

College English

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In my personal life, I have seen people in power virtue signaling and being hypocrites. Through them standing up for reasons that they don't support, they still continue to pursue a false narrative. I have not only seen people preaching something they don't wholeheartedly believe from the government but also in my personal life. This kind of hypocrisy also plays out in the secret club Jezebel in *The Handmaid's Tale*. In the book, commanders and other high-ranking officials frequent Jezebel's to indulge in activities like drinking, having sex with women they aren't married to, etc. Everything that ordinary Gilead citizens are banned from doing. However, these powerful men break their own rules.

In chapter 37, the reader is introduced to a club called Jezebel's. Jezebel's is a club where the officers get to meet and break the rules of the government because they are so powerful. On page 237, chapter 37, Offred asks the commander, "I thought this sort of thing was strictly forbidden," and the commanders respond, "Well, officially... But everyone is human after all. It means you can't cheat nature." This shows that the people who run this government don't even believe what they are preaching, know that they are virtue signaling, and don't care about being hypocritical. The government of Gilead is built upon a moral and legal system that is so unsustainable that even the commanders know of that fact, but they keep going with it. They wouldn't want to stop it because that would mean they would give up their power but still break their own rules due to them being so powerful and there not being someone to stop them.

We can also see virtue signaling and hypocritical behavior in the current government; for example, a Republican South Carolina congresswoman, Nancy Mace, voted on an amendment that would block the reimbursement of travel costs for military members who seek the procedure. She said, "It's an asshole move, an asshole amendment," but still voted for it. Another example is The Hill report "Democratic figures accused of hypocrisy on COVID-19 precautions," where it states, "Steve Adler, the Democratic mayor of Austin, Texas, is the latest to be ensnared in controversy after his hometown paper revealed that he had traveled to Mexico on a private plane in early November with a group of family members to celebrate his daughter's wedding. Adler filmed a video urging people to "stay home if you can" without revealing that he was at a timeshare in Cabo San Lucas at the time." These examples show that people in power most of the time don't agree with what they are preaching, but they still preach those things because it gains them power and makes them seem better than people who disagree with them.

Even not on a government level, in my day-to-day life, I have also experienced people who show virtue signals and are hypocritical. When I was in middle school, I had people make fun of me because I wouldn't pray, and they would try to show that they were better than me and were

“better Muslims.”, Those same people who would try to brag about being “better Muslims” than me would also do most things not permitted in Islam. What they do in their lives is up to them and isn't up to me to judge, but they are being hypocritical in the fact that they are trying to show how they are better than someone else for not practicing something, but they also don't practice most of the things that they are preaching. Experiences like that, where people selectively use faith to claim superiority over others, have shown me the prevalence of virtue signaling. People love to highlight when they're doing something right but ignore their own flaws.