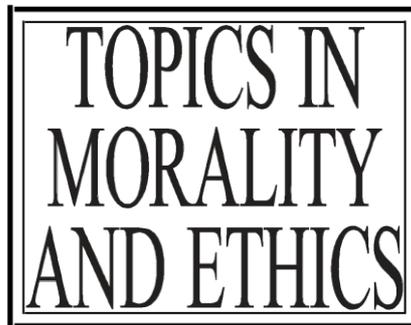


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By Harry Jivenmukta

A MORAL CRISIS? - INTRODUCTION

1

Dear Sir/Madam,

This country is in moral crisis. Let's look at the state of matters;

***crime rates are soaring,
marriages are breaking up,
prisons are full to bursting,
there is no job security,***

young people do not identify with their surroundings.

*To those who say we are all doomed, however, I will say that there is no easier way to lower standards than to spread the belief that '**it happens to everyone**' and '**there is nothing I can do about it.**' It is important to stress that most citizens are decent and law abiding.*

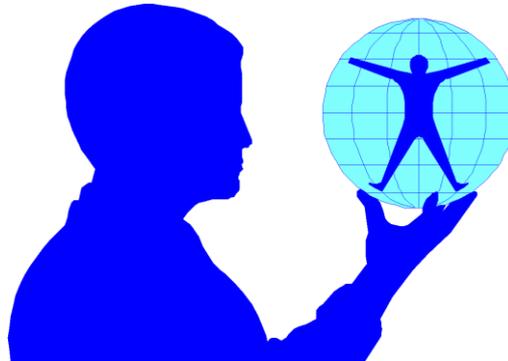
On the other hand, where there is decline it seems to be rapid and rampant. If there were a health problem which caused so much suffering as child abuse or drug abuse does, there would be a national outcry.

Many people want better standards but are not prepared to sacrifice any freedom of their own. What is wrong with identity cards, for instance, if it meant that many illegal activities could be monitored better? Much morality cannot be legislated for but government action can help and we should welcome policy initiatives from the government rather than play party politics with proposals.

Our society has a rich diversity, but the diversity itself causes some problems. Let's keep the best parts of our society but not be afraid of dumping those things that cause problems. Let's get tough with poor standards. If it means we have to take a step back and have more restrictions then so be it.

We need to get back to the idea that marriages are for life, child bearing outside marriage is wrong, criminals will be severely punished, and that parents are responsible for the actions of their children.

The above argument is typical of the attitude that many people have about the moral state of our country today. This pack is designed to look at what morality is and ask students to consider individual topics which affect the moral structure of our society.



Everyone seems to have an opinion about what we should be allowed and not allowed to do. There are always the use of two words to justify arguments which we hear both in the Press and on television; **Morality** and **Ethics**. But what do these words mean?

Morality means to do something with honesty, integrity and goodness, and concerns a whole system of behaviour. A dictionary definition is:

"...the practice of moral duties; the right or wrong of a thing..."

Ethics means to give regard to the rules and be proper in our actions.

Although at first sight both morality and ethics seem to mean the same thing the difference is that the moral code of **how things should be** refers to the whole system and comes first; the ethical code of **doing things** is determined within the limits set by the moral code.

The problem with both morality and ethics is that people can have a different view of what these words mean. What may be moral and ethical to one person might be out of date or old fashioned to someone else.

EXAMPLE.

Doctors who are experimenting with genetic engineering, which will allow people to choose certain qualities to be present or not in their babies, feel that their work is perfectly ethical because they see the future in a different way than some other traditionalists who do not think that it is ethical to 'tamper with nature'.

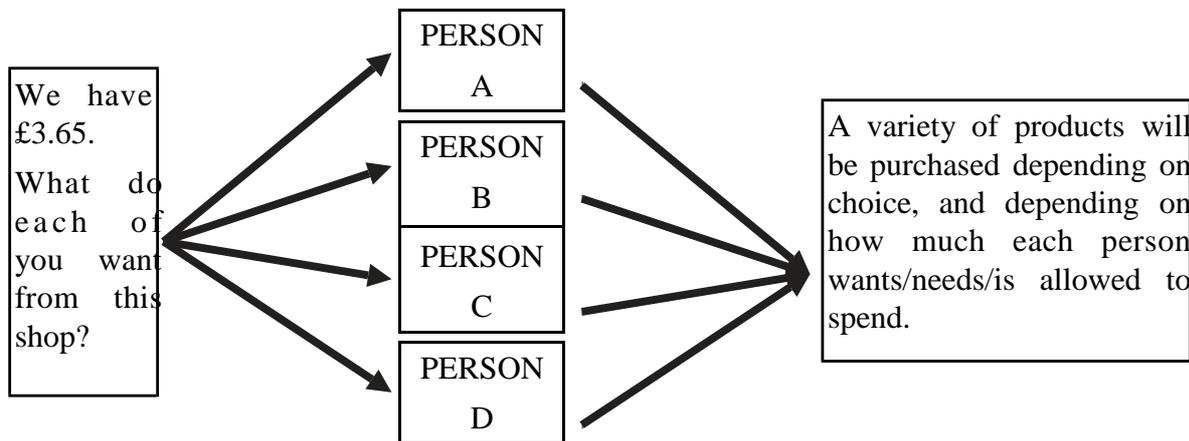
HOW WE MAKE DECISIONS

4

It is important to look at how we make decisions, and the factors we take into consideration. If the decision involves only one person and only a simple activity then the decision is simple:

I have 30 pence. I can either buy a chocolate bar or a drink. → I decide to buy a drink.

If the decision involves more than one person then the decision making process becomes more difficult:



Both of the above examples are simple in that they relate to a single amount of something, (in this case money), and which items to spend it on. It is a **'two dimensional'** decision. It would become **'three dimensional'** if the decision involved whether or not the money should be spent, and if so, on what. In this way the decision would involve many **options**:

- spend the money in this shop,**
- spend the money in another shop,**
- save the money,**
- divide the money equally,**
- give the money to charity,**
- buy lottery tickets etc.**

On the following page there is an example of the difficulty involved in making moral decisions.

When we make moral decisions we add another dimension to the decision making process; we have to decide what is **right**. Right is an idea which is **subjective**; this means that it can mean different things to different people. Some ideas are **objective**; this means that there is a clear understanding of what it means.

EXAMPLE

Person A thinks that it is **right** to carry a knife.

Person B thinks that it is **wrong** to carry a knife.

Both of these opinions are **subjective**. If Person A happens to live at the edge of a crocodile infested lake then person B might agree that it is right to carry a knife, but if person A lives in a town in the UK then person B may think differently.

An example of **objective** ideas could be: an apple thrown in the air will always fall back down to earth. Everyone would agree with this.



EXERCISE

In small groups have a discussion on what you think right and wrong means.

When does right become wrong in the following situations:

**CARRYING A KNIFE,
NOT ATTENDING SCHOOL REGULARLY,
PUNCHING SOMEONE,
STEALING FOOD FROM A SHOP,
SMOKING.**

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

6

Who is responsible for deciding what is right and wrong depends on the situation.

EXAMPLE

A mother decides what is right for her child to eat and drink. The government decides what type of warning is right to place on the pack of cigarettes which the mother buys. The doctor tells her what is right for her to do if she wants to stop smoking. The Police tell her what the law is when she is caught shoplifting. The magistrate tells her what fine is right for her crime.



Some decisions are made by certain people who are chosen through elections or appointed. When it comes to making moral decisions we are all responsible. Often it is what the '**moral majority**' think which determines the policy of the government on an issue. The moral majority refers to the general feeling which people have towards particular issues. These are ever changing because circumstances change. A good example of this is the change in public opinion about the ownership of handguns after the Dunblane tragedy when a man opened fire and killed many children in a school.

Generally, we rely on the government to put forward a view of what is and is not acceptable in our society. Sometimes there may be a small but noisy minority which opposes this view. An example of this can be found in the many actions taken by environmentalists against government decisions to build more roads. But in this example as in many others, the view of the **majority** takes precedence over the **minority**.

EXERCISE

Make a list of everything you do on a typical school day. Then write down who makes the decisions about what you do.

Which decisions do you make yourself?

Which decisions are moral ones which involve considering what is right and wrong?

How do your decisions affect what other people do?

WHO SHOULD MAKE THE RULES?

7

Decisions are made by various people depending on the situation. Sometimes we feel that the people who decide things on our behalf, (or who tell us what we should think), are wrong. Sometimes we do not know the 'full picture' that leads to certain decisions being made. In the exercise below imagine that you have been asked to re-write the school rules.

Consider the following factors:

- rules should be fair to everyone, or at least the majority,**
- individuals should have some freedom,**
- the school should operate effectively,**
- someone has to be in charge.**



Also consider:

- how you will convince others about your decisions.**

NEW SCHOOL RULES	HOW THEY ARE BETTER THAN BEFORE	WHY OTHERS SHOULD FOLLOW THEM
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
RULES ARE NECESSARY BECAUSE...		

GUN LAWS

8



There is no reason why anyone should want to own a gun in this country. There is no place in a modern society for people to keep guns in their homes.

Shooting itself should be discouraged and people should spend more of their time trying to spread peace and harmony rather than playing at being 'Rambo'.

It is dangerous to keep guns at home because the owner might be tempted to use them in anger, or they might be stolen and then used by other people to commit crimes.

Some people say that the world is so dangerous that gun ownership should be liberalised like it is in the USA but I think that if people started buying guns for protection, then others would buy bigger and more powerful weapons. If the police were armed then criminals would also become armed and it would be a vicious circle.

People who say they own guns because they are members of gun clubs who only shoot for sport should be able to leave their weapons at the gun clubs and not take them home.

Owning a gun does not make me a more irresponsible person. I involve myself in a shooting club. People who want to own a gun should be able to do so. It is not the gun that is dangerous but the owner; after all a snooker cue could kill if you hit someone in the wrong place.

If the police carefully vetted all gun licence applicants then the threat of unsuitable people being armed would not exist.

Rather than trying to ban all guns the authorities should spend more time in disarming criminals and others who are a real threat.

Even if guns were banned, the criminals would not hand in their arms and so the whole point is lost. What is the point in disarming sports shooters who are no threat to anyone when the people who are a threat would not be touched in any case?

EXERCISE

What are the main arguments for gun ownership?

What are the main arguments against gun ownership?

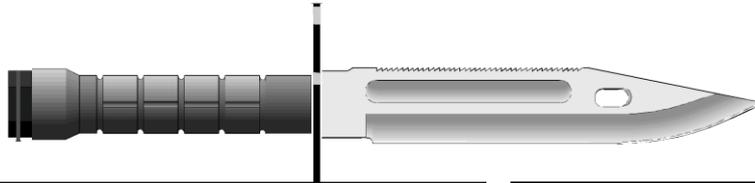
How can the two positions be accommodated so that everyone would be happy?

Can there ever be a solution with which everyone would be happy?

Find out what sort of laws other countries in Europe have regarding the ownership of guns.

KNIVES

9



The ownership and carrying of knives is just as dangerous as owning guns because the reason behind it is the same. If you carry a knife it is because you feel threatened and would use it if you needed to. In a way it is more important to ban the carrying of knives because they are so easy to get hold of and people do not need a licence.

There must be situations in everyone's life when they feel so threatened that they might be tempted to use a weapon if they had one. But they would regret it for the rest of their lives if they seriously injured or killed someone.

We should spend more time on community action against crime so that the threat that some people feel can be removed and then people would not need to protect themselves with weapons.

The government should ban all advertising of knives and make the carrying of knives without good reason a criminal offence. It is already an offence to carry an offensive weapon, but the law needs to be tightened up.

Carrying knives is not a very good idea because a person is more likely to use a weapon if they are threatened, but in some areas of the country you need a weapon to frighten people off. In some places if you didn't have a knife you would be more at risk of being mugged or attacked. I carry a knife only to protect myself and I would never use it to threaten someone.

The government does not need to pass any new laws because there is already an offence for carrying an offensive weapon. It would be difficult to extend the law because everyone buys knives; for the kitchen, Do It Yourself work, and some people, like chefs, use knives in their work. It would be stupid if people became afraid of buying a kitchen knife in case they were arrested on the way home from the shop. How can you tell the difference between a knife used for fighting and a knife used to chop onions at home? Even a pen knife can stab someone, so should we ban everything that's sharp; pencils, and hairpins?

EXERCISE

List the main arguments against carrying knives.

List the main arguments for carrying knives.

Are there any circumstances in which carrying a knife could be acceptable?

Is it true that it would be very difficult to enforce any new law which banned knives? How could any problems be overcome?

~~When people use the word 'truant' they make it seem a bad thing. I don't always go to school because I'm not interested in some of the subjects. I don't see the point of knowing whether a cloud is a nimbus or a cumulus, or how many wives Henry VIII had.~~

School doesn't offer me the things I want, and I think that it's a waste of time. In the past people could leave school at 14 and become apprentices or get a job.

Some people say that without a good education it might be difficult to get a job but I know someone who got 8 GCSEs and is unemployed. It's got more to do with what you're interested in and want to do.

I'd rather leave school and train to be a motor mechanic. I'm never going to use the things I learn at school.

In some countries of the world children do not have to go to school at all! What's the big deal about it anyway? The way the world's going, with computers and technology, there might not be many jobs in the future anyway, but people will always drive cars and want them fixed.

School is very important because new technology means that only people with a good education are going to get a good job. Education means that you understand yourself and the world.

I agree that sometimes school can be boring but you get out what you put in. Some lessons are not very interesting but others are really great. If you want to go to college or university you have to get good results. If you don't then you will leave school at 16 and there are no opportunities for a good job. A friend of my sister's left school at 16 without any qualifications and she has been unemployed for the last three years. She has never had a job, just training which is like slave labour; hardly any money for a full week of work. I'm not going to end up like that.

The other good thing about a good education is that you understand more about the world around you. You can learn a foreign language and that helps if you want to work in another country.

One of the best things about school is that you make lots of friends. If you don't go to school you end up on your own, walking the streets.

EXERCISE

What benefits do you get from attending school? Why is it important to go to school?

Is there any value in considering lowering the school leaving age to 14, and topping up the two remaining years with practical work experience or a modern apprenticeship?

Make a timetable of how you would spend your time if you didn't go to school. Use the timetable on the next page. Comment on the value you think you would get out of each activity.

Compare the timetable with your current school timetable. What are the highlight events in each?

MY TRUANCY TIMETABLE

11



DAY	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI
MORNING					
AFTERNOON					
EVENING					





Our legal system seems to be working upside down because there are plenty of support services for the criminals but not much for the victims of crime. Offenders can have rehabilitation support, get out of prison early, get help with learning new skills, and help in finding jobs. Victims often do not even know when the criminal is appearing in court, and they are treated with suspicion themselves by the courts.

Victims of crime are sometimes frightened and distressed for many months or even years after the crime but no one seems to be concerned. Often the criminal is a local person who may be out in the community causing other people distress and even threatening the victims of previous crimes.

Some suggestions of how victims could be helped are:

- criminals should be banned from the area where the victim lives,**
- the victims should receive much more support from the police,**
- the victims should know when the criminal is appearing in court,**
- the victims should be told the sentence that the criminal receives,**
- compensation should be given to the victim by the criminal.**

Victims do not do anything wrong but they suffer sometimes more than the criminal. There should be a review of sentencing. If a victim of crime knew that the criminal would be punished severely it would make the pain easier to bear.

EXERCISE

Can victims ever be satisfactorily compensated for the mental suffering of having been a victim of crime?

What punishment could be imposed on the criminal to make sure that the victim would be satisfied?

Do criminals get away with their crimes because the punishments are far too moderate?

Should victims have a say in the sentence imposed on the criminal?



Every time something out of the ordinary happens to someone there seems always to be a newspaper '**Exclusive**' story about it. Partly the newspapers are responsible, but more and more it seems to be the people themselves who want to '**cash in**' on their fortune or misfortune. Examples include the woman who had eight foetuses inside her and decided to try to have them all. She turned her situation into a newspaper drama. Or what about the man who was told that he only had months to live. He lived longer than expected and so decided to take the hospital to court for giving him the wrong information, and it made a good story for several newspapers.

Is it that people are becoming bored by ordinary life stories that newspapers have to search for the bizarre, or is it that the people involved see an opportunity to make a '**fast buck**' by selling their story? Is it greed which drives the media today?

It is worth asking whether these people are contributing to the decline in standards by selling their stories. The result of this type of news coverage is that it cheapens suffering and has no regard for victims or perpetrators. Some national institutions have been ridiculed including the Monarchy and some political figures, which can only lead to a lowering of respect and confidence in the nation.

This type of activity sums up a bigger picture of greed and the '**I'm alright Jack**' mentality of this country. Everyone just wants to make more and more for themselves regardless

EXERCISE

Is it acceptable for people to sell their stories to newspapers regardless of the subject?

Is it true that this type of journalism has an effect on the overall attitude of the nation?

The viewpoints expressed above refer to many levels of society, from the person who sells their story to the press, to the decline of standards generally in the nation. It is sometimes difficult to make judgements when someone 'lumps' several types and levels of arguments together. Separate the various levels and topics of arguments discussed and consider them individually.

Supporters of euthanasia argue that a person should be able to decide when they want to die. It has become a major issue because people are living to a very old age and many people have illnesses or general bad health which leads to great discomfort and a loss of quality of life. People who may be bedridden or in pain can suffer greatly, for years in some cases.

The major argument against euthanasia is that there is a danger that some people who have limited consciousness or suffer from brain degenerative diseases may not be in a position to decide for themselves properly. Also relatives may be able to put unreasonable pressure on people in order to relieve themselves of the duty of care or in order to get their hands on any inheritance.

In some countries the law looks sympathetically on assisted suicides. Some people do not want to be remembered as having committed suicide and want euthanasia made legal in order to give their death as much respectability as if they had died naturally.

The aged as part of the overall population are quite a large group already and will increase in the future. The cost of maintaining old people in hospitals or Homes is already very great and continues to grow. With these factors the call for euthanasia to become legal will also grow.

EXERCISE

What are the main areas of debate in the euthanasia issue?

Is life too precious and valuable to be degraded in this way?

Is it ethical to support euthanasia?

Are people who wish to die being selfish? After all they may be deciding to die against the wishes of other members of their family.

What safeguards could be put in place in order to ensure that people who want to die are not unduly influenced by other people?



A nation must always be aware of its history and hold on to the institutions which have made it a great country! We have hardly any of our identity left. The main factors which have brought this country down are:

**cheap American imported rubbish television programmes,
burger and chips eating mentality which leaves our own cuisine out in the cold,
imported slang words and speech which has no relation to proper English,
technology, which being designed in America, undermines our own way of doing things.**

Other factors which undermine us are:

**obeying European law instead of our own,
attempts to undermine our currency in favour of the ECU,
compromising our own culture by emphasising others.**

The French are better than us in maintaining their own culture. There was opposition to Disneyland being based in France and their television and theatre sectors are trying hard to maintain French culture and language.

A nation is only strong if it has a strong identity. The present obsession with integration into Europe, and the '**we are one world community**' attitude will bring trouble in the long run.

EXERCISE

Is it true that a strong nation is one which has a strong national identity?

Is the idea of '**splendid isolation**' valid any longer, or is it inevitable that this country will be part of a larger Europe? Are we already too far down the road of integration to turn back?

Are we becoming Americanised? Does it matter? Why?

Well no-one told me. It's not my fault. All my friends have boyfriends. We just hang out or go to a disco or something. Nothing usually happens, and it wasn't supposed to happen this time.

We just went out for the evening, eight of us, and we danced a bit and had a few drinks. The others went on to another party but my boyfriend and I, we went for a walk in the park. The park is quite eerie at night, but there are quite a few people around, walking their dogs and stuff like that.

We talked for a bit, and then started kissing. Well one thing led to another. I didn't think it was possible to get pregnant at my age. Only girls about eighteen and over get pregnant, don't they?

Well it is obvious now that any girl can get pregnant, but I didn't know. And don't think I'm stupid because none of my friends knew either. They do now.

Since I got pregnant, plenty of people have been giving me advice. It's not much good now. Where were my parents before? Where were the teachers when I needed to know? Leaflets are no good to me now.

I have still got a choice. I can have the baby, or I can have an abortion. My boyfriend says he will stand by me, but I know that he won't. I've grown up a lot in the last month. I know he will not be able to drop everything for me. There's too much life to see. He won't drop it for me.



EXERCISE

About 6000 school age girls become pregnant each year. What can be done to educate girls about the dangers of teenage sex?

Is getting pregnant the only danger involved in having sex at a young age?

Is it fair for the male involved to have to stand by his girlfriend if she becomes pregnant?

Is it realistic that two young people still at school or college can take on the responsibility of parenthood?

Who should be responsible for sex education:

Parents,

Teachers,

Local Doctors Surgeries,

Teenagers themselves?



People who bring illness on themselves, smokers for instance, should not receive free treatment in hospital. The resources in hospitals are very stretched and there are thousands of people on waiting lists who need essential treatment. Smokers, and drinkers, account for more than a third of all hospital patients. They know the dangers before they start and so should arrange for their own medical care in case they get ill.

It is a question of common sense rather than a moral or ethical question. It is obvious that if you participate in an activity which is going to make you ill and even kill you, that you should either not do it, or you should be prepared to deal with the consequences yourself. It is very unfair to burden the Health Service with self inflicted injuries.

Most countries in the world do not offer free medical care in any case. Maybe it is time that everyone made their own provision for their health and then there would be no question of treating or not treating someone. Then smokers could pay extra for the care they are going to need in later life, and maybe the knowledge that they have to pay would put them off smoking in the first place.

It is a sign of our civilised society that anyone who needs it can have free treatment, either at their local surgery or in hospital. **'Free at the point of delivery'** health provision is a very good and fair system of healthcare provision.

It is ridiculous to suggest that smokers should not be treated because they self-inflict their injuries. By the same token, people who get injured whilst playing sport should also pay for their own treatment, and pregnant women, because they have chosen to be in a state which requires more than the ordinary level of treatment.

The more we consider this proposal the more ridiculous it becomes. In the end we would also have to stop treating old people because they are old, and young people because they are more active than the average person.

There are two parts to this argument. The real agenda behind it is to encourage people to take out their own healthcare insurance, and the excuse about smokers etc. is just emotional headline grabbing in order to highlight the issue.

EXERCISE

Is there any sense to the argument that some people inflict injury to themselves deliberately?

Is the hidden agenda of this issue an attempt to encourage people to take out personal health insurance?

Is **'free at the point of delivery'** health provision a good idea? Can it be maintained as the demands on the Health Service increase?

SHOULD WE LEARN FROM THE PAST?

18



Winston



Adolf Hitler

The past is like reference book which informs us about the way things happened in history and gives us an indication of what the consequences could be if we take certain actions. The saying about 'learning from the past' is a very valid one which we should be aware of.

Most of the things people do today have been done before. The technology might be different but essentially the events are similar. For instance, wars have happened before and new wars are about the same sorts of things; dominance, land, politics.

If we ignore the past then we are operating in a vacuum. The past gives us a better picture of the present and gives us clues to what might happen in the future if we go down a certain path or adopt a certain attitude to events.

The past has got very little to do with the present. Today, we are living in a period which has seen massive technological advances which make the past seem very distant. The past is only valid if it relates to the present; but it does not.

I can see that the past might have been useful in other periods of history, when there was very little advancement from one age to the next. For us, the world has completely changed in the last 100 years or so, and we have become more than our ancestors could ever have imagined. What effect, for instance, does the knowledge of the Napoleonic Wars have on us in modern times? For that matter even the Second World War has nothing much to tell us today.

History is OK as a school subject but if we rely on it too much it will just hold back progress and take us back to times which are best forgotten.

EXERCISE

What does history have to tell us about how we should live in the present day?

Is history a valuable subject bearing in mind that we sometimes interpret it to suit our own needs?

Is it like fortune telling; we make it into whatever makes us feel comfortable?

In terms of decision making what role should experience of the past, present, and projections of the future play?

What is sexuality? Sexuality is not sex. Sexuality is about the relationships which people have. Some people are '**traditional**' in their beliefs, that the natural and only acceptable relationship is between one male and one female. Other people believe that there is nothing wrong if a man loves another man, or a woman loves another woman. This is called **homosexuality**.

Sexuality is a very complicated subject. For some people any talk of sexuality is embarrassing or distasteful, whilst for others it causes no difficulty at all. Some people want to discuss sexuality because they want other people to change their minds about traditional hostilities to homosexuality.

Gay rights campaigners believe that the same laws should apply to gay people as to everyone else. On the surface it does not seem that there are many issues here but there are considerations if a gay couple wanted to marry, or adopt a child. There are all sorts of ways in which this society designs systems which assume that everyone is in a male-female relationship. One example is that official letters may be addressed to '**Mr. and Mrs.**' when this is obviously not correct for a gay couple.

One of the biggest problems which gay people have is the attitude of other people. Often gay people are victimised for being different, are attacked verbally or physically. Our society seems to find it very unacceptable that some people are different to the average whether this is because of the sexuality of the person, their colour, or nationality. Gay rights campaigners see their efforts both in terms of changing some laws and in educating people that they are different, but are not a threat to anyone.

EXERCISE

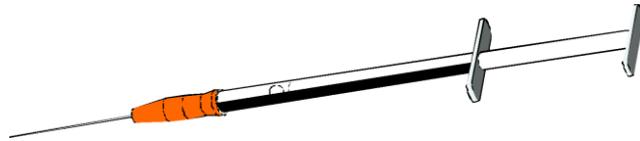
Except for their sexuality, how are gay people different from other groups in our society?

What are the main fears of traditionalists towards gay people?

All sorts of people are gay. They include doctors, priests, rich people, poor people, factory workers etc. What does this tell us about sexuality?

What is wrong with the traditional view that all relationships should be between one man and one woman? After all almost all of society has been based on this model since history began.

Often people refer to religious manuscripts and history in their arguments to condemn gay people. What does the Bible, or other religious and historical texts say on the matter?



Most people who try illegal drugs do so only once or twice. They usually try '**soft drugs**' like marijuana. Often the reason for trying these drugs is partly to do with the excitement of doing something illegal and partly to see what all the fuss is about. A few of these people will like the drug to the point where they will become addicted. Many addicts become so for the same reasons as why alcoholics or smokers become addicts:

**friends do it,
it's cool,
I can forget all my problems,
it's grown up.**

These reasons are all ill founded. There is nothing cool about taking drugs. The fact that they are illegal means that sooner or later the person taking them will be caught out. The drugs might give more of a high, but ultimately they also give more of a low feeling afterwards. If drugs make you feel big then you've got a confidence problem!

Illegal drugs tend to be seen as being more fashionable than legal drugs. Rave parties attract designer drugs. Designer drugs tend to be ones which give you a big hit for a very short time and at about £20-£30 a time are very expensive.

Illegal drugs are now so widely used that it is now much easier to get hold of them. Awareness about the effects of drugs is therefore even more important.

EXERCISE

Why do people take drugs?

What sort of pressure is put on you to try drugs?

What sort of education about drugs should there be?

Who should be responsible for drugs education:

**Parents,
Teachers,
Doctors,
The government?**



Young offenders make up a very large percentage of criminals who do burglaries and muggings. The government has tried all sorts of punishments but none have been severe enough. Young offenders should be locked up like older criminals. If they can commit the same crimes as adults then they should be locked up the same way.

People speak rubbish about poverty, unemployment, and bad housing etc. to justify the actions of these hooligans. Not all poor people or unemployed people are involved in crime; in fact most are never in trouble. Why ruin the reputation of these people just to cover up for these young offenders?

It is the duty of the government to take whatever measures to bring young offenders under control. This might even mean the return of corporal punishment.

Talking of locking up young offenders might seem attractive but it is not a long term solution. If you lock up young people they will only learn new tricks whilst in prison and come out even worse than when they went in.

The way to solve this problem is by education. Young offenders must be given the opportunity to become better people, and to be shown that there is a more fruitful future by going straight.

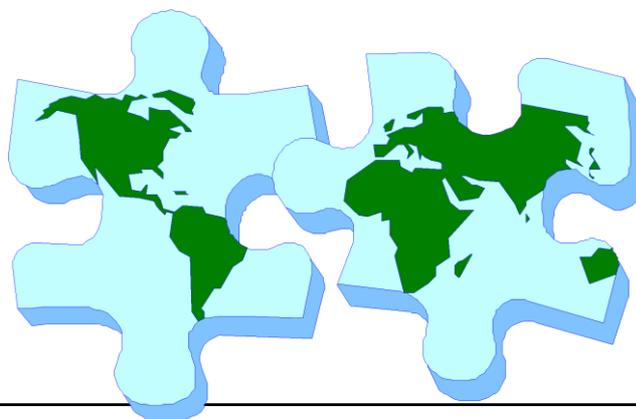
A large number of young offenders commit crime because they want the money for drugs or alcohol, or they commit crimes whilst under their influence. A campaign to educate young people about drugs would help.

In any case it is clear that locking people up does nothing in itself to improve matters.

EXERCISE

In groups, imagine that you have been asked to draw up a proposal on how young offenders should be punished. You have been asked to concentrate on the following;

- the causes of crime,**
- different types of punishment to fit minor, and serious crime,**
- the type of rehabilitation which should be offered,**
- whether parents should be made to pay for the crimes committed by their children,**
- the link between drugs and crime.**



Some people want to cling on to the idea that we are a single nation, separate from the rest of the world, able to stand alone. But this is no longer the case, not only for our country but for any country. Modern technology and the improvement in transport means that it is almost as easy to travel to another country in Europe as it is to travel to another town in this country. It is possible to send faxes, E-Mail, communicate on the Internet, and send parcels in 24 hours anywhere in World.

We should look at the world community idea as an opportunity. What can be better than to know about other ways of living and doing things. Just look in the shops and you will see that we have food from all over the world in every supermarket, most products are imported, and there are international communities of people living in every city. Look at the type of food we can get these days; Indian, Chinese, Italian, Mexican....

There aren't really any disadvantages in the world becoming a more integrated place, just a huge advantage.

EXERCISE

Do you think that the idea of a world community is a good idea? Have a discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of looking at the world in this way.

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES

One of the exciting things today is that people can be who they want to be. In the past everyone had to conform to a system; suit and tie, semi-detached house mentality. But now you can go out into town and see people who dress as they want, eat what they want, and live how they want. There is nothing wrong with living on a narrow boat, in a caravan, or even in a tent.

Free expression makes people better because they don't have to pretend who they are. The days of people 'knowing their place' has gone forever. Don't put me in a category;

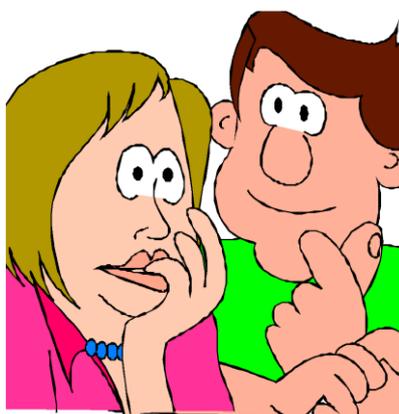
**working class or middle class,
rich or poor,
good girl (pat on the head), or bad boy.**

There should be no more of the girls can do this... boys should do that... either. It shouldn't matter if you're black or white, able bodied or with a disability.

Some people with small minds want to keep as many separations as possible so that they can feel in control. The next millennium should be a true age of equality where people can develop and grow as they want and achieve more than any generation has done before.



Don't put me in a box!



Who shall we be today?

EXERCISE

Some people believe in an 'ordered society' where everything is labelled and everyone has his or her place in the world. Just look at ordinary forms; they ask all sorts of questions to try to identify you and put you in a 'box'. Is this inevitable?

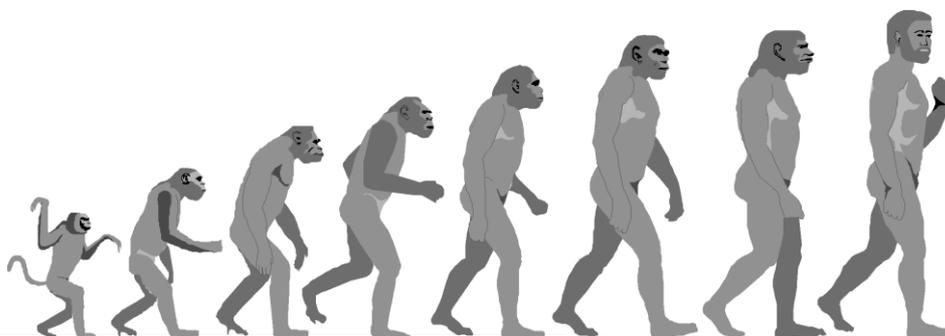
Should people be categorised?

Are we really living in a society where we can do anything we want to, live in any way we want?

What effect does increasing freedom of expression have on the law and order aspect of our society?

What is it to be really free?

Some people think that we are actually losing our identity rather than being able to express it more. We are influenced by television, magazines, radio and computers. Are we just people who are as tied to our labels as generations before but with more toys to keep us happy?



The future is very frightening. I can remember when everything was much better. Our lives were simple. You could get a job and it would last possibly for the whole of your working life. There was less crime and people were much happier.

We might not have had computers and two cars in every drive, but we were contented. Today, everyone is grabbing; a television in every room, 30 television channels all showing rubbish, jobs which are short term, no respect for the Queen, and a bottomless pit of wants and desires.

People do not have any values any more. Couples divorce before they have given their marriage a chance, children turn to crime, drugs are everywhere, and we are not safe in our homes. We could leave our doors unlocked in the old days. Yes, give me the past any time.

It is true that life is much faster today, but that is exciting not frightening. The past was the past and will never come back. We should look at the new advances in technology and lifestyle as an opportunity not a burden.

Although there are many uncertainties, there are also many more comforts today. Everyone has a washing machine, microwave oven, and most people have cars and computers.

Women especially have a better quality of life today, freed from domesticity, they can go out to work, be independent and choose when and if to have a family.

The future is only frightening if you don't want to open your eyes and see how great it is.

EXERCISE

Why do some people see the future as being more uncertain and probably worse than the present?

Do some people always fear change? Why?

Write an account of how you see your life in ten years time. What new developments might there be, and what sort of new moral questions and dilemmas might there be? Consider:

Genetic engineering,

A Cashless society,

The search for life on other planets.