

Essay on liberty and society

[Society](#)



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The good society. In a good society, an individual can experience both freedom and justice. But these ideas, freedom and justice, are still debatable. Could these ideas really exist with each other? The existence of both freedom and justice are both limited by many factors. Freedom is to be able to exercise your desires, to freely express your feelings, your expressions, and to be able to live your life in a way that you enjoy it.

The limitation though, is when your freedom overlaps other people's freedom, whether negatively or positively. Like freedom of expression, when you do so it affects other people, like their freedom to choose a religion; then there is injustice there. That is where the concept of justice enters.

Justice is there to correct people's mistakes, so that they would not further step on other people's freedom. It is not punishment, but it could be a means to punish. Justice is the idea that sets guidelines to one's freedom. It is there to make sure that you remain fair and observe law and order. This is all for the good of all, not only for yourself, but of the community.

Different views. Henry George and John Stuart Mill are both brilliant people with different views of society and how people should live. They have almost inverse, opposing ideas about the way people should go about their lives and their communities.

Majority Rules. For Mill, it is the majority that rules, wherein they are the ones who impose a law on questions of duty to others, regarding their own self interest, and so be able to impose economic injustice to minority individuals and to groups(Mill, p. 4).

For George, it is not the majority that rules and must decide on rules to impose on others. It is the interest of the people that we should decide on what rules we impose. For George, the movement toward equality is important, wherein the majority or the rich are not the ones who have the power to make rules.

George states that when you remove the root of all problems, which is the individual right to land, you are taking it away from priority of occupation, the most illogical ground where land ownership is defended. According to Henry George, “ Priority of occupation give exclusive and perpetual title to the surface of a globe on which, in the order of nature, countless generations succeed each other! Had the men of the last generation any better right to the use of this world than we of this?

Or the men of a hundred years ago? Or a thousand years ago? Had the mound-builders, or the cave-dwellers, the contemporaries of the mastodon and the three-toed horse, or the generations’ still further back, who in dim aeons that we can think of only geologic periods, followed each other on the earth we now tenant for our little day? (George, VII. I. 28)” George points out those imposing rules such as individual rights to land would greatly induce poverty, thus creating inequality. When there is inequality, there is abuse from the people above, thus creating injustice in the system.

Who would want to experience injustice? The real problem lies on the hands of the people who are on top, who are manipulating the situation for their benefits. It is a great burden to carry for the people affect, the masses, the poor people who are work-stricken in order for them to live, the ones who are

sweating it all out, while the real people benefiting are on their warm offices relaxing, waiting for the money to come to their pockets. George stresses that these inequalities must be resolved, and offers us a solution. That is to make the land a common property, a property for all, not only for the rich, thus reducing the terms rich and poor, to a term better known as equals.

These equal rights not only promote the availability of these resources to everyone, but also respect to other people's rights. He appropriates his rights to the land with respect to what other people have, thus being able to distribute the use of these resources with the other people.

Land Distribution. For Mill, a free society doesn't have laws that states that the government should take land from the rich people to give to the poor.

Land distribution, or the distribution of the wealth of these rich people is not a law in a free society.

The government has no right to take away these lands in order to give to the poor. That kind of action is not a manifestation of freedom because you are imposing that the lands be distributed. Freedom is being able to own lands that you desire, in a means that is lawful and does not violate any laws.

Freedom does not entail that the government takes away if you have much of that something. Freedom is letting you own what you are able to own, not distributing it to others.

But George has a different point of view. He said that the unequal distribution of wealth is the real problem of the modern civilization. He then stated that if you look at it carefully, it is clear that this unequal distribution of wealth traces back to the institution of private property in land. George

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said that because of this institution, there is no increase in productive power that is beneficial for all the people, and the existence of this institution further worsens the situation. But for George, distribution of this private property, private ownership of land, doesn't pose any good effects or is impracticable (George, VI. II. 1).

But he proposes a way on how to deal with this problem, a way to remove an evil, he said, is by removing its cause. He explained that poverty intensifies as wealth increases, and wages are decreased while the productive power rises. The cause of all these is the monopoly of land, which is where the money comes from, the field of labor. So in order to rid us of this poverty, to level of the wages, only the way the law states that they should be, then the individual ownership of land should be ceased, thus substituting common ownership (George, VI. II. 2).

He then concluded that the chain of reasoning has led to this decision, wherein both by deduction and induction breaks down to the unequal ownership of land means unequal distribution of wealth. Unequal ownership would then be associated to the private ownerships, individual property in land. Thus, it follows that when you make land a common property, it removes the problem of unequal distribution of land.

Money allocation. For Mill, he stressed that in a free society, the government – as the public's representative, should not have a veto on the way a person or a member of the society spends their money (Mill, p. 97).

But for George, he presents yet another different point of view. For him, the universe is in harmony, and so must be everything within it. Equality should

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be practiced and if we are to hope for equality, we must associate this with social development and must have harmony with other reforms.

He proposes to show that the universe does not deny people to aspire for something, does not deny the people to want something, yet in order for the society to have progress, there must be equality, wherein all motives must lead towards equality, not inequality. Even though there are objections, George sees it as a part of the solution, wherein the eradication of this evil is to provide equality, to stop the unjust distribution of wealth, the people should have equality. What we spend is also affected, for George; we must work on towards that equality.

Henry George said, “ All this I propose to show. I propose to meet all practical objections that can be raised, and to show that this simple measure is not only easy of application, but that it is a sufficient remedy for all the evils which, as modern progress goes on, arise from the greater and greater inequality in the distribution of wealth – that it will substitute equality for inequality, plenty for want, justice for injustice, social strength for social weakness, and will open a grander and nobler advances of civilization.

(George, VI. II. 8)”

George proposes that everyone practice equality in order to maintain the justice for all. This includes all the actions towards people’s wants, including their budget and expenditures, wherein they are responsible for watching it closely.

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