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Essay 3

Ambitious Goals, Reasonable Means

Thesis: After examining the broad meaning this claim carries, I strongly disagree with this threshold statement that if a goal is worthy, then any means taken to attain it are justifiable.

I. Counter argument — Reasons and examples that support the claim. (Saving Private Ryan)

II. Argument — The worthiness of a goal also depends on the interactive influence exerted by the goal on others. (The invasion of Japan)

III. When people focus more on the goal than means, they tend to ignore or forgive their wrongdoings, in a sense their goals are goodwill. (Elizabeth Holmes)

Restatement of thesis: To sum up, I am wholeheartedly against the assertion since it neglects one important aspect of how to evaluate goals and puts us in an embarrassing place of functionalists and opportunists.

Ambitious Goals, Reasonable Means

It is human nature to have dreams or goals. They serve as a mental visualization and motivation. As we work towards our goals, we take certain actions and steps to ensure our success. Thus, the topic assertion makes sense when we consider the underlying of this implication is that whatever the conditions, the natures of the endings deserve our effort wholehearted. But after examining the broad meaning this claim carries, I strongly disagree with this threshold statement that if a goal is worthy, then any means taken to attain it are justifiable.

As mentioned above, the claim is supported when people consider all the efforts put are worth it. For example, in the epic war film Saving Private Ryan, eight solders tried to save Ryan who was mistakenly sent to the battlefield. The mission was tough and six of them died on the way. This movie is controversial due to whether we should save one’s life at the cost of others’ lives. However, many people believe that since no innocent person should die and it is solders’ obligation to protect their people, the means taken are justifiable. In addition, the ending deserves any cost paid. Thus, the claim expresses the strong desire to achieve the goal.

Nevertheless, let us define the worthiness of a goal. How worthwhile and valuable a goal is lies not only in the subjective meditation and evaluation of an individual since we must consider the interactive influence exerted by this goal on others. For instance, a country may consider the goal of achieving economic success and well-being of its citizens to be worthwhile, but if we know they have invaded other countries, exploited their labor and utilized their scarce natural resources just as Japan did in World War II, our morals reveal us the dark side of the goal and make it less worthwhile than it seems to be to its home people. In a word, since no goal is set from a pure disinterested, impartial perspective, it is necessary to bear the interwoven relationship in mind before targeting at a certain goal. Even if all the advantages and benefits involved justify the worthiness of this goal, not all means taken would be considered as sensible and judicial. Therefore, we have to struggle a balance between the worthiness of a goal and the proper way to obtain it.

On the other hand, when people focus more on ending than means, they tend to neglect or forgive their wrongdoings in a sense that their goals are goodwill. To speak explicitly, we observe too many cases where good intention resulted in failure and harm because of the improper means people took. For example, Elizabeth Anne Holmes, who was compared to the female version of Steven Jobs, founded a company aiming to improve the process of blood test. She said because she used to suffer from the pain and long wait for each test, it was her dream to solve this problem. However, she gradually found it was not as easy as she thought, but since her desire for the goal was so strong, she started to fake the test results. As a result, she was accused of fraud and went bankrupt. From the example we can see that, ideas go contrary to our wills and intentions occasionally. Thus, it is necessary for us to make the consideration and full analyzes of the means to obtaining goals.

To sum up, I am wholeheartedly against the assertion since it neglects one important aspect of how to evaluate goals and puts us in an embarrassing place of functionalists and opportunists. It is easy to get blind or fanatical while pursuing our goals if we just think like what the claim says. However, to tell the truth, a worth goal which is beneficial not only for ourselves but also for others deserves our accolade since it is always the power that push the society forward. As a result, it is highly resulted to look from different perspectives to figure out where the true value of a goal lies and how to achieve it.