Robert Frost V. Pink Floyd Essay, Research Paper

From Robert Frost’s Mending Wall to Pink Floyd’s Another Brick in the Wall, humankind erects and maintains real and symbolic barriers to protect and defend opposing stances, beliefs and territories. Although each “wall” is different they serve the same purpose and both Frost and Floyd oppose them. Robert Frost’s Mending Wall is a very popular poem. This poem consists of two characters: the narrator and his neighbor. In this poem the two neighbors are mending a stone wall that separates their property. The wall mending has been a pastime of the neighbors for many years and occurs every spring. Over the winter the wall has fallen victim to both hunters and the frozen ground and, therefore, contains gaps that must be filled.

In the poem the narrator questions the sense of even mending the wall . He concludes that neither of the farms contain animals, only trees, which would be enough of a boundary. There is no physical need for the wall, so why go through the trouble of fixing it every year for no apparent reason. Although the narrator is right the ignorant neighbor insists that they mend the wall by saying “Good fences make good neighbors.”(Frost) The neighbor repeats this saying although he doesn’t know why the wall is necessary nor does he know why it will make them better neighbors . Frost is criticizing the ignorance of the neighbor here. Mending Wall, although it doesn’t appear it on the surface, almost parallels to a popular Pink Floyd song, Another Brick in the Wall. The speakers of the song are students and the poem is directed towards teachers. In this song, as in Mending Wall, a barrier is discussed, but this time it is a phsycological barrier instead of a physical one. This barrier has been put up by society and is being built up by the teachers. The students are calling out against this building up of the wall.

As it is stated in the song:

“All in all you’re(teachers) just another brick in the wall.”(Floyd) This barrier being put up is restraining the students’ freedom of thought, a process that has gone on and become reinforced over a long period of time. Floyd has realized this barrier and is calling out against it as he says:

“We don’t need no thought control.”(Floyd)

The barrier put up by education is just as unnecessary to Floyd as the stone wall is to Frost. The teachers in the song are doing the same thing that the neighbor’s father did in the poem, reinforced and insured a lack of communication and ,therefore, ignorance in the next generation. The neighbor is a perfect example of the product of these barriers, he doesn’t know truly know why the wall must be there but he never questions his father’s words and understands that the wall is really keeping him and his neighbor from having a better friendship. Frost describes the neighbor “like an old-stone savage armed. He moves in darkness as it seems to me.”(Frost) This darkness is the ignorance that he displays as he mends the fence. Floyd relates to this dark ignorance with the “No dark sarcasm in the classroom!”(Floyd) The neighbor’s father and they teachers parallel and the neighbor is their product.

In these two works both speakers are attempting to halt the reinforcement of ignorance and the limiting of thought. These speakers each represent the view and message of their writers. Both Frost and Floyd want to break down the barriers set up by humankind. These barriers are what keep people from questioning or even contemplating things that happen in every day life. These barriers are often subconsciously put up and strengthened by society and may control one’s thought. These techniques may be used by governments and other institutions to insure that someone doesn’t know “too much” or uncover certain conspiracies. Frost and Floyd have provided us with two very different situations in which this technique may be used as a warning to help us to prevent the further control of our thought and to help us eventually attain freedom of thought.

Although they are two diferent forms of literature both Frost’s Mending Wall and Floyd’s Another Brick in the Wall send the same message. That message is to think.