

# WOW! Plato's 'Tyranny' Sounds EXACTLY LIKE America Today!

Philosopher George Santayana's line has become cliché, but it's so damn true: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

Well, perhaps if more Americans today read Plato (like they used to), then our country wouldn't be repeating the same mistakes he warned us about 2,400 years ago.

In Book VIII of his *Republic*, Plato uses a fictitious conversation between his teacher Socrates and Adeimantus to explain how [democracies](#)—when they become too radical—devolve into tyrannies.

I have included [M. James Ziccardi's apt summary](#) of this conversation below. The parallels between the "tyranny" Plato describes and America today are chilling:

*Socrates continues by claiming that democracies are transformed into tyrannies when the city becomes "drunk" with freedom; and that unless the leaders are able to provide more and more of it, they are punished by the people, and become accused of being "accursed oligarchs". He further states that the city "insults those who obey the rulers as willing slaves and good-for-nothings, and praises and honors, both in public and in private, rulers who behave like subjects and subjects who behave as rulers." And once freedom has been extended to all lengths of the city, and makes its way into the private households, it ends up breeding anarchy throughout, even among the animals. It causes a father to behave "like a child and fear his sons, while the son behaves like a father, feeling neither shame nor fear in front of his parents, in order to be free." Furthermore, "a resident alien or a foreign visitor is made equal to a citizen, and he is their*

*equal.” Socrates goes on to say that, “a teacher in such a community is afraid of his students and flatters them, while the students despise their teachers or tutors. And in general, the young imitate their elders and compete with them in word or deed, while the old stoop to the level of the young and are full of play and pleasantries imitating the young for fear of appearing disagreeable and authoritarian.” When freedom is extended to its utmost lengths, there is no inequality between parents and their children, teachers and their students, and ruler and their subjects; nor is there any inequality between men and women, or masters and slaves. Even the animals become free, for as Socrates states, “no one who hasn’t experienced it would believe how much freer domestic animals are in a democratic city than anywhere else.” He sums up his characterization of how far freedom comes to be extended in a democracy by saying that the citizens’ souls become so sensitive that, “if anyone even puts upon himself the least degree of slavery, they become angry and cannot endure it. And in the end... they take no notice of the laws, whether written, or unwritten, in order to avoid having any master at all.” This, then, is the “fine and impetuous origin from which tyranny seems to evolve.” As such, “extreme freedom can’t be expected to lead to anything but a change to extreme slavery, whether for a private individual or for a city.”*

An entitled population that makes increasing demands of their leaders? Check.

Contempt for law-abiding citizens who pay their taxes? Check.

An incoherent immigration policy? Check.

“Adults” living in perpetual adolescence? Check.

Parents who have lost control of their children? Check.

Teachers who have lost their authority in the classroom?

Check.

Disrespect for the elderly? Check.

It's frightening really.