

A Modest Proposal

A solution for America's rising problem of selfish and spoiled teenagers, growing up to become burdens on society.

How would you react if suddenly you were ripped from your nice warm home where you had no responsibilities and were thrown into a harsh wasteland filled with beasts and perils around every corner and had to survive for not just one, two, or even three years? You would change, pardon you survived of course, but you would certainly learn to appreciate the small things in life you took for granted. This is a hypothetical situation of course, (or at least for now it is) but it is part of the solution that I propose in order to solve a growing issue of adolescents disrespecting their elders and each other by partaking in selfish and vile acts. Such an issue is a problem, yet no one seems to want to act on this, and for that I figured I would take my shot at it.

My solution is a simple one, yes, on a child's 15th birthday they are sent to a closed battlefield where they must survive for several years, this environment will have a multitude of elements. The first of which being a split between an African safari in the summer and a snowy wasteland in the winter. In this battleground there will be ferocious man-hunting beasts, such as, but not limited to: wolves, lions, tigers, and bears, depending on the environment. They will hunt these selfish souls until they learn cooperation and by extension respect for themselves and others (the beasts included of course), or they will die a fruitless death. Of course I must say they could die, because life and likewise victory are not assured, but certainly obtainable, and how they choose to survive is up to them. Those that are truly spoiled and weak will perish

early, and those that have taken their selfish habits with them and choose not to evolve may survive early on, but will inevitably perish. However, the smartest of these teens will cooperate with each other, possibly banding together or even creating their own society. These will be the ones who survive and live to see their families again. Some may call this idea outrageous, but I must assure you, with a few reasons of course, why this is not only a good idea, but a necessary one.

For one, the only way to survive in such a world is by teaming up in some way, it's impossible to survive its hardships alone forever. Forcing them to cooperate will solve the problem of a teen's selfishness as eventually they will see that the only way to survive is by cooperating with each other. This will also teach them people and team skills which are highly valuable and worthwhile skills in today's workforce.

Secondly, teens in this age are, for the most part, fascinated with violence. Conflict, as sad as it may be, is the one true thing that sends a message to all human beings. By putting teens in this wasteland they will learn the tragedies that come with being a selfish human being and strive to achieve the opposite of that as their lives will truly depend on it.

And lastly, it's common knowledge that when a person is forced into an unfamiliar situation one of two things will happen. They will either fight or they will run. This is a well documented and proven human condition, commonly referred to as fight-or-flight. That proven condition is the basis of this test. For you see, by removing the flight condition and preventing a person from running they will only be able to fight and evolve. Fighting of course does not just

mean a physical confrontation. In this case it means shedding their selfish ways and banding together to overcome a foe they cannot run from.

Of course it is impossible to address all of the arguments people would propose to what most would consider a “radical” idea. But, I will address a few that I can already hear. An obvious one people will say is that people will say is that some teenagers do treat their peers and elders with respect. Such a solution is unfair to them, as they don’t deserve to suffer because of another child’s mistakes. And to that my response is simple, so what. If they truly are grateful and cooperative with others then they will have no problem surviving in such a world, and if they still perish then clearly they were not a use to society anyway. Another clear question is that this unfairly favors those who are physically gifted. This is untrue, if anything such an environment is geared *against* those who rely on physical gifts to survive. The object of living in such an environment is not to kill the beasts, they are infinite in comparison to the people. The object of this test, once again, is to survive. The only way to survive is to outsmart your opponent and banding together to prevent a pack of wolves from considering attacking you is a much more successful solution than trying to beat them to death. This test is about cooperation people I cannot stress this enough.

In conclusion, I must reiterate that the problem of teens today is that they are spoiled as a majority are in no way forced to learn how to properly behave in society. They have been given opportunities to learn and given by the current state of things that is *clearly* not working. It sickens me that this is an issue that is consistently swept under the rug and that a solution has yet to be provided. And I must say that as a healthy and understanding 17 year old I am in no way a beneficiary nor a subject of such an instance as I would be unaffected by such an edict. I

am an entirely neutral and unbiased, as hard as that is to find in this society, person in this instance. And for those who say I am choosing a side I urge them to provide me with a solution to this problem and if I deem it plausible then I will wholeheartedly stand behind such a person. But, until then I suggest you turn the pitchforks away from me and take a good hard-look at your own homes before writing off my idea as “radical” and “inhumane”, as I’ve heard so often before.