

Chris Nutter

Professor Brian Lovato

POSC 340-01

15 May 2020

Common Sense and Today's Allegory

Thomas Paine wrote a pamphlet in 1775 with the title *Common Sense*. This piece was set out to be a way to bring social and political justice to what is now the United States of America. The belief in freedom and the pursuit of happiness was the main drive of the piece. The significance of this is within the title of the book, *Common Sense*. It criticized the political climate at the time stating that it breaks enlightenment ideals of how a society should grow. The piece has a lot of historical references that could help the political climate in the 21st century. While the underlying political problems of the piece do not require reviewing, the reverberations of the book could very well require a re-evaluation. Many of the issues plaguing society today stem from lack of social awareness, physical political disagreement, and social hierarchy instabilities. What does each citizen owe to one another? Should whites pay reparations for committing immoral acts of slavery upon black men and women? Society should attempt to recognize the instability of the political climate and understand why this progressive nature of instability is unhealthy for a community to succeed. Through the first section of *Common Sense*, Thomas Paine thought people in society should owe each other life and liberty while also keeping an appropriately structured government. The concept of common sense has humans question their qualities and if they truly allow people to live the way they want to live. People owe it to this concept of common sense for the ability to care for each other in the way that society intended. Men owe each other the proper care and respect as every other man. People

should learn how a proper society is ran, how to live equally to every other human, and how to properly live in a free society in order to benefit from the common sense ideals.

Each person's civil duty on Earth is to allow the progression of the others' civil duties. What that means is that each person on Earth should allow anyone to do anything they choose. Any job that someone desires they should have the opportunity to show their worth and compete with others for that opportunity. Humans owe each other the opportunity for sustainable life while keeping competition for higher status. The foundation of capitalism allows everyone to work hard to reach higher and prove their self-worth; the concept of earning a living in the United States. Karl Marx's views on capitalism shine a biased light on how true capitalism can flourish in the world due to his bad impressions from Prussia's economy system. Marx makes claims that with "...the increasing value of the world of things proceeds in direct proportion the devaluation of the world of men." (Capitalism, Critique, Revolution, 10) which completely devalues modern capitalist morals. With the expansion of correct capitalism (which is often broadcasted in the United States accurately by proper media) society begins to see proper growth of economic affairs. Proper capitalism brings proper motivation to every able citizen. If citizens choose to work hard, they will earn what they deserve. Marx's view of early communistic ideals displays a lack of knowledgeability and respect towards workers who earn a decent wage and struggled through each economic class to earn a higher spot on the economic food chain. People owe each other the opportunity for growth through economic means in the United States and diminishing higher income workers who earned their wages is insulting and damaging towards this potential economic growth.

Integrity is taught as what you do when no one is looking. What words, expressions, or actions do humans do when no one is around to notice them. Respect is an integral necessity for

integrity to remain in a functioning society. Each human has the inherited ability to respect one another but often people choose to degrade others (often for personal gain). There is a difference between comedy and degrading as well. Comedy is not intended to be taken literally as it pokes fun on life's imperfections while degrading often is meant to be demean a group of people. The founding of Black Lives Matter has been a reason for many African American individuals to stand up for what they believe is the lack of recognition equality towards the other races in America. Even after the removal of slavery and initiation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which guarantees the lack of discrimination for any race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, African Americans still feel they are considered inferior in the United States. The problem with the group stems from the underlying goals of the movement. Christopher J. Lebron's book, *The Making of Black Lives Matter*, quotes during his reference to All Lives Matter (a countermovement guided on including every life instead of just insinuating black lives), "This retort [All Lives Matter] subverts the message of the original slogan by semi-sincerely worrying that to insist black lives matter must somehow mean that black lives matter more than other lives—in other words, those insisting that all lives matter are really concerned about what they perceive to be a fundamental inequality in the status of lives base on race." (Lebron, 82) The impression Lebron sends is that he believes All Lives Matter degrades the concept of Black Lives Matter because it throws out the narrative that inequality does not occur anywhere else. Lebron's belief is that All Lives Matter believe that the Black Lives Matter movement is based on the "fundamental inequality" of the lives of black men and women. If the basis of Black Lives Matter is that African Americans be treated equal and with respect the same a white man does, then why does All Lives Matter avoid that narrative; the fact he denounces All Lives Matter might showcase a form of discrimination against people who view All Lives Matter as a way to include all races and colors.

Every human race has undergone a form of discrimination and slavery in their lifetime and humans owe it to each other to realize that no matter what race, gender, color, or religion we are affiliated with, we are humans and should treat each other with the proper respect everyone initially deserves; only then will humans know how to grasp the concept of integrity.

Living free is something the United States has known for many centuries. Since 1776, Americans have undergone many radical changes to society but at its core withheld the common concept of freedom in mind. The innate characteristic of America is the ability to live the life you dreamed of without a boundary stopping you. While not all of America's history was perfect, the goal of freedom stuck with everyone and now in the 21st century, freedom for anyone is possible and plausible. John Locke's ideals of freedom bring out a sense of truth onto how freedom is achievable in a society. Law of Nature, one of Locke's main ideals towards a free society, involves how "self-preservation is key" to living in a proper free society. (John Locke – Introduction and Second Treatise, 4) State of War is another important ideal where Locke states that, "I have a right to destroy that which attempts to destroy me" (Locke, 14). The concept of self-preservation and protection are important to understanding how freedom in America is demonstrated. While under monarch rule, the average citizen was not free but rather controlled by the British who wanted to keep the citizens in line and under their regime. It took an entire body of people working together to fight off a tyrannical rule. Now, almost two hundred fifty years later, America obtains this concept of freedom however everyday we start to see it deteriorate into a more conformist government with less freedom every day. America is starting to lose the founding father's ideals of a proper society with a stable government system. People owe it to America to maintain the reason it is considered the best country in the world; the 3 principles ingrained in every American's thoughts: Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

While we advance into the future, America will start to radically change. Either we stay divided and keep fighting or people can owe it to each other to be decent to each other and start to understand how each person's actions and motives affect the world around us. While we can remain different, it is up to humans to sacrifice each other's interest for the benefit of humans. It is impossible for one man to agree with everyone's opinion but acknowledging their opinion and providing evidence to backup one's claim can help progress society along in the future. Humans owe it to each other to understand these core ideals of a proper society is ran, how to combat race-relations, when oppression really occurs, and how to accurately live in a free society.

Works Cited

Lebron, Christopher J. *The Making of Black Lives Matter: A Brief History of an Idea*. Oxford University Press, 2019.

Locke, John, and Thomas Preston Peardon. *The Second Treatise of Government*. Prentice Hall, 1997.

Lovato, Brian. "Capitalism, Critique, Revolution - Karl Marx's Materialist Conception of History." POSC 340-01 Lecture. POSC 340-01 Lecture, 2 Mar. 2020, Fullerton, HUM 224.

Lovato, Brian. "John Locke - Introduction and Second Treatise." POSC 340-01 Lecture. POSC 340-01 Lecture, 10 Feb. 2020, Fullerton, HUM 224.

Marx, Karl, et al. *The Marx-Engels Reader*. Norton, 1978.