

Debate on free will vs determinism



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The debate over free will and determinism has been going on for centuries from the time of great thinkers like Thomas Hobbes and Isaac Newton and therefore these debates have been the part of political and economic theories. Centuries back, majority adopted the notion of determinism and destiny which never allowed individuals to think out of the box. It restricted the individuals then to their resources and their philosophy permitted them to want for more. If it was not for free will then a person born disabled would give up all the hopes in life and would not find cure to make his life better, populations would accept oppression and ignore the fact of a revolution. Along with this, law and justice could not be enforced as the judgements would be made on destiny. Although determination is deeply rooted from centuries as it dictates the life of disabled people like Tatyana McFadden and luck plays its part as it did for Justin Bieber, however free will is the ideology of modern world because it has given birth to the concept of accountability, struggle, hard work, courage, planning, and therefore effecting norms of social responsibility and renaissance.

Free will is making decisions based on desires and then being accountable for the fact that whether it is a bad or good decision. The theory of free will suggests that the individual makes decisions according to his preferences and is responsible for it, i. e. the individual is rational and is not bounded by any external factors and what he chooses is best for him. Doctor Herald Shipman portrays this theory as he first chose to be a doctor and then later used his profession to be a murderer. After witnessing his mother's sufferings from lung cancer Shipman motivated himself to be a doctor. After graduating as a doctor in 1970, Shipman changed his priorities and chose to

kill his patients. He was sent to a rehab when it was found that he is addicted to a painkiller which he used to obtain from his patient's prescriptions and suffered constant blackouts due to it. However, after two years he was declared fit and got his license reissued. After getting a second chance Shipman never changed his priorities and ended up killing 250 of his patients intentionally. When proven guilty, Shipman was jailed where he chose to commit suicide. Hence individuals like Shipman chose what they seek are best for them and are held completely responsible for it.

Along with this free will has its cons too and it can lead an individual to ignore all the limits and end up in bad acts. It all depends on the personal responsible that how he treats it. Free will can be devastating for a person as in the case of Malcolm X who indulged in larceny, drugs and prostitution before he found the purpose of his life. Malcolm X had a turbulent early life, his house was burnt down. His father died when Malcolm was six years old and his mother suffered emotional breakdown and was sent to rehab. Malcolm had to live in an orphanage for few years. Later he got to know gangsters, thieves, pimps and drug dealers. He ended up being a drug addict and adopted burglary as means of earning; some biographies even say that sometimes he had sex with other men to earn money. He was arrested for burglary at the age of twenty and was imprisoned for seven years. Malcolm X is a great example of free will in itself however he chose activities which disintegrated his life.

Furthermore free will impacts the decision making power of an individual as it governs one's aptitude to struggle, recognize their abilities and ponder over how to make use of them. It empowers one to motivate them and not

give up in life. For example Oprah Winfrey had to face harsh realities very early in her life but she never thought of giving up and ended up being an inspirational figure for women all over the world. Winfrey suffered from sexual harassment in her childhood and all the tensions forced her to run from her house in her teen age. However she chose a better life for herself and with her free will and spirit she made decisions which helped her improving her life. Her willpower can be seen from the fact that after such a disappointing childhood Oprah never gave up and sought way in education; winning scholarship at a university. She recognized her abilities as a motivational speaker and joined a radio station at the age of seventeen and later she hosted The Oprah Winfrey show and became the voice of thousands of people. This reflects that her passion and commitment with her work and will to not give up made her one of the most influential personalities in the world.

On the contrary, the concept of predestined has a major part as some characteristics are determined by birth and they structure one's future, i. e. whether that individual gives up or fight hard against the odds. Tatyana McFadden is a great example of the later as she was born with a paralyzed lower part of body but still ended up being gold medallist in Paralympics. When her mother got to know of her daughter's disability she abandoned her and McFadden lived in an orphanage for six years. McFadden however was optimistic and had to walk on her hands because she was not able to afford a wheelchair. She never got discouraged by her illness and after her adoption she took part in many sports like gymnastics and wheelchair basketball. At the age of eight she won two medals in Athens and since then McFadden

hasn't looked back and went on going to win sixteen medals, including nine gold medals in her career. Hence it can be implicated that free will is the answer to hurdles set by what is determined at the start of one's life and how that individual wants to go along the life.

Along with this destiny determines success for some and over shadow the free will, the very pattern worked for Justin Bieber as his career began through cyber fame. Destiny determined Justin Bieber to be where he is today, it casted away his free will. Bieber's career started when he uploaded his music videos on You Tube to show his friends and family. He was lucky when Ushers agency contacted him and signed him up for Hollywood. It's destiny that can change people's lives in seconds and can ruin it at the same time. There are so many talented people who upload videos on You Tube but all do not have the luck to be famous.

Free will does not only direct the life of an individual but thrives the success of many great nations and teams. From all the success stories of independence, fights, revolutions and renaissance it can be seen that it is the will of the people constituting that notion and uniting themselves to bring success. Manchester United is a living model of such teams who combat what is determined for them. On the sixth of February 1958, United's squad was returning to The UK when their plane crashed at Munich Airport after it was refuelled and out of forty four passengers, twenty one died instantly and many of the team members died later. Nonetheless, United never gave up and the depleted team went on Semi Finals of the European cup the same year. The staff and players together supported each other and were eager to regain their status as champions. This willingness to succeed and not to give

up resulted in United becoming the English Champions nineteen times and the European Champions thrice since then. This verifies that free will can lead to hard work and can overturn the routes laid by what is predestined and of that what is to come in future.

Free will and determinism are two concepts which are very much different from each other but also related at the same time. Stephen Hawking, an active member at Cambridge University is quoted as saying “ I have noticed even people who claim everything is predestined, and that we can do nothing to change it, look before they cross the road.” Apart from this, success stories of Winfrey, McFadden and Manchester United reflect how individuals are masters of their own ships and they never let the circumstances, determinism or destiny take over them. These people choose their own destiny and outcomes. It is true that determinism exists but if the concept of free will is eliminated then the models of social responsibility, accountability, law and justice, morality, hard work and planning will all fail and life will have no meaning. Therefore it can be concluded that free will navigates the life of individuals as it allows them to trespass determinism.