)

With this statement, the reader can extrapolate many meanings and metaphors from the idea that people exist as a part of the world and should not pit themselves against nature. Firstly, Le Guin obviously alludes to Dr. Haber’s and George’s interference with reality. Rather than ascribing a value judgment to previous occurrences and attempting to adjust them to a perceived notion of how to construct reality, nature ought to run its course. Let the various causes and effects play out so that the world as well as the people in it can reach a homeostasis. With respect to this thought, *The Lathe of Heaven* takes a Taoist perspective on how humanity ought to interact with nature. It “…teaches us that if we would truly make the world a better place, we must abandon all pretense towards rational control. We must renounce all distinctions between ourselves and the rest of the world…” (Call 96). Despite the abilities we as humans have in manipulating our environments with technology, we can never fully master our environment as if it is separate from us. George increasingly comes to this conclusion as he sees the effects of his dreams on the world around him.

The second parallel one can draw relates to a more general statement pertaining to man’s interference in nature. With our scientific knowledge, constant technological progression, and new discoveries, man often interferes so much with nature that he cannot
keep up with solving the problems that he creates when he intervenes. We, as human beings, must consider the practical impossibility of attending to all of the complexities of the universe and to all of the unintended consequences of our actions. In this vein of thought, George Orr reflects:

… when the mind becomes conscious, when the rate of evolution speeds up, then you have to be careful. Careful of the world. You must learn the way. You must learn the skills, the art, the limits. A conscious mind must be part of the whole, intentionally and carefully—as the rock is part of the whole unconsciously. (Le Guin 168)

Thus, Dr. Haber not only becomes a benevolent tyrant, but Le Guin uses him as a metaphor for the intervention of man in nature. Dr. Haber, with his power to manipulate reality, within a short amount of time potentially causes more harm than good. Men, with their self-awareness and their expanding consciousness, have this power to change the environment drastically with technology. George Orr shows the readers that power to change something for a perceived improvement might not definitively solve a problem. In fact, a drastic change means the hard work needed to reach a balance has not yet solidified within the consciousness of the state. Dr. Haber abuses George’s power, which extends from individual people to the environment, but since he views himself as separate from his surroundings, Dr. Haber has no sensitivity to the changes he makes.

With George’s dreams, Haber can manipulate reality so that no differences in skin-color persist, and no tensions cause interethnic conflicts, and he eliminates war. Dr. Haber contents himself in a world where people have no major physical differences. He creates a world where people can be penalized for being sick. When Dr. Haber attempts to usurp George’s ability, his dreams pull reality apart. In their article, Richard Astle and Gerard Klein note the symbolic role reversal where the doctor becomes increasingly neurotic while the patient becomes increasingly lucid. Even an enlightened individual can lose himself in his rationality, and despite his scientific knowledge, man cannot fully grasp the gravity of change. The ordeals that the characters in this novel have faced demonstrate that science and intervention of mankind in nature by means of technology do not fully lead to desired ends. With respect to this story, Bacon’s belief in science and enlightenment principles proves insufficient in solving all problems that plague mankind.
The rights of citizens in this society fluctuate significantly throughout the novel as reality shifts according to George’s controlled dreams. Dr. Haber manipulates the powers of George to force change upon the lives of people. Rather than giving them rights, or a means to determine what they collectively want in an ideal society, Dr. Haber changes people’s bodies so they look the same. Like an unfair ruler, his actions alter the lives of many people without respect for their own thoughts and opinions. The people become simple objects in Dr. Haber’s world. But this power does not and should not belong to only one person.

Using Dr. Haber’s abuses as an example, Le Guin poses a problem where the larger group has no control over their own fate. Throughout the course of her book, though, she presents a solution where she “…develop[s] awareness of exploitation, expose[s] those structures producing it, and create[s] alternative communities as open as possible to the fulfillment of all their members” (Porter 246). This model reveals a method for change beyond the purview of her book. People must first realize their problem and what is causing it. Then they must explore the alternatives until they find the best possible one for everyone in the group.

Dr. Haber has many similarities with other despots because he seeks to make people forget about conflicts. Rather than working through issues, Dr. Haber takes a faster route that only superficially solves a problem. People, then, do not learn anything. In his actions to circumvent disease, famine, and war, Dr. Haber has deprived the collective consciousness of experiencing progression over adversity.

### 3.7 Dystopias Overview

Dystopias, as we have seen, foster fear by focusing aggression on “…the identification of scapegoats… who are in fact only marginally different from the official norm. [Dystopian] governments typically enforce their intolerance of difference through persecution of specified marginal groups” (Booker 11). Scapegoats necessitate the totalitarian rule of the government, which must exert a concerted effort to perpetuate stereotypes to retain power through its citizens’ fear of uncertainty. Also, dystopias (especially We, 1984, and Brave New World) show a prevailing tension in the sexual culture of their citizens. “In particular, sexuality functions as a focal point for an entire array of practices through which modern society has attempted to constitute the individual as a subject of administrative control” (Booker 12-13).
Controlling sexual desire could potentially aid a government in maintaining power over individuals. However, these sexual practices impose an unwarranted discomfort on individuals, which, in many cases, sparks their propensity to disobey the wishes of their governments.

Scapegoating and sexual control are two aspects of culture manipulated by dystopian totalitarian states, which also tend to practice censorship, terrorist acts of torture, ostracism, and mechanization of humanity. Dystopian authors illustrate these aspects of culture by highlighting the interactions of protagonists with governments to raise awareness, and, “[i]ndeed, it may be that dystopian warnings of impending nightmares are ultimately necessary to preserve any possible dream of a better future” (Booker 177). Through the characters, the audience becomes aware of the possible abuses of a government that has attained too much power over its constituent parts.
CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

While pondering the formation of an ideal state, I have come to realize that it is constantly in flux since the careful checks and balances that ensure stability, happiness, and freedom need constant reevaluation from legislators and citizens. Through the investigation of these eleven utopias and dystopias, I have extracted six principles that contribute to an ideal society.

1. The state ensures some individual, inalienable rights and safeties as it organizes resources so that every person receives what he needs for survival.

_Utopia_ and _New Atlantis_ both feature governments that ensures the safety and security to their people. Subsidizing basic needs of their citizens, a government can ensure the basic health of their people. Theoretically, citizens, who do not have to particularly worry about these needs, can focus on self-actualization, artistic expression, and self-discovery. In _New Atlantis_, citizens can perhaps better contribute to technological discoveries because their government provides for their basic needs. We see that they have sufficient means to live and that they have a sufficiently luxurious life that prevents them from seeking extra payment for their hospitality while entertaining their new European guests. They already have the things they need from their government, so they do not tend towards corruption.

In More’s _Utopia_, as in Skinner’s community of _Walden Two_, with their ample resources and work ethic, their governments have organized the resources as well as the labor force so efficiently that every person works minimal hours, yet contributes to a sufficient production that satisfies the needs of all citizens. With their spare time, people can focus more energy on things such as music, reading, or appreciation of the arts. The social climate of these communities has been arranged so that more people can live healthy lives and contribute to the intellectual development of the larger group. This principle illustrates a fundamental responsibility that a government has to its people, protection. By providing individuals with supplemental resources like nourishment and shelter, a government also
expresses its concern for the well-being of its constituents, who can in turn contribute to its own evolution and development.

2. The legislative system of an ideal state has flexibility and simplicity to change according to the needs of its citizens. It has a close relationship with its citizens so that its actions always pertain to the best interests of the people.

   Flexibility of a government is necessary so that the state might change according to shifting needs of people in different times. A government might find it difficult to maintain flexibility in conjunction with strength and respect which it needs from its citizens. However, when economic, social, and political environments constantly evolve, a government must evolve with its environment. Otherwise, it could potentially resort to oppression or corruption to retain its power. For this reason, Plato’s *Republic*, though it theoretically functions well as a whole, censors stories and prevents exploration among its people, which means that it does not easily change over time, which eventually might prove to be a hindrance to the state in the long run.

   Though a government must evolve with people, and with the values of the times, it must also retain simplicity. With laws and a defined concept of justice, a government has to ensure safety and fairness among its people. Excessive, convoluted laws make implementation and change difficult for government to enforce. As for citizens having too many rules, or when the government tries to control every aspect of their lives, citizens have more opportunities to go against the wishes of their government.

   *We*, modeled after totalitarian Russia, provides readers with an example of how too many laws over-regulate the lives of citizens. D-503, who has grown up revering his state, begins to develop personally, and his conflict with the rules administered by One State lead him to undermine the authority of the Benefactor. Instead of creating laws that cater to the needs of its people as Rousseau’s hypotheses necessitate, One State tries to alter the people to fit the laws, which it cannot practically maintain without mutilating the brains of its people.

3. An ideal government facilitates growth in the individual without regulating him so much that the state completely controls the life of the citizen.

   Much of this paper has focused on the relationship between the individual and the group as a governmental entity. After conducting this research, I find that Richard Erickson states the relationship best in his research when he notes that:

   ...there is the view that presents the individual as the “end” and other persons and societal institutions as means of serving or obstructing that end... On the other
hand, there is the view that some larger entity is the “end” and that individuals are means serving that end. Thus an institution, an ideology, a state, or a religion provides a center around which individuals are to arrange themselves... both are “at the center” like foci of an ellipse. (Erickson 8)

Erickson first presents the idea where the individual should take precedence over the group, then states the inverse. In lieu of both of these ideas, both the individual and the group should stand at the same level. Unless the interests of the two are expressly at odds, then neither should negate the importance of the other. Governments (i.e., groups) as collectives tend to have more power than an individual, but they should always respect the suffrage of their component parts. It seems that the majority of the utopias and dystopias attempt to rid the society of religion, creativity, or family. The government then attempts to replace those institutions with its own agenda, which severely undermines the self-determination of the individual. A government oversteps its power and becomes despotic if it attempts to force individuals (through laws or through brainwashing) into a mold not designed by the “soul” or self-determination of the citizens.

For instance, in We, as in Brave New World, 1984, Walden Two, and Republic, the state regulates and limits the development of a nuclear family so much that a citizen does not have the privilege to control his own familial and personal relationships. In their attempts to make everyone live the same kind of life, they unnecessarily restrict the interpersonal development that a person can attain from a small, inner circle of friends and family.

This goes against the universal tendency of people to arrange themselves into familial sub-groups of a population and thus would require a significant amount of energy to maintain. Whether culture arranges families in mother-father-headed households or if it organizes families by other affiliations, people all over the world still organize themselves according to genetic relationships. Despite the fact that many people would value their family and friends over their community, this does not mean that a state should rid itself of natural kindred ties.

4. Though a government should facilitate cultural solidarity, it should avoid constant cultural involvement that engineers similarities in its population (cultural or physical) because a lack of diversity creates minorities that will likely never attain the ability to reconcile their differences.

Some people might think that uniform individuals with the same beliefs, needs, and culture are more unified. We see, however, that in 1984, We, and Brave New World
attempting to force physical and mental similarities on all citizens can make people weak. It prevents them from adapting to unpredictable, uncertain social situations. For this reason, the state ought to foster diversity in culture and belief systems instead of subverting them because this action allows for a peaceful coexistence of strong citizens. When people feel comfortable with others and with themselves, they can focus their energies on more productive efforts rather than worrying about their place in a social hierarchy.

In the case of *Brave New World*, a culture with clearly defined identities and categories for its citizens does not provide a place for the minority of people who think or look differently. When a person does not match the exact canons of his group, he feels ostracized from it. Rather than attempting to fit every person into a prescribed social group, a government should allow people to form their own identities so that they can form strong bonds with other unique individuals. People who live in diverse environments have a better chance at adapting to change or unpredictability. Thus, they might also be more receptive to acquiring new knowledge that would contribute to the benefit of society in general, like the development of society.

5. An ideal state uses and develops technology to optimize resource allocation and the physical health of its citizens, but the implementation of this technology should not interfere with the overall health of the environment, the health of the economy, or interpersonal relationships.

A group can use science and technological development to contribute to its arsenal of resources. Medicines and agricultural technology, for instance, help to contribute to quality of life. Many people, including Sir Francis Bacon, see science as a way of solving many social problems. He seems to think that a dedication to science coupled with comfortable ways of life would contribute to peace among people. In his society, the zeal people have for science satiates their spiritedness and perhaps contributes to some of the reasons why ideal citizens do not have the inclination towards corruption.

Science and technology do not cure all ailments in a society, however. When applied excessively, they can cause more problems than they fix because they skew the balance in the environment. In *The Lathe of Heaven*, for instance, Le Guin demonstrates that technology, when used excessively, alters the climate to one less favorable for humanity. In the beginning of her book, greenhouse gases and pollution caused by development have harmed many people and displaced them from their homes.
Technology also has an undeniable effect on the economy. It is in the products that people buy, and it produces other machines. In *Player Piano*, though technology has contributed to the lives and comfort of many individuals, a sudden switch to the mechanization of the work force puts many people out of a meaningful job. This demonstrates a type of development/satisfaction curve where newly unemployed people cannot find or make new jobs that satisfy them.

Finally, in *Fahrenheit 451*, excessive use of consumer technology has hindered mental development and personal relationships of individuals. Too much reliance on technology has left citizens uninterested in reality and dependent on superficial fantasies created for amusement. People should take all things in moderation, however, since technology has provided people not only with entertainment, but with fast information. It might separate some people, but it keeps others connected to one another. Bradbury’s critique of technology reminds us that science and technology are tools even if some people abuse them.

6. In return for the safeguards in resources and safety which a state provides for its people, ideally, individuals refrain from over consumption and excessive pursuits of wealth or power.

If the state ensures resources and safety, and if people are inclined toward constructive pastimes, it is easier to maintain a social order where people do not feel pressured to acquire inordinate amounts of money or power. In some places like Walden Two and Utopia, authors have even managed to formulate economic systems that bypass the use of money. Since they see it as a source of corruption, and as a somehow unnecessary intermediate means of acquiring actual products, they have eliminated it from the government altogether.

Ultimately, since the agreements made between a group of people create a state, and since individuals make a group, ideal societies have individuals who generally consider the needs of the group while the group also cares for the individual. To foster an ideal political, economic, and social environment, the state must propagate circumstances that contribute to the confidence and strength of all people because strong people make strong states.

Keeping Maslow’s principles in mind with respect to utopian studies, the government, by securing a man’s right to physiological and safety needs, makes each of its citizens stronger. A strong citizen can then aspire to realize the top three tiers of the pyramid.
As the individual seeks to attain needs progressively higher on the pyramid, the government should become less and less involved with regulating the items that fall in these categories. Though governmental institutions ought to facilitate things like love, belonging, esteem, and self-actualization, it should not set laws that prescribe a single way to attain these things.
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