
Existentialism

6.3 & 6.5 - Bad & Good Faith

Team 6:

Angela Zhou, Derrick Li, Jose Romero, Koey Chan, William Barber

6.3 - Anguish & Bad Faith



A “truly human” life is possible only for those who recognize the inescapability of freedom and its responsibility, which comes at the cost of anguish.

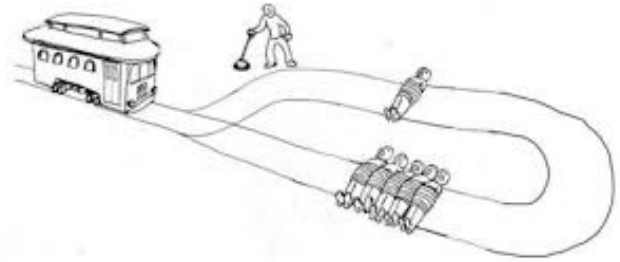
Two sources of anguish:

- “The absurd” (Camus): sense of groundlessness which arises from human being’s radical freedom – “we are nothing, and nothing can justify who we are”.
- Our freedom to choice means we bear the responsibility for creating our own worlds of value – i.e. “play God”.

This makes the “good life”, one with meaning and value, difficult to achieve.

Three Ways of Escaping Anguish

1. Illusion of Choice: Decision to not choose
 - Invalid: Indecision is a choice itself
 - i.e. Trolley Problem
2. The Way of the Serious Minded
 - Seek an objective source of value for advice or guidance in life (ie. believing in God)
 - Belief that goodness comes from a source other than one's own values
3. Bad Faith
 - Attempt to objectify self rather than embracing subjectivity
 - Attempt to adopt role without choice/decisions
 - Sartre's waiter example



6.5: Acting in Good Faith

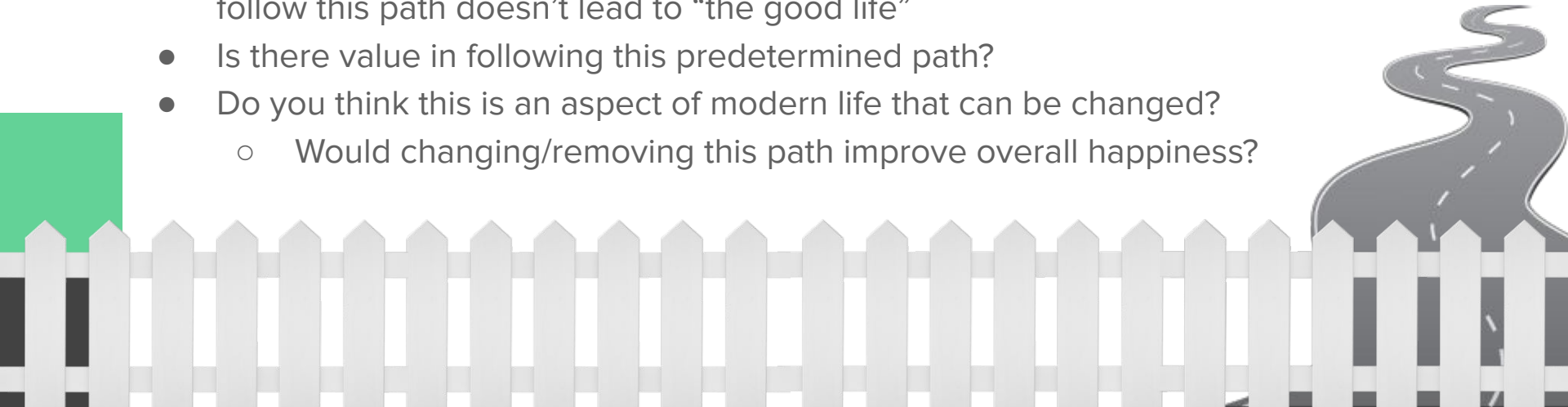


- Value of action comes from sincere intent
 - “It’s the thought that counts”
 - We must recognise freedom of self-determination
 - Only good-faith response to question of why we are the way we are
 - We are who we make ourselves
 - Concern: any action can be made in good faith. Is it still valuable?
 - The “sincere Nazi”
 - Is the intent truly the most important aspect?
-

Is Modern Life in “Bad Faith”?

The “American Dream” → College, marriage, house, two kids, cushy job...

- Many students go to college not purely because they want to, but because they *should*
- Family pushes you toward having kids, house, a “white picket fence” lifestyle
- Oftentimes, these actions aren’t done with intrinsic motivation, and trying to follow this path doesn’t lead to “the good life”
- Is there value in following this predetermined path?
- Do you think this is an aspect of modern life that can be changed?
 - Would changing/removing this path improve overall happiness?



Identity and Role

- Identifying your existence/identity through your job/role: bad faith
- Roles aren't inherently bad faith
- To move from bad faith to good faith, acknowledge your existence/identity as distinct from your role
 - Acknowledge your choices, decisions
 - Don't just be a cog in the machine
- Retirees often have a crisis: who are they now that they don't have a job?
 - We often identify ourselves through our positions
 - Good faith = embracing our identities as selves removed from our roles

