

Civil diobedience essay



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Not everyone knows what civil disobedience is. Civil is something relating to a community or to a citizen. Disobedience is failure or refusal to obey.

Therefore, civil disobedience is citizens failing to obey the law. Not meaning robbery or murder but to protest against something. Speaking your mind when something is not right.

For example a group of people might be against killing animals. A group of vegetarians may stand out in front of a meat market holding signs and chanting how they don't think that people should eat meat because innocent animals are being killed. They may try to tell the customers how they are doing a terrible thing. They would state their opinions hoping the people may listen.

This is civil disobedience because they are causing tension between the owner of the store and themselves. It may cause a battle between the vegetarians and the meat eaters. If you do not have a permit to protest then you cannot protest. It is against the law. Even though they are not harming anyone physically it is still illegal and they can be punished for it. Someone like Martin Luther King Jr. would probably not agree.

Martin Luther King Jr. was a minister of a Baptist church. He became the president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. This was an organization of all races from all over the country to fight nonviolently for racial integration.

King was in Birmingham and led a protest that had been very civilized. The police then reacted violently making the civil protest a violent one. King then wrote his Letter from Birmingham Jail. His audience is clergymen of the area.

In this letter he uses people like the Apostle Paul and Jesus Christ. King says,

An unjust law is no law at all. Therefore, one can and must defy man-made law if it violates a higher moral law. He used this so the clergymen can relate. These are the people the clergymen worship and follow, so King figured they might listen.

King felt Birmingham had been unjust and segregated. He says, To put it in the terms of St. Thomas Aquinas, an unjust law is a human law that is not rooted in eternal and natural law. Again he refers to someone the clergymen are familiar with. Trying to have understood.

The thing that bothered King most was that white ministers knew this was justice and they just kept silent. They did not do anything to say blacks should have equal rights even though they believed they should. Instead they were silent which King thought was just as bad as hateful words and actions.

King argues that the clergymen referred to the activity in Birmingham as extreme. He did not like the act they called him an extremist. Then he explains it is okay because, what about Jesus? He was an extremist. Then he mentioned more people like Amos, Paul, John Bunyan, Lincoln, and Jefferson.

Everything King wrote in his letter he backed up with religious people, people who had made a difference in this world. He talks about the belief in God and to know moral and unjust laws. Every individual should have equal rights, according to King. That is in the Constitution. The thing is that not everybody

does. Everyone is equally worth the same, but that is not expressed by everyone. This is one of Kings main arguments.

Martin Luther King Jr. wrote this to make a difference in how people are treated. The way people are treated is very important and he wanted to be supported. Many people did support him but were silent about how they felt. King tried to get them to express the way they feel as he had done himself. So the best he did was write the Letter from Birmingham Jail hoping the clergymen would listen and take a stand.

At the end of his letter he apologized if he had said anything to offend anyone. He also states, I hope this letter finds you strong in the faith. And I believe that is what King really wanted to do. Get people in touch with what they believe in.

We then have a document by Morris I Leibman who is a lawyer. In this document, Civil Disobedience: Aid or Hindrance to Justice? Leibman explains why he does not agree with civil disobedience.

He states, In a democratic society, any violation of the law is an uncivil act. What he is saying is that no matter what you are doing whether it is civil or not you are still breaking the law. He uses all legal principals to explain why he does not agree.

The opposing side is a book Civil Disobedience: Aid or Hindrance to Justice? by Morris I. Leibman. He states In a democratic society, any violation of the law is an uncivil act Leibman is a lawyer who believes any law broken is an uncivil act. He goes by the rules, the rule of law.

Leibman believes there is nothing civil about disobedience. Any law that is broken is wrong. Leibman argues, the vast majority of its adult citizens are able to influence the law by freely voting for their own representatives. He is saying because citizens have the right to vote they can give their opinion that way. They do not need to break the law and go against the majority. They should respect the decision of the American society.

Assumptions Leibman made are that not everyone is going to agree with with the laws passed. There will always be problems, even with just systems. There can always be another way to go around it. He states, the just system includes multiple opportunities for peaceful change and development.

He uses Article 28 and 29 from the Declaration of Independence. They say that Americans have the right to public order and the general welfare and a democratic society. There is always room for improvement he continuously states throughout his lecture. To him there is no reason at all to break the law.

He wants to get rid of civil disobedience all together. If people weren't civil there would always be problems. To him civil disobedience is contradicting itself. Civil and disobedience means completely opposite things. Therefore, to him civil disobedience is wrong and you should obey the law no matter what.

I agree with Martin Luther King Jr. His points are very convincing. I believe that moral laws are higher than man-made laws. People should be able to speak their minds. If something is bothering someone they should be able to

try to fix it. They should be able to tell the world what is wrong so maybe people will listen.

As long as they are not harming anyone or anything it is fine to let the society know what can be used to change. Not everyone has to agree with that person they do not even need to listen to them. But if it makes that person feel better by knowing they tried then let them. There is nothing wrong with letting people know how you feel.

King refers to people who have made a difference and to me that is a very big deal. Just knowing that I am reading something by Martin Luther King Jr. makes me really interested in what I am reading. Once I was finished reading the letter I really felt he was trying to get in touch with what they believe in. I don't think people should follow a crowd. They should listen to themselves and stick up for themselves and be original.

Leibman says people have the right to vote. That is true but if you vote and you don't win where is the justice in that. He believes in all man-made laws. Not everyone agrees with them. I think some laws cause more problems just because people don't agree.

In conclusion King argues that a man has a right to take the law into his own hands, if the law is unjust. He also states that if the law is morally wrong any person should be able to disobey that law.

Leibman contradicts by stating whether or not the person believes the law to be unjust he still should not break that law. He believes that if a person has a

problem with the law, they should use the judicial system to correct it into their beliefs.

Is civil disobedience justified in a democratic society? This question will never have a correct answer. Everyone will have his or her own opinion when it comes to this topic. Some people will agree some will disagree. After reading King and Leibman side I have made a decision of agreeing with civil disobedience.

Bibliography: