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The Role of Society

How do revolutions begin? How is change implemented? Who leads rebellion? When we look back through our history, the influencers, the change makers, the leaders of revolution are ordinary people. People make change when they stand up and make noise about the problems they’re facing. There is war, famine, racial and gender inequality, violence, and injustice all over our world, what are we going to do to end that? We are all humans, made to love each other. We need to stop stepping on each other’s necks and start helping each other out. Our role in society is to help the unfortunate and to bring attention to the injustices that occur in our world, so that they are fixed. The role of society is to act with integrity, rebel against unjust systems, and speak out against prejudice.

There are 7.5 billion people in the world and all of them have a story. Everyone has a name, a life, family, friends, enemies, and everyone has problems. Some people face more significant problems: hunger, poverty, homelessness, bigotry, or abuse. Everyone deserves respect, no matter their social status, economic status, religion, or ethnicity, and no one should ever face violence caused by their identity. In the fall of 2018, there was a shooting at a Pittsburgh synagogue which left 11 Jewish worshippers dead. When hatred and bigotry is constantly being publicized and spread through the internet and media, senseless violence is a recurring result. Shootings like this have been on the rise in the last 10 years, with 57% of all mass shootings occurring in that time frame. People have the right to practice whatever religion or faith they choose, without fear of being persecuted for that belief. We are free to live our own lives and we need to respect the way other people choose to live theirs. Every person deserves to

be treated with integrity, from the elderly homeless man to the well-dressed businessman, we all deserve respect.

Humans have the right to abolish unjust systems and replace them with fair ones. In the work, *Civil Disobedience* Henry David Thoreau writes about the right of men to overturn unjust governments. He asserts that when people are mistreated or taken advantage of by their government they have a right to squelch that government and create a new one. An example of his philosophy, Thoreau refused to pay his taxes as an act of rebellion because his government was involved in the Mexican American War, which he believed was an unjust war. Thoreau wrote that his ideal government would be, “... a State at least which can afford to be just to all men, and to treat the individual with respect as a neighbor.” The government, however, does provide us with our unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, so why should we bite the hand that feeds us? The government controls the political aspect of our lives but not the social aspect, how people treat each other and view different people, races, and genders. We have the right to be treated equally, in the eyes of the law, but more importantly, in the eyes of our peers. Humans have the right to live in a society that respects them and gives them equal opportunities in every aspect of their lives, we have rights that need to be acknowledged and respected. People have the right to demand justice and fairness in their governments, and they have the right to abolish unfair systems.

When people in our society suffer from prejudice and hate, we have a right to use our

voices and speak out against those injustices. At the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico City, African American sprinters Tommie Smith and John Carlos walked onto the podium, received medals for 1st and 3rd place, and proceeded to raise their fists and bow their heads as a symbol

of black power while “The Star-Spangled Banner” played. They used their platform, quite literally, to spread awareness about the inequality of African Americans and colored people across the globe. It was a symbol that America could not ignore; the US needed to treat their black people and minorities better. Reform was needed for the systems that had been designed to keep minorities at the bottom. In today’s America, 21% of impoverished people are African Americans, which makes up the largest group of impoverished people in the US. Also, African Americans and Hispanics make up only 32% of the US population, yet they comprised 56% of all incarcerated people in 2015. Incarceration can result in unemployment and poverty and is a system that targets minorities. If we want our world to have equal opportunities for people of all backgrounds, we must speak up against prejudice and inform the public about the inequalities we face, no matter how small. Citizens must speak out against injustice and inequality in order for society to improve and become a fair place for everyone.

The role of society is to act with integrity, rebel against unjust systems, and speak out

against prejudice. People must treat each other with respect and dignity, we are all human and we deserve fair treatment by our peers and especially by those in leadership positions. We don’t need to put up with systems that oppress us, we have the ability to rebel against them and fight for equitable systems. Celebrities and athletes may have a bigger platform, but everyday people have a voice also, we just need to learn how to scream and make our voices heard. Everyone can affect change, whether it is a small or widespread change, it is important to use your voice.

Alexander Hamilton had the right idea when he believed that, “the first duty of society is justice.” Justice for all or justice for none, our world will never improve unless we fight for the rights of everyone.

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