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Editor's Note:

The JWP is a periodical with a self-consciously academic purpose: to give a platform to the student voice, and by exploring disciplines beyond curriculum, the writers on the JWP hope to inspire the interest of their younger readers. In addition to this, super-curricular activities - so termed by Oxford and Cambridge - form an important part of developing and expressing a passion for these disciplines, and so a tripartite purpose exists. Each month/half-term (still to be decided), the JWP will feature articles by both regular and guest writers on the arts, sciences, and humanities, as well as an interdisciplinary philosophy section. In the début issue we present the question of free will, thematically tied with writer's examinations of operation outside the zeitgeist. Free will is a pervasive issue which almost every school of thought has attempted to address - perhaps it is quite pertinent as several major decisions approach our year 12s: what we're doing with our lives henceforward; whether we're attending university; if we are, which one and what course. Who knows? It might even be somewhat comforting if this is all pre-determined according to our social conditions and genetics.

Generation Snowflake

Are young people really all narcissistic whingers?

Lazy, self-obsessed, narcissistic, self-righteous, social-media obsessed, selfish Generation Snowflake who have a stronger sense of entitlement than social conscience and who consider loss of wi-fi, loss of phone charge and loss entitlement to be some of life's great catastrophes. Is this a fair criticism of the young generation of millennials who make up our current student population?

Generation Snowflake is a term that has been widely used across the media and even within educational establishments to describe young people who, as a result of a molly-coddled upbringing, think that the world revolves around them. According to this definition, Snowflakes are easily offended, intolerant of views that do not align with their own and are more likely to cite mental health issues rather than being robust, resilient and able to cope with the challenges life throws at them.

The criticism of youth cultures, of course, is nothing new. My parents' generation, the baby boomers, born at the end of World War Two were dubbed the "Me" Generation in the 1960s and 1970s as the first teenage subcultures developed. Teenagers in the 1960s and 1970s were generally better educated and better off than previous generations and didn't have the inconvenience of fighting in major conflicts to distract them from developing their own dissatisfactions. Beatniks, mods, hippies, psychedelics, rockers, skinheads and punks all created their own identities as well as receiving their fair share of criticism from older generations fearing the collapse of the moral fibre of society.

As teenagers, my own generation, known as

J. M. Scott

Generation X, could be criticised for the over-consumption of many forms of media – listening to music on Sony Walkmans, watching too much MTV and playing too many computer games. Teenage subcultures evolved with goths, new romantics and ravers being scowled at by the then ageing punks and hippies.

Is the culture of narcissism associated with today's social media selfies really any different from the fashion, music and attitude of disco, pop or even the counter-cultures of hippies and punks?

Of course these neat generalisations and stereotypes don't fit the majority of the people they seek to define. Neither of my 'baby boomer' parents were ever hippies. They didn't even like The Beatles. So neither are this generation, by any means the spice-smoking, knife-wielding mobile phone addicts that neatly fit into lazy definitions. I've even met a couple of young people who can express their emotions without having to use an emoji.

Statistics tells us, after all, that this is the generation who are much more likely to wear a cycle helmet, a seatbelt and a condom. They are much less likely to take drugs, smoke, drink alcohol, gamble or fight. This generation have an acute awareness of their mental health and the wellbeing of others around them. This generation have unprecedented access to the world in which they live and are much less likely to tolerate discrimination or bullying.

There are issues which are particular to this generation which explain some of the Snow-

flake characteristics. Targeted content on social media means that people do appear to be more prone to developing polarised opinions of the world. This has not been helped by political developments such as Brexit which have only amplified the sense of tribal loyalties. But this development is not particular to the younger generation who, in my experience, are much more open to considering conflicting views than older people I come into contact with.

Certain newspapers were left aghast when young people complained about homophobic jokes on the 1990s sitcom *Friends* when it was made available on Netflix. Again, this is nothing new. My generation were offended by racist jokes in sitcoms from the 1970s like *Love Thy Neighbour*. Some things belong in the past. Whether that means these shows should be banned or not is another matter, but we shouldn't be surprised that young people, brought up in an increasingly tolerant society, will be sensitive to language and references that are unfamiliar to them today.

Wild generalisations about whole generations are misleading at best. The young people I have had the pleasure of working with are resilient as well as sensitive, self-conscious as well as having strong social-conscience. They participate in huge numbers in sport, the arts, volunteering, caring and are committed to an education that carries ever-increasing significance for their future opportunities. Young people are ambitious, creative and respectful. Perhaps older generations should judge their own contributions before dismissing those who have yet had the chance to deliver.

Another Perspective

The Reluctant Fundamentalist's relevance in the 'War on Terror' era

The American Idea – the perception and identity of the young nation-state - occupies multiple spaces and conflicting meanings simultaneously, unaware of its different iterations according to its international or personal scales. The nation itself claims a culture of freedom and liberty under the rule of law and the laissez-faire minimisation of regulation, with a fiercely patriotic population to reaffirm those values when they become compromised. Critics may question the reality of that claim, or oppose it outright; to citizens in nations like Pakistan, that 'liberty' is enforced in the form of drone strikes and military intervention. The USA, as of 2014, is involved in 134 conflicts around the world - this involvement ranges from combat to training foreign forces – even though Congress has not *officially* declared war since World War Two. This extensive military intervention was triggered largely due to 9/11. A distinct shift occurred within the Western world when George W Bush declared war on Terror. America adopted a new hostility to whatever it deemed to be a threat to its 'national security' around the world and, within its borders, aggravated assault against Muslim people spiked by almost 800% that year. The question of where literature like the Reluctant Fundamentalist fits within this aggressive new zeitgeist takes on greater urgency considering that, currently, hate crimes against Muslim people are at their highest point in the USA since 2001.

Mohsin Hamid provides counterpoint to the mass of post-9/11 literature, much of which is formed within overwhelmingly Western philosophies that approach questions of ethnic relations and geopolitics as the 'insider', with a character defined instead by his separation to this system. In his 2007 novel, an 'outsider' – in this case a Pakistani-born intellectual émigré to the United States – provides an arresting and, at times, uncomfortable new perspective. This discomfort, however, only serves to prove its necessity,

T.E. Dunthorne

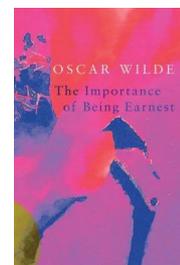
as the reader is forced to consider the humanity of someone whose ethnicity is assigned the role of assailant in this global conflict. The first person narrative – at odds with the more conventional contemporary style of limited omniscience and free indirect discourse – and the framing constructed, whereby the protagonist relates the story to an American stranger who is never given a voice, means this perspective and the humanity of the individual is undeniable; unavoidable, even. This highly deliberate framing means that the reader is placed into the role of the American stranger, in an examination how our own preconceived ideas of people can affect the narrative of individuals like the protagonist, who doesn't lack the psychological realism necessary to achieve this.

To attain his arresting counterpoint to more conventional post-9/11 literature, Hamid has the narrative operate in dual scales: that of the intimate, individual portraits of characters as discussed, and the microcosmic role they play in examining America as a superpower, and the tense political relationship between the USA and Pakistan. In January 2018, President Trump tweeted: 'The United States has foolishly given Pakistan more than 33 billion dollars in aid over the last 15 years, and they have given us nothing but lies & deceit, thinking of our leaders as fools. They give safe haven to the terrorists'. This statement, although published after the novel, summarises these tensions; the USA's vendetta against extremism takes precedence over the preservation of international relations. This is the world that provides the backdrop for the novel. It addresses these interactions between nation-states and examines events like the invasion of Afghanistan from an alternative perspective than the Eurocentric one we are most acquainted with. These events don't just clumsily feature in the book as plot points, however. The characters are intertwined with

them, representative of groups affected by them, and sometimes act as reflections of the events themselves; as this world spirals dangerously into conflict, they too spiral into dangerous mental states. Structurally, the mood gradually shifts towards an insidious uncertainty as the geopolitical drama unfolds and the protagonist becomes isolated and disillusioned with his own American Dream.

This book is not comfortable, nor does it exist to be so. It is a compelling critique of American nationalism, one which undermines the image of the 'outsider' that has been created by this nationalism. Instead, we have to question our own relationship to the West and to the War on Terror we're currently waging. Why do people become fundamentalists? We often see the finished product of a perfect villain – the crazy radicals who preach hate or attack our system – when do we see the humanity and the reasoning beneath that? This book provides an intimate portrayal of that transformation from reverence to resentment. Most importantly, however, it forces us to ask what we've done to provoke it.

May Book Recommendation:



The Importance of Being Earnest—Oscar Wilde

A play of about 100 pages, condensed whilst retaining the obstinate wit that's characteristic of Wilde. The text doesn't take itself seriously, but still flirts with themes like the turbulence and uncertainty of the modernist period. It's warmly arrogant without the self-indulgence of writers that set about writing serious things for serious people.

Unobserved Cats

Quantum mechanics on why watched pots don't boil

Schrödinger's cat is a world-renowned thought experiment. It was devised by Austrian physicist Erwin Schrödinger (1887-1961) to demonstrate the paradoxical nature of quantum mechanics when applied to everyday objects. The thought experiment is as follows:

A cat is trapped in a box. Along with it is a vile of poison, a hammer, a Geiger counter and some radioactive material. The amount of radioactive material is so minuscule that within the course of an hour, only one atom may decay at most. There is a 50% chance of this decay occurring. If the radioactive atom does decay, the emissions will be detected by the Geiger counter, triggering a mechanism that releases the hammer. The hammer smashes the vile of poison, killing the cat. If the radioactive atom does not decay then the cat stays alive. We can only know the cat's outcome by opening the box and observing the system. Thus, until this observation occurs, it seems the cat would have to exist in a superposition state of being both alive and dead.

When the system is observed and the radioactive atom is forced into a condition, we call this the wave function collapse. The wave function is a mathematical entity that contains information about the dynamic behaviour of a particular particle. Whilst evolving, it contains within it all the possibilities of the particle's future. The way in which the wave function evolves in time is determined by Schrödinger's equation. In the case of Schrödinger's cat, the wave function of the radioactive atom is initially concentrated around the undecayed state. It then spreads into the decayed state before 'snapping back' into the undecayed

A.A. Amoo-Gottfried

state when a measurement is made- the wave function collapses.

Since Schrödinger's thought experiment, physicists have investigated how the result of a wave function collapse can be altered- and thus how factors could be used to control the outcome of the cat. In doing so, the Quantum Zeno Effect was discovered.

Zeno was a pre-Socratic Greek philosopher, famous for demonstrating that motion is logically impossible. One of his four most famous arguments on this subject was The Arrow Paradox. He determined that in any instant, an arrow in flight can be observed as motionless. Likewise, physicists discovered that if a radioactive atom is constantly measured to see if it is in its initial state, it would be forced to stay in that initial, undecayed state. The act of measurement requires the quantum system to be strongly coupled to the environment for a brief period of time, disturbing the system. This ability to either delay or accelerate the result of a quantum event through frequent observation became known as the Quantum Zeno Effect.

The National Institute of Standards and Technology conducted experiments to investigate the Quantum Zeno Effect. Approximately 500 beryllium ions were confined in an ion trap. A radio frequency field was then applied to the system. The field's frequency and strength was carefully selected such that it would stimulate the ions to make a transition from their lowest energy state to a higher energy state. The ions consequently jumped back and forth between the two states and did so once

every 256 milliseconds. Physicists then illuminated the beryllium ions with short pulses of light, each lasting 2.4 milliseconds. If an ion was in the low energy state, the pulse would excite the ion to the high energy state. The ion would then immediately reemit the photon in a random direction upon returning to the low energy state. This process is called scattering.

Due to the fact that the light was only scattered by ions that ultimately remained with low energy, the photons emitted could be measured to indicate how many of the ions were still in this state. They measured the scattering at the end of each 256 millisecond interval before calculating the probability of finding ions in the high energy state. This probability was found to be 1 when no measurement was applied, meaning all ions were transitioning to the high energy state. However, as measurement was applied, this probability began to tend to 0. The measurement pulses occurred so often that there was no time for each ion's uncertainty to become large enough to permit it to reach the upper level. This outcome has peculiar implications for the role of the observer in relation to a quantum system.

The way in which Schrödinger's cat and the Quantum Zeno Effect should be interpreted is still subject to debate within the scientific community. Regardless, our current data certainly does seem to strengthen the conviction of those who believe in the century-old phrase: 'a watched pot never boils'.

False Memories

Imagined realities and how they impact our lives

L.A. Hunt

Many believe that memory is like a recording device and one can accurately replay an experience whenever the information is needed. The truth is that under certain circumstances, memory can be altered and our thoughts can change, giving false memories and inaccurate descriptions of events. This psychological phenomenon can be relatively harmless, like in a situation where keys are thought to be left in one room but were actually left in another, however, in other cases, falsifying memories can cause devastating injustice and could dangerously affect a criminal court case.

Elizabeth Loftus is a psychologist who studies memory; not how or why we forget but rather the opposite, how we remember. She has set many innocent victims of false testimonies free and has dedicated her career into researching the diagnosis of false memory syndrome and how created memories can differ from real events that actually happened. Having a fabricated recollection of an event can be very common. Suffering from false memory syndrome is a genuine condition - although it doesn't qualify as a mental health problem - but the reality is that everybody has experienced this on at least at one point in his or her life.

There are a number of existing arguments as to what causes this phenomenon to occur. Factors of misinformation and misattribution of the original source is believed to be at fault. Older existing memories can also interfere in the formation of a new memory and results in the distorted view received of the most recent event. Loftus has researched that it is possible to induce false memories through suggestion and also that as time passes the memory can become stronger and more vivid. Peo-

ple are incredibly susceptible to suggestion, which in some cases can be dangerous, possibly resulting in false convictions in criminal cases meaning an innocent victim can be wrongly incarcerated for many years.

Elizabeth Loftus conducted experiments to reinforce the importance of word suggestion in relation to false memories. She conducted one study where two groups were shown a video of a car crash and one group was asked how fast were the cars going when they 'hit' each other and the second group was asked how fast the cars were going when they 'smashed' into each other. The group who were led by the adjective 'smashed' told the researcher that the cars were going faster than they actually were in comparison to the group who were asked how fast they were going when they 'hit' each other. Another experiment that Loftus led included a visual aid of a picture displaying a car halting at a stop sign. The group was divided into two and opposing sides were asked 'if they saw the stop sign' and 'if they saw a stop sign'. The implication of the word 'the', which suggested that there was a stop sign, resulted in the group's confirmation that there was in fact a stop sign. Whereas the other group who were asked if they saw 'a' stop sign resulted in tentative results, concluding in the belief that there was not a stop sign. Both of these experiments reinforce the vital effectiveness of word suggestion when it comes to false memories.

Different strategies have been used to recall memory through therapy. This has become more difficult simply due to the task of distinguishing between memories

that have just been repressed and those which have been imagined. Hypnotherapy, repeated questions and bibliotherapy are all techniques that have been used to manipulate patients into arranging their thoughts. In 1989, there was a study that was conducted investigating hypnotisability and, when participants were asked a question involving suggested answers, 11.5% recalled the false suggested event, whereas in a question formatted as multiple choice no participants claimed the false event happened. This study reinforced the importance of suggesting answers in relation to recalling false memories.

So whether you've suffered from false memory syndrome or just misplaced your sunglasses - as hard as it may be to believe - you are not the only one; most of the population has experienced this at some point in their life as well. Many psychologists have researched this phenomenon, why it happens and how to differentiate between real and made up memories but there is still a very big grey area to explore whenever this topic arises. These memories are generally very easy to fabricate and can cause devastating results if not researched properly. To name one of many, Elizabeth Loftus has led some very developed research and has resolved many legal cases with her work and had set many innocent victims free. Though some view her work as controversial, most believe she is the first to take steps in the right direction.

The Ethics of Euthanasia

A discussion on the right to die

Euthanasia is the practice of intentionally ending a life to relieve pain and suffering. Euthanasia is illegal in the UK; while euthanasia itself has no legal position, instances described as euthanasia are treated as manslaughter or murder. There are a number of countries, however, such as the Netherlands, Belgium, Colombia, Luxembourg and Canada, in which euthanasia is completely legal. In order to understand the reasons for and against the practice of euthanasia, it is important to first distinguish the differences between active and passive euthanasia, and voluntary, involuntary, and non-voluntary euthanasia. Active euthanasia involves administering something (for example, a lethal dose of medication) that will end a person's life. Passive euthanasia involves withdrawing or withholding treatment that is necessary to maintain life. This is not the same as withdrawing life sustaining treatment – in order to provide good palliative care, it is important to consider the patient's best interests as they suffer terminal illness. Voluntary euthanasia occurs when the patient asks for their life to be ended, while non-voluntary euthanasia occurs when the patient is unavailable to give consent but their next of kin does. Involuntary euthanasia is when neither the patient nor their next of kin gives consent to it.

One of the main arguments against euthanasia is that it's simply too hard to regulate – some cases of euthanasia are voluntary, but how can we protect the rights of those patients who don't have the ability to make the decision themselves, or those who didn't consent to it at all? Euthanasia as a practice encourages paternalism within healthcare that's damaging to patient rights. Euthanasia could easily be misused if doctors see it as a solution - how is it possible to protect patient autonomy when the doctor has the right, and the power, to end their life? Additionally, consider the four pillars of medical ethics as outlined by the General Medical Council: Autonomy, Justice, Beneficence and Non-Maleficence. How is it possible to respect these ideas, which are vital to patient care, whilst at the same time requiring doctors to end a patient's life when the patient wants it, even if the doctor feels it is not what's best for the patient? A balance between autonomy and beneficence can be difficult – the patient may not always choose what's best for them, and a doctor must respect the patient's autonomy in that sense. However, to ask health professionals to take part in ending someone's life when not in the stage of palliative care could just be a step too far. Of course, consent forms and bureaucracy would inevitably be involved. But, even in the case where the patient asks for it, is that

R.L. Jackson

enough of a consideration of the emotions of the healthcare professionals involved? They're being asked to end someone's life when the point of their career is the opposite. Does the Hippocratic Oath that all physicians swear to mean nothing in this situation?

While the 'aim' of euthanasia is to alleviate suffering, patients who may decide they want to end their life may not always be in the appropriate state to make that decision. Euthanasia should not be 'necessary' if good palliative care is in place, and if the practice of euthanasia became more common then this could have negative implications for the way that terminally ill patients are treated. Within most religions euthanasia is forbidden for a number of reasons, the main being that many believe euthanasia undermines society's respect for the sanctity of life. Introducing euthanasia could lead to it being used as a solution in difficult cases and even weaken the emphasis placed on finding cures for life threatening illnesses. From a religious perspective, some also believe that it is important to place value on suffering as well as life, and believe that eliminating those who suffer is not a moral solution.

One of the biggest arguments for euthanasia is that people have an explicit right to die. Again considering the pillars of medical ethics, respect for patient autonomy is a vital part of discouraging paternalistic doctor-patient relationships and human rights as a whole. Therefore, many argue that it is the obligation of healthcare professionals to help the patient with their wishes out of respect for autonomy. Additionally, some argue that allowing euthanasia could free up scarce healthcare resources – although no authority has seriously proposed it.

The whole idea of euthanasia is allowing a patient to end their suffering, and perhaps shorten the grief of families. It is argued that it is someone's right to 'die with dignity' – to not be in pain for the last part of their life. There have been a large number of cases in which people have had such a low quality of life that they feel as though euthanasia is their only option. Diane Pretty, who suffered from Motor Neurone Disease (MND), lost a legal battle to have control over her death. Because of the nature of MND, it was inevitable that she would die by choking or suffocation. She wanted, at the least, for a healthcare professional to interfere if it started to happen. Her request was denied and in 2002 she died in the exact way she was terrified of. Is it right to let individuals suffer like

this, for their families to have to see this happen? Although many Christians are strongly against euthanasia, some argue that it undermines the Christian message of love and compassion; keeping someone in pain is evil.

Libertarians argue that death is a private matter and others have no right to interfere with this. While this may be true, doesn't involving healthcare professionals in someone's wish to end their life automatically means it's not a private matter anymore? While someone may take it upon themselves to commit suicide, euthanasia inevitably involves other people.

To be trapped in a state of constant pain and suffering is undoubtedly something that no one should have to experience. No family should have to see a family member in pain for a long time, when their desire is to 'die with dignity'. But do we ever really die with dignity? Whatever organ shuts down first, we will all experience cardiac arrest- the blood will stop flowing to our hearts, thus the rest of our body and, failing cardio-pulmonary resuscitation and defibrillation, we will be pronounced clinically dead. Society has become so focused on the modern death that we have forgotten – we all die the same way. So, besides from all the legal and social problems that could come with legalising euthanasia, there's one thing that stands out: if modern death wasn't so romanticised, particularly in the media, would people be feeling the need for euthanasia in the first place?

What's Going On At Chicken Farms?

The ongoing ethical depravity of battery farming

R.S. Coleman

Battery farming is the most common technique used by egg farmers and has been for a while. It's a cost effective farming method in which egg-laying hens are kept in tiny cages, unable to exhibit natural behaviour such as wing-flapping, perching and foraging. Hens suffer from endless health issues, such as weak bones due both to the lack of movement and their bone structure - which has been selectively bred into the chickens to maximise the amount of eggs that can be laid. Furthermore, the hens will often cling onto a bar at the bottom of their pen and stay there without the ability to move causing the feet to get swollen, weak, disfigured and permanently damaged to a painful degree.

From birth they are sentenced to a short life-time of captivity where their only purpose will be to mass produce eggs for consumption. This is disgusting, unnatural and it's shocking that this is even legal. Even worse, it's appalling that there are people who actively buy battery eggs to save a few quid. Not that free range chicken and egg farming is completely ethical by any means, but it's much better than the infelicitous confinement experienced by the battery hens. Of course in an ideal world, this wouldn't be a bother, and consumers could rely on the animals being kept in acceptable conditions. Unfortunately the world we live in is cruel, full of even worse people who are shielded by our ignorance. What's the problem with having free roaming chickens in a field? Surely this would persuade animal-loving consumers to purchase their goods, even if it does come with a hefty price, and it would mean that the farms would be much more ethical. In 2012 the law changed for battery hens. Rather than the despicable 550

cm squared (the size of an A4 piece of



paper) minimum that chickens were previously restricted to, they now are blessed with another post-it note sized amount of room. Pardon the sarcasm; it's infuriating to see that people of authority have the power to change these rules with ease and they use this ability to add another post-it note to each chicken's cell. Admittedly, the law did force farmers over Britain to spend over £400 million on replacing the cages, but it was far from a fix for the problem.

Reading this article may have caused some discomfort for you. Which is understandable. This is an extremely upsetting topic and almost scary that it's happening everyday on a mass scale. How can these farmers be sick enough to administrate this every day and witness the pain they are inflicting without feeling the need to stop? Researching this topic in order to write this article has been very unpleasant and it's incredibly infuriating to see the amount of articles actually suggesting that battery hen farming is ethical. They argue that the chickens feel safe when they're in the cages and that they don't need to be

able to move. Of course with further investigation, it's easy to find out that this false information is being spread by farm-

ers who are releasing biased information, likely so that more consumers can feed themselves with ignorant hope that they aren't facilitating the cruelty. Maybe the farmers are genuinely ludicrous enough to believe it themselves so they feel better about their torturous acts.

Of course it would be easy to put this at the back of your mind and forget about what you've learned today. That's definitely the comfortable option. But I ask that you remember this and keep it in mind for your future decisions. What can you do? Well firstly, you can make sure you buy only free range eggs if you don't already. Secondly, share awareness just like I have. If you can convince people to also buy free range eggs, you'll be limiting the amount of profit going towards the farms that oversee battery hen farming. I could tell you to become vegan - it may not be realistic for all - but please give it a thought. Finally, let's hope that one day a little bit of humanity can be restored and battery farming will be illegalised.

Shaping the Modern World

The positive and negative effects of free will in constructing our world

Our world today is the product of our history as a civilisation. Daily activities that seem commonplace now have derived from the age of the British Empire, an empire in which the sun never set and the blood never dried. Examples of this heritage include air traffic control being conducted in English, regardless of the origin of the plane or the destination. But our empire is responsible for more than 'the world's language'. The oppression of native people in colonies, taken in the name of the reigning monarch, has influenced our society today, alongside the slave trade and the role of other European empires, in the wide scale oppression written in the records of time - yet is still endured by many today. Protests are one of the most common forms of free will exhibited today, largely because people are using a combination of their freedom of speech and their free will to come together and speak out about things they believe in. Fairly straight forward - some may even say harmless - but the origin of protest has a much darker past.

The Trans-Atlantic slave trade has, arguably, been overshadowed by other racially orientated events, such as the holocaust. That does not, however, negate its significance as the origin of what is widely considered the first social movement and the fuel for one of the most significant revolutions in modern history. In the trade, White masters placed their Black slaves in shackles and severely punished them with beatings if they did not fulfil their wishes to their desired standards. This form of punishment was done to deter the slaves from using their free will to rebel against the conditions they found themselves in, as a result of so called 'racial superiority'. There was, of course, those who used their free will to escape the situation they found themselves in, evidence of this can be seen in figure 1, which is a leaflet appealing for information about a runaway slave. The slave in question risked his life to fight for his freedom by running away, proving his free will won against the threat of severe punishments and even death. His action proved that even people who are manipulat-

E.D. Braithwaite

ed to believe that they have no free will are strong enough to see through the indoctrination and fight for their freedom regardless of the consequences. The most significant demonstration of free will among the captives is visible in Toussaint L'Ouverture when he emerged as the leader of the 1791-1804 Haitian Revolution. This is one of the most significant revolutions of the Modern Era and in the abolition of the slave trade itself; it was the only slave rebellion that led to the founding of a state run by non-white former captives, one in which slavery was illegal. The revolution's significance lies in its success in freeing Saint-Domingue - Haiti to modern scholars - from colonial rule, making it the second independent nation in the Western hemisphere. It is easy to argue, however, that, while Haiti managed to free itself from colonial rule, its free will to develop as a nation was significantly impeded by the huge sums of money France demanded starting in 1825. Scholars have argued that this is one of the reasons it is the poorest country in the Western hemisphere.

Whilst there are plenty of examples throughout history of people coming together to fight for their rights, using their free will, it is also of the utmost importance to discuss the times free will has been exploited. An almost perfect example of this was the founding of Australia by Captain James Cook. In the Government-sponsored expedition Cook was under instruction by the President of the Royal Society, James Douglas, to respect the legal ownership rights of the native people and even went on to say that no European nation had any right to occupy part of their territory. As you may have guessed, this did not happen. Sir Joseph Banks, a naturalist, claimed that the vast land was larger than Europe yet thinly inhabited. Although few would accuse him of lying, it might have been beneficial to his argument to have left the boat and set foot on the ground before making this judgment. On top of

this, it is important to note that this was done seemingly at a glance - he had no real interest in fulfilling the requirements clearly set out before the expedition took place. This abuse of power is very rarely discussed in teachings of history and there are two likely reasons for that. Firstly, it portrays the British Empire and European powers in a negative light, which would not gel well with the Eurocentric teaching style this country adopts when educating the population on the past. Secondly, there has not been any significant opposition to British rule in Australia - yes, they gained their independence, but their head of state is still the British monarch.

Free will is a wonderful asset to our civilisation. It helps spur on social movements such as revolutions and protests, but it also reminds us of our capability to abuse this gift to oppress others or claim things for ourselves when, in reality, we are in no position to. On top of this historical education on uncomfortable topics is limited; that is something that needs to be changed so that civilisation can progress, to try to make sense of the part free will has played in creating our world today, and the role it will continue to play.

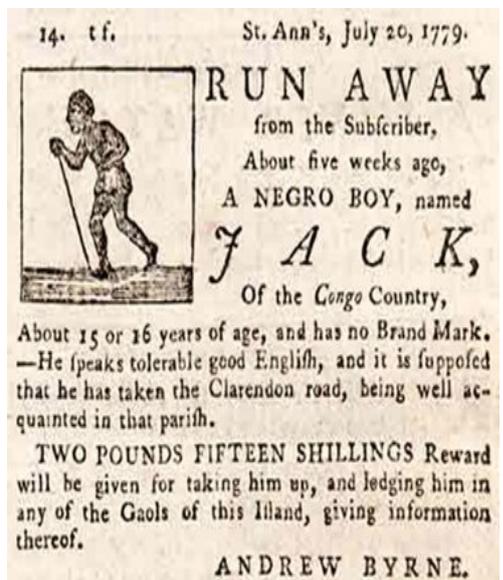


Figure 1

Is Free Will an Illusion?

A collaborative piece on human agency and its implications

T. E. Dunthorne

Free will, when conceived as the cognisant, individual, and independent agency of a human being to make decisions, has some historic defenders whose philosophy - somewhat out of fashion - represents an optimistic kind of humanism. Hegel (1770 - 1831) was one such philosopher; the material world, especially political systems, are formed by influential individuals with big ideas. This means that we are in control of our lives, especially on a societal scale, that we are free to define our own lives. His arguments are compelling until the intellectual firebrand of Marx (1818—1883) enters the scene with his 20th-century-shaping radicalism. Rejecting Hegel's idealist conception of history, Marx argued that, rather than ideas shaping the material, the material shaped the ideas - the thoughts we have are formed by our social and economic position, and these thoughts are inevitable. The French Revolution is a good example for the expression of both these ideas: according to Hegel, the Renaissance and the Age of Enlightenment caused the masses to consider the injustice of their position and revolt; according to Marx, the Renaissance and the Age of Enlightenment was another step in a pattern that was always going to unfold, and the masses' revolt occurred as the product of social tension between economic classes. These two brilliant minds are in direct contradiction with one another; it seems as though trying to answer a question as metaphysical as that of free will is just another example of human beings fumbling around in the dark. It might be more suitable to ask if we *could* ever answer that question with confidence.

A. L. Browne — On Free Will in Art

How can we have free will in art when society is so focused on just the aesthetics? In our society we develop trends that systematically alter our perception of art - whether consciously or not. We are incessantly presented with aesthetically pleasing art by mass media because it's much more accessible and doesn't challenge us; 2,400 years ago, Plato had even been promoting the censorship of art that didn't show beauty, so that people might aspire to be better. The mindset created by the extent of consumerism surrounding specific styles of art make them widely accepted and subconsciously expected. This is reflected in the all-too-often dismissive reactions people give to the obscure - even after the countercultural revolution following World War 2. A depiction of this can be seen by juxtaposing Andy Warhol's work with Francis Bacon's (the 20th century artist, not the Enlightenment era thinker). To our current culture, Warhol's work is much more accessible, that being a defining element of pop art: it pushed popular and mass culture with, for example, Campbell's Soup Cans (1962). This isn't a challenging concept to grasp, and it's arguably a very superficial one too. Aesthetically, though, it's satisfying, and so it sells. Art that isn't as pleasant, however, isn't as prevalent in pop culture. Francis Bacon's work conveys the harsh, grotesque truth of how it feels to be human. The impact his work makes can't be articulated coherently enough to give it any justice, but - at the simplest level - it feels emotionally heavy and uncomfortably desperate. Our society and the nature of popular culture directs us away from work like this: work that's pessimistic or unconventional in style (unless, it seems, it's work that romanticises the notion of pessimism), and so Lichtenstein's Drowning Girl (1963) is more accepted than Bacon's Study after Velazquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X (1953).

The nature of consumerism and the climate of pop culture has meant that we are deterred, by default, from creating art that would be criticised or not immediately understood by our peers - who take our work with the preconceived perception of what they think art should be, forced upon us by mass media. We are ridiculously judgmental as a society, and insecurity about other people's perceptions inhibit us from being as free as we underlyingly want to be. As a result, the ideas that challenge these conceptions have to be diluted to be expressed. There can be free will in art, but this free will is constricted by the psychological boundaries of the popular consensus and the need to be accessible to appeal.

E. L. Braithwaite

There is a way to establish a link between what Tabitha was saying about social tension between classes and Abbie's argument of consumerism deterring human beings from freely expressing our what we want, in any way we chose. As a social concept consumerism is generally perceived as acceptable, although those further down the class ladder are judged more harshly than those higher up for partaking in materialism. From that, one can infer that there is a difference between the free will that everyone as individuals possess, and the level of free will people feel is socially acceptable or safe to express, an idea that is also deeply rooted in class and race. To see evidence of this you just need to look at 21st Century America; specifically at the police, the general attitude they have towards guns, and how people of African origin are viewed. It's not difficult to see that, although everyone in America has the right to bear arms and would simply be expressing their free will by doing so, people of a darker skin tone are deterred from using their free will to this end due to the institutional racism that grips America. There is, of course, an argument against this: some may take the viewpoint that this is not affecting their free will, as they can still *legally* bear arms if they wish to do so. However, for them to bear arms in such an institutionally racist society means making a conscious decision to potentially risk their freedom and their lives, whilst white people have not had to consider that in their decision to purchase and own a weapon.

It can clearly be seen that social tension between classes limits the level of free will people feel they can exhibit, as does preconceived notions of race; these are factors which cannot be ignored. Whilst people can be deterred from expressing certain forms of art out of fear of backlash, people are also being deterred from readily expressing their free will on a day-to-day basis due to their race and their class - two factors which can dictate their 'importance' to society. In 2018, this is not something we should be discussing anymore. This should be a historical idea that we can learn from, not ignore whilst as it happens around us.

Is Free Will an Illusion?

A collaborative piece on human agency and its implications

A. A. Amoo-Gottfried

The universe is governed by mechanical laws. All actions in the universe are physical events. In order to adhere to the law of conservation of energy, these physical events must have been preceded by corresponding physical causes. However, free-will is a non-physical concept. Thus, it is logical to conclude that free-will cannot be a cause of Man's actions and is a mere illusionary phenomenon.

Hard Determinism encapsulates this idea. It is championed by key materialist philosophers, such as Baron d'Holbach (1723-1789). The theory states that human behaviour is wholly determined by external factors and that there is no scope to accommodate abstract concepts, such as free-will. Materialist philosophers argue that we can liken the reduction of intention to psychophysical causation with the replacement of mythological explanation of lightning - the bolts of Jove - in favour of representing lightning physically, as the momentary occurrence of natural electrical discharge. Such an alteration in our current mode of understanding may initially be considered unsettling but would ultimately provide a better model of the natural world. The law of conservation of energy supports the dismissal of free-will as a concept. It is universally accepted that the sum of physical energy in the universe is constant. Energy can only be transferred into different forms and can not be made subject to increase or diminution. Consequently, all bodily movements are entirely explicable in terms of antecedent physical conditions and the energy provided by them. The will of man must then be irrelevant, and does not contribute to the causes of his actions. If a mental event, as opposed to a physical event, had come to cause an act of the body, then the physical energy possessed by the universe would have to have increased- an impossible conclusion.

Charles Darwin (1809-1882) noted that as science becomes increasingly successful in explaining the natural world, the demand for a type of Materialism that can elucidate the phenomenon of consciousness is becoming more apparent. It seems that we, as humans, often make attempts to validate unsustainable notions such as free-will as means of fuelling our own anthropocentric views of the universe, rather than as means of logical deduction. Rationally, we can deduce that all aspects of reality are pragmatic and physical. Hence, the phenomenon of free-will must also be brought within this purview of science.

R. L. Jackson

The concept of free will has not only been continuously debated in the field of philosophy, but studied within the field of neuroscience. The various scientific explanations for free will as a concept focus mostly on consciousness, and how our brains process action relative to time. In a classic paper, written over twenty years ago, psychologists Dan Wegner and Thalia Wheatley proposed that the experience of intentionally willing an action is no more than a post hoc casual inference that our thoughts caused some behaviour. They proposed that this feeling doesn't actually play a role in producing a behaviour – therefore occasionally leading our brains to believe that we made a different decision to what we actually did. Similarly, the psychologist Paul Bloom explored the idea that in the very moments we experience a choice, our minds rewrite history, fooling us into believing that the choice – which was only completed after its consequences were perceived – was our choice all along. Over the years, studies on free will have been done in various ways; the unreliability of personal experience, however, means that Electroencephalograms (EEG) – which are used to measure brain activity – have been used to try and gain a deeper understanding by measuring brain activity against movement. A number of studies done using this method have found that the brain appears to decide to move *before* any conscious intention to do so; this suggests that the idea of choosing to move is just an afterthought to the action. This evidence dictates that events are set into motion independent of any conscious thought. Therefore, regardless of any other arguments for or against free will, we must ask: how free *can* we be if our decisions are made in the subconscious before we even perceive them?