

Good vs. evil argumentative essay



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Good vs.

Evil has been a classic contrast used for centuries. It has been used in films, books, plays, and even children's tales. But what constitutes good and evil? What determines if an act is good or evil? The things that we know, the things we believe, are not our own original ideas. That is a known fact. Everything we know and believe was influenced by our upbringing, our family and friends or lack of, our education; basically every thing that comes into contact with us. Even for the people who would say " I hated my parents and my education so they didn't influence my beliefs! " Well, I'm sorry to be the one to tell you, but they did.

The need that you may have had to rebel caused you to believe in opposite things from your family or whoever you wanted to rebel against. But that's another question for another chapter. In today's world, we trust our own beliefs as to what is good and what is evil. But what defines this? Most people would tell you that the " norm " defines good and evil. Society tells you that helping an old lady across the street is good and shooting a man in the head is evil. Don't get me wrong though, I do believe in good and doing the right thing, I just want to portray a philosophical approach to this contrast.

Back to the point, if everyone trusts the " norm " to decide what is good and what is evil; then isn't that a form of mob mentality? Mob mentality is something that people are constantly warned about in literature through out time, an example being Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn. So I have reached a paradox. If the " norm " is decided by the majority of people, and the majority

of people coming together to create an idea is mob mentality, and mob mentality is considered bad and wrong; then aren't our ideas of good and evil created by something that is not good in the first place? If you are at this point reading and wondering what my answer will be to this question, I want to tell you now not to get your hopes up because I don't have a definitive answer to that. Let's bring this idea back in time to the early times of human existence. What are a human's basic needs? Food, water, clothing and shelter, right? I've heard this hundreds of times. Well if we humans are in fact animals, then we have a set of instinctive needs.

Just like a new born cougar enters the world with instinct for hunting, don't we as well? If society wasn't here to set guidelines wouldn't we just be living in and amongst our instinctive needs? If one of our instinctive needs is to eat, and some of us choose to eat dogs or cats (as they do in some countries) then why do we have animal help groups breathing down people's necks to make this stop? Because it is evil, right? But is it really? I myself could not stand the thought of me eating a dog or cat, and that is because I come from a society where these animals are pets, your friends. But why is it wrong for people from another society to do this, when they don't see it the same way we do? Who is right here? Of course, each side thinks they are right but is there a real answer to this question? Let's give a scenario; two men break into your house, they kill everyone in your family except you and your mother. They put a gun to your mother's head and say " We will kill her and you will get everything, the house, the car, the money, the only thing we require is that you join us and work for us. " What would you do? Do you take

their offer and watch them kill your mother, or do you tell them no and die for it.

It is a lose-lose situation, there is no realistic decision you could make that would create a win. If you let them kill your mother, you will live out the rest of your life with that hanging over your head. If you say no, then you both die. The people that are doing this are evil, right? Why? I would say because they are murdering innocent people, just wiping their existence away with the pull of a trigger. But do they think that? What if the person with the gun thought what he was doing was ok? What if he grew up on the streets and the only thing that he learned was violence.

If violence was the norm for him, and it conflicts with our norm, which one is right? If you should always trust in your beliefs, what if your beliefs are wrong? Lets take an example from history. Martin Luther King Jr. vs. Hitler. Good vs.

Evil, right? For argument's sake, lets classify the general population of the world into two groups. Group A are the people who idolize MLK Jr. and despise Hitler. Group B are the people who idolize Hitler and despise MLK Jr. Both sides are amongst a group that holds the same beliefs and ideals as themselves.

They all believe they are right, and if the idea of wrong and right is determined by the norm, and the norm is what the majority of people decides, then aren't they both right? Doesn't this faulty decision lead to extreme conflict? Look at all the past wars in this world. They all boil down to the basic fact that each side had conflicting beliefs and each side believed

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that they were doing the right thing. So does that make each side wrong or right? Good or Evil? What do you do to fix this major flaw in today's society? Be yourself. Individuality. Don't allow yourself to be too heavily influenced by the things around you.

Take everything you see and keep it, soak it all up, leave no stone unturned, and when you think you have everything, then decide for yourself. The truth is what we all seek in one form or another. Some are content to leave things be and others aren't. For those of us discontent to settle for anything less than the truth, we are fighting a losing battle. I leave you with this quote from Wilkie Collins “ Are there, infinitely varying with each individual, inbred forces of Good and Evil in all of us, deep down below the reach of mortal encouragement and mortal repression — hidden Good and hidden Evil, both alike at the mercy of the liberating opportunity and the sufficient temptation? “