

Cooperative and Conformist

I kind of hate this photo while simultaneously loving it.

Everyone loves this picture because this guy is standing up for what is “right” in a sea of conformity. The reason I kind of hate this photo is because our culture has used it to act brave while submitting into a sea of conformity. Only a very small fraction of people are willing to be this guy, yet I see most people speaking as if we should be this guy. Most people speak as if this would be them, but very very few ever would.

Almost everyone reading this would be raising their arm, and the people who read this are my friends who tend to be incredibly non-conformist. While I often stand against the crowd, I am not sure if I would even be this guy. I see my cooperative and conformist impulses along with everyone else.

I see many parts of our culture to be filled with incredibly horrible values, and most people are quite conformist within it. However, the popularity of this picture represents how extreme conformity within our culture is perceived to be non-conformist. People get to take the credit of bravery while being an extreme coward.

Despite this, it is still a pretty great picture.