

Are we free to make our own choices in life?

Life



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1st essay Are we free to make our own choices in life? Although it sounds appealing to make one's own decision freely, it is actually an impracticable goal as the society has exerted significant influence and restrictions on individuals and has shaped one's value of what they should do and what they should not do. In today's society, people are more free to make our own choices than we were before, but it is true that we cannot indulge our interests at the cost of transgressing the basic rules of the society.

The first example is about the choice of curriculum. Nowadays, we are much less limited when choosing extracurriculum activities and collegial groups than people were before; however, there are basic disciplines which must not be neglected such as Mathematics, English Literature, Physics and Chemistry. These disciplines are compulsory because they will greatly assist your future career and well-being, while choosing to ignore these compelling courses will undoubtedly result in a great obstacle since you are not equipped with some of the most basic skills.

Furthermore, you will be less likely to enroll in an outstanding university or college, which can be attributed to your choice of not taking these basic disciplines. Actually, everyone is provided with a concrete and immutable schedule for daily courses which will not be altered by any individual student without a reasonable application and cogent explanation. From this example, we can see that there are courses that we have to choose to study. In other words, we cannot make a choice totally freely on which courses to take. Another example is about filial responsibility.

Turning to Chinese society, it is a written law that every grown-up should look after his or her parents if economically permitted. One of my neighbour

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is a vile woman, always shouting against her parents and asking her parents for money. I usually hear argument with her parents on economic issues. In fact, she does not shoulder the responsibility of a daughter to take care of her elderly parents; instead, she throws herself in the cyberspace, not willing to take on a job to "act as" a daughter. She may not be punished by law; however, every family in our community has acknowledged her notorious reputation and malicious behaviour.

As she decides not to take care of her parents, she has broken the basic law of the society--conscience. Her case indicates that people who make choices regardless of the rules of society will be injurious to not only the people around them but also themselves. In conclusion, we are more or less limited by the rules of society when making decisions. However, as far as I am concerned, these rules should not be regarded as obstacles, but should rather be considered as contribution to the stability and harmony of the whole society. 2nd Essay

What must we do to truly understand ourselves? As an old saying goes, 'It is always being difficult for people to judge themselves evenhandedly.' And I agree that many people do not have general idea what he or she is like in others' eyes. Therefore, from my perspective, to communicate with other people, discuss some common topics, or even argue about something can not only help people have truly understandings of others but also themselves. Two characters, Elizabeth and Mr Darcy in the *Pride and Prejudice*, a far-reaching novel, can serve as an example.

Their first interaction was on a ball where Mr Darcy refuses to dance with Elizabeth, who regarded him as a person with rude and pride personality ever

since. After that, another officer, Wickham's accusations enhanced Elizabeth's prejudice about Darcy. Both of them, Elizabeth and Darcy, have the idea that the other is proud while have no idea about their own personalities. Nevertheless, as time goes by, Darcy falls in love with Elizabeth and expresses his feelings to her. He is astounded by her prejudice about him.

He sends Elizabeth a letter telling everything happened between him and Wickham. Through their communication, they learnt each other's personality, realized the damage they have made in both of their hearts and finally became couples. Darcy's pride of status is founded on social prejudice while Elizabeth's initial prejudice against him is rooted in pride of her own perception. But their true communications afterwards made both of them correct their ideas about each other's characteristic as well as their own personalities. Another example is in the movie of Titanic.

Rose was a girl with notable social status and she would be married with a business man, Carl. Though she did not love him, and was tired about the sybaritic life of upper classes, she lived against her own heart. When saved by Jack, and had conversations with him about their distinct life, Rose realized that she did not want to be an upper class anymore. She finally acknowledged her love with Jack and decided to live with him forever. Jack's discretions prevented Rose from jumping into the ocean and also encourages Rose to be brave and act in accordance with her heart.

Communication is the very way that made Rose to change and understand herself as a woman. I agree that the meeting of two personalities is like the contact of two chemical substances and insist that communicate helps

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people to recognize themselves. 3rd essay Is censorship sometimes justifiable? Human rights include freedom of speech and freedom of expression. Based on this definition, many people believe that censorship is a flagrant infringement on human rights, and thus it should not be tolerated. However, I believe that censorship can be justified.

Through a discussion of censorship of history textbooks in Japan, censorship against racism in Singapore and movie ratings, this essay seeks to show the benefits of censorship to the community. The censorship of Japan's war crimes in Japan's history textbooks shows us that censorship is necessary to preserve national pride. In all history textbooks used in Japan, atrocious war crimes such as their cruelties in World War II, most notably the systemised raping and pillage of Japanese soldiers in the rape of Nanking, China, are only briefly mentioned as parts of the wars, all the grotesque details prohibited.

Though China accuses Japan of distorting history, this is necessary to maintain the national pride in Japanese students, especially for those younger students whose opinions and impressions of the country are still in the shaping. Therefore, the censorship can be justified if it is used wisely for the good of the nation. Censorship is also justified in Singapore to ensure social cohesion and racial harmony. In a multi-racial country like Singapore, a caustic racist remark can trigger conflict that threatens the social cohesion that took Singapore decades to cultivate.

As such, the Media Development Authority (MDA) prohibits the use of derogatory language or insensitive remarks against any races in any form of media, be it printed media like newspapers or the new media- the Internet.

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This ensures the mutual respect between different races, and thus protects social cohesion in a fragile society like Singapore. Therefore, in cases like this, censorship should be justified. The movie ratings system is the most common type of censorship, and it is reasonable as it protects the minds of the young against violence and sexually explicit materials shown in movies.

Massive research done on movies containing violence, foul language and sexually explicit materials has shown that exposure to such materials at a young age can lead to psychological instability for viewers and make them more prone to committing juvenile delinquency. As such, the movies are often rated from Parental Guidance to NC17, M18 and in some countries R21, to protect viewers from viewing dangerous materials unsuitable for their age. The movie ratings system thus is a necessary form of censorship to bar the young from being exposed to harmful materials through movies.

Overall, censorship is justified in many cases, as it seeks to maintain social stability, racial harmony and to protect the young minds from dangerous materials in movies. However, once misused, censorship can violate human rights principles of freedom of speech and freedom of expression. Due to the complexity of censorship, the government needs to be prudent in using censorship to the best interest of the society. 4th Essay What two options are the most difficult to choose between? The most difficult choice is neither between life and death nor between love and freedom, but between truth and lie.

Although I have to admit that it really takes a lot of courage to decide to die when one still have chance to live and it is harder to give up one's beloved to pursue the mental world of freedom, it is the choice of insisting on the truth

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that takes the greatest bravery. Louis Pasteur is such an example who bravely challenged the majority's opinion in order to hold the truth. Before him, people commonly believed that life comes directly from the lifeless matter. This theory is called spontaneous theory which was synthesized by Aristotle, the unshakable authority at that time.

Hence, people from common ones to experts all deeply believed in this theory. However, Pasteur threw doubt on this commonly believed theory after conducting a series of experiments. Seeing is believing. What was shown in the experiments definitely disproved Aristotle's old theory. Here came the choice. He could publish the result of his discovery to insist on the truth or support the old wrong theory to lie to his heart. If he chose the first one, there would be lots of critics waiting for him. No one will exactly know what those crazy people will do who championed the spontaneous theory for so many years.

His friends even warned him about the quagmire lain on the endless truth chasing path. On the contrast, if he chose the latter one, he will suffer from the torture of consciousness instead of the one from others. Finally, he decided to choose the first choice. Pasteur publicized his discovery in 1864 and brought a controversy immediately. Countless people found fault with Pasteur's experiments but soon people gradually were persuaded by the fact of the experiments. Because of this choice, Pasteur became one of the founders of the microbiology.

Unlike to choose death or freedom, people never know what they will get after holding the truth. Perhaps one can earn famous during his or her life time, like Louis Pasteur, or he or she can be punished to die without

understanding from other people. For instance, Giordano Bruno donated his life to pursue the truth. While at his contemporary, he was considered as a heretic because his belief of Copernican model offended the authority of the Catholic Church. In the end he was burned at the stake by civil authorities in 1600.

Still lucky, his idea was understood by several people and recorded in text form so that his descendants could recover his opinion and memorize him forever. And those people who had no supporters for their persistence or did not record their opinion would be forgotten by generations. In conclusion, either pursuing truth or giving in to lie needs plenty of bravery to chose. However, we have to make decision between them. This was because he was the gold medalist. 5th essay Do we need knowledge of the past to fully understand the present? People live in the present. They plan for and worry about the future.

The knowledge of the past gives us all the demands that press in from living in the present and anticipating what is yet to come, why bother with what has been? Knowledge of the past gives us all the desirable and available branches of knowledge. It is why we insist to learn knowledge of past such as history. I agree with what Rosamond MacKitterick told us. He said that a sense of the past is an essential part of our identity . The past is in many respects a foreign country, but on the premise that travel broadens the mind, this is all the more reason to go there.

Any subject of study needs justification: Most widely accepted subjects—and history is certainly one of them—attract some people who simply like the information and modes of thought involved. I know that you may have more <https://assignbuster.com/are-we-free-to-make-our-own-choices-in-life/>

doubtful about why to bother need to know what the purpose is. In a society that quite correctly expects education to serve useful purposes, History is in fact very useful, actually indispensable, but the products of historical study are less tangible, sometimes less immediate, than those that stem from some other disciplines.

In the past history has been justified for reasons we would no longer accept. For instance, one of the reasons history holds its place in current education is because earlier leaders believed that a knowledge of certain historical facts helped distinguish the educated from the uneducated; the person who could reel off the date of the. Knowledge of historical facts has been used as a screening device in many societies, from China to the United States, and the habit is still with us to some extent.

Unfortunately, this use can encourage mindless memorization—a real but not very appealing aspect of the discipline. History should be studied because it is essential to individuals and to society, and because it harbors beauty. There are many ways to discuss the real functions of the subject—as there are many different historical talents and many different paths to historical meaning. All definitions of history's utility, however, rely on two fundamental facts. We could borrow knowledge of the past to understand the present situation better in any field.