

Pinocchio Takes Woodshop

American society, as a whole, has a number of contradictory expectations surrounding the growth and development of its members. A phenomenon that baffles each and every person subjected to it – and more importantly, promotes the concept of “just a phase” – American children are taught from the start that they will be the reigning supremacy throughout the nations. Euphemisms such as, “You can do anything if you put your mind to it”, or, “Be all you can be”, give American children a false sense of godlike superiority, unmatched throughout the world. Couple that conceptual vision with the ideals of Free Market Capitalism’s undying devotion to “self”, and you’ve got a fat-free recipe for rebellion and disbelief, simmering throughout adolescence, and coming to a boil at early adulthood. Upon the realization that there is no such thing as “special”, no concept remotely resembling “one of a kind”, no “unique little snowflakes”, anger and disbelief become apparent. Refusal of the “Lemming Predestination”, the mundane fate of the masses; denial of the fact that their fate consists of going to school, getting a job, having a family, and making their children go through the same exact process – just like their parents did for them. They’ve never felt so alive as in their anger, and yet – to the rest of the world – it’s merely a phase. It’s incomprehensible that a society would actually preprogram its members for failure, and yet, America does just that every single minute of each and every day.

According to ideas expressed in non-extreme cultural relativism, the general attitude concerning this farce should be one of conceptual understanding in the fact that this process helps to drive a productive, semi-organized society. Children need to be told lies, painting a bright future, and leaving them excited about life. As they grow older, like their belief in Santa Clause or the Tooth Fairy, the truth becomes apparent. They live and learn for themselves, hence removing responsibility from the involved adults, politicians, and leaders. The removal of responsibility accompanies an absolutely necessary removal of guilt. This lack of guilt is necessary, as they are usually locked in their mundane, nearly suicidal lives, and an additional burden could be the proverbial “straw”, breaking the camel’s back. With this explanation, it is understandable why these practices become necessary, since everyone knows that a society can’t function with its members killing both themselves and one another on a regular basis.

As for what extreme cultural relativism might have to say in this situation, a person should not only understand the system employed by this society, but they should also accept the values presented as being ethical, or moral without further question. They should agree with these lies, and believe in their necessity as a solution for living.

Both systems are attempting to justify this grave insurrection through trite definitions and fancy speech, but from the perspective of a member going through this time of enlightenment, all of the justifications in the world mean absolutely nothing. I hate the fact that I’ve been lied to from the moment I was born. I hate the fact that I’m relegated to living out the rest of my life in a cookie-cutter suburb of an industrial

wasteland, having nothing to look forward to beyond weekend bouts of discontented home-improvement projects, separating weeks at a job that I hate, in order to support a life that I can't stand. I refuse to accept the lies any longer, yet I refuse to accept the premature death as an alternative. Cultural relativism, like so many devices of pacification, is designed to numb the reality of any situation. I WILL NOT BE A DRUGGED LAB RAT. And yet, with all of this, there are no solutions, there are no answers, there are no alternate viewpoints that fix the problems like so many tools in an aftermarket toolkit. There is no appropriate reaction that will suffice because we, as a nation, are entirely caught up in our own greatness, our own beauty, our own "infallible" existence. We're dead and don't even realize it. Doomed to be conquered by barbarians like every other "great" and "civilized" nation that has – and will – ever exist.

-Dave-