

The Giver

“It’s the choosing that’s important, isn’t it?” The Giver asked. The answer was definitely positive according to the response of the protagonist, Jonas. As a reader, I considered this the most impressive quote in the novel.

Jonas’s community was extremely safe and suitable for humans to live in. Everything was under control and well organized, inclusive of the birthrate, the mortality, the spouse and job of every individual, as well as the Sameness, which meant there was no color, changeable weather, nor rough terrain in his world. More unbelievable, citizens didn’t have their own emotion since they were required to take pills to suppress the attraction towards the opposite gender. Simultaneously, they were also protected from the memory of history and the Elsewhere, where was extremely far from their community. As a result, the lives of the citizens were quite identical. Each of them was born by a woman they would never know and then would be brought up by a designated couple. At the age of twelve, they would be assigned to different jobs and began to dedicate themselves to the community until they were too old to work, when they would be sent to the House of the Old. In the rest of their life, they would be carefully cared and lived comfortably until one day, when the House of the Old held a celebration to recall one’s successful life before killing the citizen.

The system of the community worked efficiently and well. It was the Committee of Elders that meticulously made all the decision for the community. Most important of all, it was the receiver that received all the memories from the past, including happiness and anguish. The receiver was highly honored because he used his knowledge to give advice to the Committee of Elders when they asked for his opinion. Moreover, he carried the burden of receiving tortured pains from the memory, which other people could hardly bear and never wanted to experience.

After Jonas was selected to be the new receiver, he began to experience the memory from the past. His viewpoint changed and found out that although the community was well organized, it was somewhat sick because there wasn’t liberty for the choosing and true feelings of love and sadness. He longed for changes, so finally, he escaped from his community and set off to the Elsewhere so that the memory he had received would be shared with all of the citizens. After a long, tough journey, Jonas finally arrived where he knew somehow the destination, where seemed to be similar to the normal world we are

accustomed to.

I think the fictional community in the story went to extremes. Except the receiver, all of the citizens knew nothing about the past and other places. On the contrary, the selected receiver had the duty to experience every memory of the history, including warfare and starvation. The receiver was lonely and separated because nobody else could understand what he thought. On the other hand, the citizens lived a life hungry for feelings, for love, for color. They took it for granted that they didn't have the right to choose because they didn't have any idea of what human once lived like.

However, the system of the community seemed to solve most of the problems people are facing nowadays. For instances, citizens considered they and their spouses assigned by the committee were perfect matches since they didn't have the right to choose. As a consequence, under no circumstances would a divorce be applied. Besides, without color, racial discrimination would exist by no means. Furthermore, the limited birthrate and death rate prevented the community from heavy economic burden and starvation, just to name a few. Seen from this viewpoint, the community might be a perfect world. Nevertheless, I treasure and prefer the world we now live in because at least we can realize the truth and make our own decision. Speaking of the society problems, although we can't control them as efficiently as the community, we can figure out solutions to the problems and choose the best one to be put into practice. It's the choosing that's important, and gaining control of everything isn't worth it.