

October 11, 2020


POLS 4900

Response 7- Evil is in the Eye of the Beholder

Imagine a religious suicide bomber attempts to blow up a plane at 35,000 feet with a with dozens of people in it. Most people would say, without batting an eye, that is one of the most heinous crimes a person could commit. A less drastic and scary example would be telling a friend that they do not look fat in an outfit that showcases a protruding belly in an effort to spare that friends feelings. What is not known is that the suicide bomber, in their mind, truly believes they are doing something as an act to their **god**. The friend is attempting to be a good friend and not hurt their friend's feelings but will allow the friend to go out in an outfit that is not particularly flattering. In both situations a person thought they were doing the right thing and someone from a different side could easily say otherwise. The concept of right and wrong depends on who is telling the story.

In **the Prince**, Machiavelli writes that a person can be hated for good and bad things. (Machiavelli). The important piece the author is showcasing is the power of perception. Good, bad, right, and wrong are not one person fits all. A prince is supposed to be a man of honor and nobility. If the enemy were to come up to the prince and ask his battle plans should the prince be so noble and tell him the truth? Also, if the Prince lies for the good of his kingdom does that nullify his nobility? To answer the questions, it depends on what mind frame is being adopted. If a person is going off the Prince doing what is good for the people of the kingdom the answer is of course he is right in his deception. However, if a person is going off a textbook definition of being noble, the answer is no. It is clear that right and wrong walk a very fine line.

There seems to be a gray area in regard to right and wrong. The author of **the Prince** believes there can be a healthy blend in the right and wrong plight. Although to some it can sound like hypocrisy, it is a worthy concept to be noted. Machiavelli points out this balance of feelings toward the prince. The Prince is to be loved and feared, hated by some but not by all, in addition to being a lover of justice. (Machiavelli). There seems to be many rules about what makes someone virtuous. Alexander seemed to be the most virtuous of all men and still ended up being hated by his people. (Machiavelli). In other words, a Prince has to be good, bad, devious, trustful, kind, mean; in many ways a walking contradiction, to some, but to others a balanced human.

A general consensus of people would agree that murder is wrong, but would they have the same of opinion depending on the circumstances of the situation. Winston Churchill explained to his **them** secretary that there is great cost in war. (Whitehead). In every war there are many lives lost yet are those people who take those lives supposed to be considered murderers. That depends on what side a person sits on; if they are on the opposing side, they would look at the other soldiers as barbarians and murders and vice versa. Winston Churchill said his only  mission in life was to kill Hitler. (Whitehead). For people that love and follow Hitler, his murder is an atrocity; for the all the people who suffered in concentration camps at the hands of Hitler, his murder was their saving grace. Another notable example was President Lincoln signing the Emancipation Proclamation. (Whitehead). Although his motives for signing it were not as forthcoming as to free people who were unjustly enslaved; it is unlikely that the newly freed slaves cared about his motives. From the slave's perspective they were free and that is all they needed.

Just like beauty, the notion of right and wrong lies within the heart of viewer. Some people like the Prince do the wrong thing for the right reason or like Lincoln do the right thing for the wrong reason. At the end of it all, the perception of a person doing right and a person doing wrong is all left up to interpretation. There does seem to be some gray area in the concept of right and wrong that borders land of being hypocritical. In short, there will always be this conceptual void that right and wrong will dwell because of its every changing meaning that is dependent on the next viewer.

Highlights indicate spelling/grammar issues. Try and contend with more than one work in these responses.