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**Q3. According to Nobel Laureate, Milton Friedman, 'there is one and only one social responsibility of business...to increase its profits...' Do you agree?**

Milton Friedman was a Nobel Prize winning economist who famously defended free market values and conservative politics. In his 1970 article, "The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits", Friedman discusses the stockholder theory, stating that firms only have a 'legal responsibility' to make a profit for their shareholders<sup>1</sup>. Friedman's view emerges in the context of the post-World War II rise of corporate capitalism as firms and executives tried to reconcile social and moral obligations with a stronger cultural emphasis on profit. Prior to this time, in Anglo-American context, there was a strong belief that firms have moral standards beyond rational self-interest. For instance, the concept of the 'Christian', civically-minded businessperson which predominated in the 19th century and well into the 20th. Friedman's essay is especially relevant today due to the resurgent debate on the viability of Corporate Social Responsibility. This essay will argue there are five major flaws in Friedman's arguments. Firstly, it will question Friedman's argument that, while people have moral obligations, firms are not really moral actors. Relatedly, it will critique his moral distinction between privately owned firms and public companies. Secondly, it will examine Friedman's odd concession that companies should still observe 'ethical customs', which contradicts his general stance. Thirdly, it will explore the complexity of determining when companies are seeking profit or acting morally. This is an issue Friedman acknowledges, but this essay will argue that he downplays its significance. Fourthly, this essay will critique Friedman's argument that firms would not be efficacious in their attempts to achieve aims other than making profit. Fifthly, it will interrogate Friedman's claim that firms can leave serious environmental and social reform to governments.

From the outset of his essay, Friedman argues that "only individuals can have responsibilities. A corporation is an artificial person and, in this sense may have artificial responsibilities, but "business" as a whole cannot be said to have responsibilities"<sup>2</sup>. He states that individuals who wish to contribute to a certain cause may do so with their own money and time, however, seeking to do it through a business is wrong, as it involves spending someone else's money for one's own interest. By contrast, he states that the obligations of a firm are to follow the law, not espouse any further morality.<sup>3</sup> However, Friedman's argument is flawed, because corporations are formed by individuals. For instance, let us imagine an anti-racist CEO working in a racist area with weak anti-discrimination laws. If they follow Friedman's argument, they would not hire a racial minority job candidate in a public-facing role. By doing so, however, they would perpetuate one of the worst forms of racism, economic disenfranchisement, and entrench race-based income inequality. In a capitalist society, individuals spend much of our lives at work and, indeed, it is

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<sup>1</sup> Milton Friedman, "The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits", The New York Times Magazine, September 13, 1970, located at: <https://web.archive.org/web/20060207060807/https://www.colorado.edu/studentgroups/libertarians/issues/friedman-soc-resp-business.html>, accessed 1/06/2019.

<sup>2</sup> Friedman, "The Social Responsibility of Business", op cit.

<sup>3</sup> Friedman, "The Social Responsibility of Business", op cit.

often the role where we can most impact our community. While Milton Friedman states that individuals can have morals, therefore, he denies them the opportunity to express those morals or act in accordance with them.

Tellingly, Friedman excludes 'individual proprietors' from his essay and 'focuses on corporate executives'<sup>4</sup>. This is because, technically, individual owners have total control over their business. The business is funded by their own money, and therefore, all expenditures are technically a 'personal social cause', which he states they are well within their rights to pursue. However, it should be noted that shareholders are very similar to individual proprietors. Shareholders simply have a portion of capital in a firm and use their shares to make decisions within the company, based on an agreed voting system. As such, if the collective will of the firm is that they should pursue corporate social responsibility then that is not meaningfully different from an individual proprietor. Even if one might say that the shareholders rarely vote on corporate strategy, they select the board who hires the CEO to act on their behalf every day. Part of the CEO's considerations will naturally be to maximise all interests of the shareholders, including their moral values. Later in his essay, Friedman states, that "the newer phenomenon of calling upon stockholders to require corporations to exercise social responsibility" will... "involved is some stockholders trying to get other stockholders... to contribute against their will to 'social causes'". But the reverse is also true: totally-profit-seeking shareholders impose their will on more socially-minded shareholders.<sup>5</sup> As Asher Schechter has argued in response to Friedman, paraphrasing the theories of Nobel Prize winning economists Oliver Hart and Luigi Zingales, "A company's ultimate shareholders are ordinary people who, in addition to caring about money, are also concerned about a myriad of ethical and social issues"<sup>6</sup>Friedman also argues that when large public companies pursue ethical standards also might harm consumers or employees<sup>7</sup> but similarly, pursuing profit also does not always please your customers, or employees. For example, raising the prices of your product may increase profit, but will likely frustrate customers, whilst lowering wages to cut costs may also annoy your employees. As scholar Lynn A. Stout noted when examining Friedman's views "certainly they can choose to maximize profits; but they can also choose to pursue any other objective that is not unlawful, including taking care of employees and suppliers"<sup>8</sup>.

Having identified some flaws in Friedman's definition of a 'company', this essay will now turn to problems in his conception of what constitutes non-profit based goal or objective. Friedman argues that "responsibility is to ... make as much money as possible while conforming to the

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<sup>4</sup> Friedman, "The Social Responsibility of Business", op cit.

<sup>5</sup> Friedman, "The Social Responsibility of Business", op cit.

<sup>6</sup> Asher Schechter, "Why Friedman Was Wrong", in "It's time to rethink Milton Friedman's shareholder argument", *Chicago Booth Review Online*, 07/12/17, <https://review.chicagobooth.edu/economics/2017/article/it-s-time-rethink-milton-friedman-s-shareholder-value-argument>

<sup>7</sup> Friedman, "The Social Responsibility of Business", op cit.

<sup>8</sup> Lynn A. Stout, "The Shareholder Value Myth" (2013). Cornell Law Faculty Publications. Paper 771. <http://scholarship.law.cornell.edu/facpub/771>

basic rules of the society, both those embodied in law and those embodied in ethical custom."<sup>9</sup> This is contradictory since 'ethical custom' could include a range of moral objectives and values. It can be argued that following these customs will not always maximise company profits, or even may damage them. For example, not lying is an ethical custom, and outside of fraud laws, one is not mandated to tell the truth. However, telling the truth might reduce the company's profits. For example, imagine a CEO is in negotiations with two companies. She instructs her secretary to lie one of those firms about why she cannot meet with them, when in fact she is conferencing with their rival, this would be legal, but not ethical. Following the ethical custom of honesty would, however, weaken the firm's negotiation position. If Friedman believes the CEO should be compelled by ethical custom to tell the truth, what is the distinction between this behaviour and the CEO making environmental goals a condition of the tender? Friedman thus contradicts himself here by conceding that there are some cases where a firm should not seek to maximise profitability.

Thirdly, Friedman concedes that there are some unclear cases where profit may or may not conflict with other goals<sup>10</sup>, but massively underestimates how often this might occur. This is significant because it makes his advice to executives impractical. Friedman only considers the case where doing some social good may improve your brand image. For example, some banks refuse to lend to fossil fuel projects, which, while does reduce their immediate profits, helps improve their image with current and potential future employees. There are, however, other instances: For example, the government sets baseline standards for non-discrimination in hiring staff but firms often have diversity policies that exceed this because workers value working alongside colleagues that reflect the society which they live in. A more diverse workforce increases company productivity, leading to long term profitability. Moreover, as David Rodin argued in "The Ownership Model of Business Ethics" "the separation of long-term profitability and the social good becomes arbitrary" especially since the "viability of society and the environment are central to the performance of firms over time"<sup>11</sup>. As such, Friedman's strict distinction between profit and other goals is difficult for firms, directors and executives to uphold.

Finally, Friedman also makes an argument about efficacy. He states that many executives do not know how to truly bring social good, and therefore, they should not attempt doing so. Milton uses the example of an executive told to fight inflation:<sup>12</sup> "He is told that he must contribute to fighting inflation. How is he to know what action of his will contribute to that end?... But nothing about his selection makes him an expert on inflation. Will his holding down the price of his product reduce inflationary pressure?"<sup>13</sup> This argument is spurious, as inflation is unlikely to be combated by individual firms lowering the prices of their goods. There are, however, other examples where corporate change is possible. For example, executives are likely to know how to decarbonise within their industry, and also would know that such a change would improve the environment.

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<sup>9</sup> Friedman, "The Social Responsibility of Business", op cit.

<sup>10</sup> Friedman, "The Social Responsibility of Business", op cit.

<sup>11</sup> David Rodin, The Ownership Model of Business Ethics. *Metaphilosophy* Vol 36, No 1-2, (2005) 163–181.

<sup>12</sup> Friedman, "The Social Responsibility of Business", op cit.

<sup>13</sup> Friedman, "The Social Responsibility of Business", op cit.

For example, Google has been carbon neutral for two years now, their data centres use 50 percent less energy than comparable facilities and their 'campuses' are made from sustainable materials<sup>14</sup>. Google thus chose to forgo immediate profits to pursue an objective that was not required by law. But more importantly, Google were clearly effective: as a major energy-using corporation they cut emissions in California in a non-negligible way. Their actions have also set the standard for their industry.<sup>15</sup> Even if other firms are not experts on how to have an environmental impact, they can hire consultants to help their decisions. Moreover, logically, if people working at a firm suspected their socially-minded actions would not have an impact, it is unlikely they would risk profits, even in the short term. In reality, this debate is confined to cases where the benefits of a socially just decision are probable and measurable.

On the issue of efficacy, Friedman argues that the government has set basic 'ethical' regulations on companies, and will continue to do when a problem, such as global warming, become more serious.<sup>16</sup> However, this contradicts the views Friedman has articulated in his broader scholarship, that governments are often not best placed to act and misunderstand the needs of wider society. Additionally, the government can be short-sighted when making regulatory decisions, since they are focussed on winning elections every few years. This means radical action will not happen soon enough for issues such as global warming. Corporations have short term incentives too, of course, like annual earnings targets, but they also have an interest in the long term. For example, companies are actually incentivised to reduce their negative impact on the environment because they recognise the long-term viability of their business is dependent on a healthy ecosystem.

Friedman argues that it is undemocratic to impose social obligations and moral preferences that are not legally enforced since this goes against the will of the majority in a society. Rather, he also calls on socially-minded executives to lobby for change in the electorate or legislature.<sup>17</sup> However, this option is not very realistic. In his conception massive corporations are unable to bring about change, so why would individuals, like socially-minded executives, be better placed to do so? Individuals have fewer resources and power compared to corporations, so lobbying for change is more challenging and less likely to yield results. In addition, it is not likely that executives could both effectively argue for social change and continue to work at a firm that undermines it. For instance, it would be odd for the CEO of a firm that does not hire any women as senior executives to call for quotas to be imposed. Or, let us assume, these executives will be successful. By this logic, powerful and wealthy individuals who perform moral actions that are not required by law could also be viewed as anti-democratic since they are imposing their values on an unwilling polity.

Milton Friedman was undoubtedly an incredible economist, and his work has had an immense impact on public policy. However, Friedman was unable to predict the complex role of morality in contemporary business and the blurring of the difference between profit and social good.

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<sup>14</sup> Google, "Environment Projects", n.d., located at: <https://sustainability.google/environment/>, accessed 15/07/2019.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Friedman, "The Social Responsibility of Business", op cit.

<sup>17</sup> Friedman, "The Social Responsibility of Business", op cit.

Especially in a status quo where society faces issues such as global warming and structural inequality, it is important that firms do more than seek profit.

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## Essay by Indigo Lee-Wilson

### When, if ever, have there been 'good' revolutions?

Since revolutions are fought between oppressed citizens and a powerful government, the process is likely to be violent. For this reason, revolutions must be justified. Even in the rare case of a peaceful revolution, revolutionary actors can not know in advance that there will be no casualties. The revolution must therefore be morally justified to account for the potential or actual loss of life. At the outset of this analysis, however, it is important to define a revolution: a revolution is not just a violent protest or riot. The distinction relates to objective: while a riot has no goal, and a violent protest merely aims to produce some form of change, a revolution seeks a specific type of change. Revolutions challenge the nature of the government and, if successful, alter the political structure of society. A just revolution must have a goal that is just, from the perspective of both values of the time and standards of today. For instance, some acts of spectacular violence in the French Revolution strike us as excessive and immoral, but may make sense given the extent of oppression and everyday character of violence in France at the time. By the same token, a revolution to preserve slavery does not become moral simply because those values were endorsed in the past.

In order to work out if a revolution has ever been 'good', one must first develop criteria for a good revolution. To do so, one might borrow from Just War Theory (JWT)<sup>1</sup>, a body of philosophy designed to evaluate whether conflicts are moral. In JWT, war is only permissible after other options have been exhausted. Similarly, a revolution is only justified if there are no other effective alternatives such as negotiation, protest and electoral politics.<sup>2</sup> This is because violence should be avoided at all costs. In JWT, war is only legitimate if it has a reasonable chance of success: revolutions should also pass this test so there is not a pointless waste of life.

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<sup>1</sup>Nick Fotion, '*Just War Theory*', in *Theory vs. Anti-Theory in Ethics*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), viewed 28 April 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Christine Emba, 2015, 'Just War Theory: A primer', *The Washington Post*, 30 November, viewed 28 April 2019, <[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/in-theory/wp/2015/11/30/just-war-theory-a-primer/?utm\\_term=.edcf70ba7332](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/in-theory/wp/2015/11/30/just-war-theory-a-primer/?utm_term=.edcf70ba7332)>.

In JWT<sup>3</sup> the peace produced by war must be greater than the peace that preceded it. Symmetrically, a revolution must not just remedy the wrongs of the oppressive government, it must establish a better society, for most citizens, compared to the situation that preceded the revolution. In JWT and during revolutions, it is important to avoid civilian casualties and only intentionally target the enemy. Similarly, a revolution must be proportionate to the wrongs of the government, and revolutionary action should be focused on the oppressors, rather than innocent civilians. In JWT<sup>4</sup> a war must be waged by a legitimate authority:<sup>5</sup> while revolutions, by their very nature, lack legitimate authorities they must be legitimated by a mandate of broad popular support. Signs that they have popular support include that the citizenry show solidarity with the violent actions, the movement grows in popularity over time, and that the government has to resort to draconian and repressive measures to stop the revolution.

This essay will adopt a case study approach to justify this criteria. Firstly, it will argue that the American Revolution is a classic example of a good revolution. By contrast, the Bolshevik Revolution will be explored as a failed revolution with good intentions but a bad outcome. In the latter part of the essay three examples will be used to analyse the complexities of assessing whether a revolution is good. The Gwangju Uprising will be discussed in order to interrogate what constitutes a revolution. The essay will then turn to the Iranian Revolution to argue that one must not just consider whether the stated objectives of the revolutionaries are achieved, but also other the general impacts on the populace. Finally, the French Revolution will be examined to consider what time frame of impacts is relevant when considering whether the revolution was good and how we weight varied and incommensurate types of consequences.

The American Revolution<sup>6</sup> is a paradigmatic case of a good revolution since it successfully achieved just aims. The Revolution was a last resort which was used after the Americans had lobbied England for lower taxation and more democratic input. The American Revolution was

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<sup>3</sup> Tamar Meisels, *Contemporary Just War Theory and Practice*. (Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY: Routledge, 2018), viewed 28 April 2019.

<sup>4</sup> Alexander Moseley, n.d., *Just War Theory*, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, UK, viewed 28 April 2019, <<https://www.iep.utm.edu/justwar/>>.

<sup>5</sup> Vincent Ferraro, 2010, *Principles of the Just War*, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, USA, viewed 1 May 2019, <<https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/pol116/justwar.htm>>.

<sup>6</sup> Oversimplified 2018, *The American Revolution - OverSimplified (Part 1)*, online video, 30 August, viewed 1 May 2019, <<https://youtu.be/gzALIXcY4pg>>.

broadly supported by its people. About 40-45%<sup>7</sup> of Americans were pro-Independence and called themselves Patriots, while those who supported the British were labelled as loyalists and estimated to be 15-20%. The Patriots, moreover, must have made up a large amount of the population in order to defeat the most powerful army in the world and therefore they had legitimacy, justifying the Revolution. These Patriots were opposed to British rule due to taxation without representation: heavy duties were imposed on Americans<sup>8</sup> but they were denied a vote on the English Parliament. The army led by George Washington<sup>9</sup>, did not target the populace since the army members were taught to gain the trust of neutral Americans by avoiding theft, rape and unnecessary violence towards civilians. Given America had also the support of foreign armies, such as the French<sup>10</sup>, they had a reasonable and legitimate chance of success. The goal of the American Revolution was to give citizens direct democratic control. Even though the new constitution excluded women and African American slaves, it was still preferable to the prior system.

The Bolshevik Revolution<sup>11</sup> was just in its aims but not a 'good' revolution given the society it produced had secret police, the collectivisation of poor peasants and high levels of corruption. The Bolshevik Revolution's aims<sup>12</sup> were to remove the Tsar Nicholas II from power and instead create a communist society.<sup>13</sup> The Russian people had previously protested against the rule of the Tsar in 1905 and been very unsuccessful, hence, it was reasonable for Bolsheviks to focus on violent revolution. Due to Russia being under a monarchy, the citizens were unable to vote the Tsar out through electoral politics. The Revolution had broad support due to the Tsar's corruption and ineptitude. In the short term Bolshevik Revolutionaries avoided civilian

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<sup>7</sup> Robert Calhoon, 'Loyalism and Neutrality', (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2008), viewed 1 May 2019.

<sup>8</sup> Jack P Greene, *The American Revolution*, *The American Historical Review*, vol. 105, no. 1, 2000, pp. 93–102, JSTOR, viewed 2 May 2019, <[www.jstor.org/stable/2652437](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2652437)>.

<sup>9</sup> Willard M. Wallace, 2019 'American Revolution', in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. USA, viewed 2 May 2019, <<https://www.britannica.com/event/American-Revolution>>.

<sup>10</sup> The Library of Congress, n.d., *France Allied with American Colonies*, Washington, D.C., viewed 2 May 2019, <[http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/revolut/jb\\_revolut\\_francoam\\_1.html](http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/revolut/jb_revolut_francoam_1.html)>.

<sup>11</sup> A&E Television Networks, 2009, *Russian Revolution*, viewed 11 May 2019, <<https://www.history.com/topics/russia/russian-revolution>>.

<sup>12</sup> James Ryan, 2018, 'Goodbye Lenin? A Centenary Perspective', *History Today*, vol. 68, no. 6, pp. 40–50, viewed 11 May 2019, <<http://search.ebscohost.com.ascham.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=khh&AN=129552249&site=hrc-live>>.

<sup>13</sup> John Ruddy, 2017, *Russian Revolution in 10 Minutes*, online video, 30 October, viewed 11 May 2019, <<https://youtu.be/dGNaSgZgUAs>>.



casualties, the only real harm done was performed on the Winter Palace<sup>14</sup>. The Bolshevik Revolution, at first, aimed to fight against the Tsar's secret police, however, they too, ended up creating their own secret police force, CHEKA.<sup>15</sup> The Revolution also led to the collectivisation of farming, which was arguably as coercive as agricultural labour before the Revolution. Originally, Russia still had a quasi-feudalistic society where peasants would work on the farm they were born into and the wealthy classes did not have to do hard labour. However, the revolution created the system of all people, regardless of class, worked on a farm that they were assigned to by the government. This was highly ineffective since it removed people's incentive to work, thus causing starvation.<sup>16</sup> Finally, the Revolution had high levels of corruption: this is due to the lack of other economic opportunities and the non-existence political competition. Whilst the idea and aims sounded just, the Revolution may have even taken the Russian people backwards.

The example of the Gwangju Uprising<sup>17</sup> can be used to engage with the difficult question of what constitutes a Revolution. The Gwangju 'Revolution' of 1980 consisted of student protesters opposing martial law in South Korea. The students were violently attacked while the city and its press was placed in lock-down. The events at Gwangju is typically termed an 'uprising' but its impact was revolutionary since ultimately led to democratisation of Korea.<sup>18</sup> The state reaction reveals how scared the authorities were that these protests would change the Korean state: "[d]emonstrators in the southern city of Gwangju and passers-by were beaten to death, tortured,

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<sup>14</sup> *Timeline of the Russian Revolution*, 2019, British Library, UK, viewed 11 May 2019, <<https://www.bl.uk/russian-revolution/articles/timeline-of-the-russian-revolution>>.

<sup>15</sup> Jennifer Llewellyn, 2014, *The CHEKA*, Alpha History, viewed 15 May 2019, <<https://alphahistory.com/russianrevolution/cheka/>>.

<sup>16</sup> Orlando Figes, 2017, *From Tsar to U.S.S.R.: Russia's Chaotic Year of Revolution*, National Geographic, viewed 15 May 2019, <<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/archaeology-and-history/magazine/2017/09-10/russian-revolution-history-lenin/>>.

<sup>17</sup> Nancy Abelmann, 2004, *Contentious Kwangju: The May 18 Uprising in Korea's Past and Present (Book)*, *American Historical Review*, vol. 109, no. 3, pp. 888–889, viewed 26 May 2019, <<http://search.ebscohost.com.ascham.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=khh&AN=13621357&site=hrc-live>>.

<sup>18</sup> Tim Shorrock, 2015, 'The Gwangju Uprising and American Hypocrisy: One Reporter's Quest for Truth and Justice in Korea', *THE Nation*, 5 June, viewed 26 May 2019, <<https://www.thenation.com/article/kwangju-uprising-and-american-hypocrisy-one-reporters-quest-truth-and-justice-korea/>>.

bayoneted and disembowelled or riddled with bullets.”<sup>19</sup> It also speaks the impact of the event on eventual democratisation, indeed “On April 29, 1997, 'May 18' was established as a national memorial day to symbolize struggle for democratization.”<sup>20</sup> The Gwangju Revolution thus invites us assess what constitutes a revolution since this purported ‘uprising’ actually had revolutionary aims and impact. In general, the revolution was just since it used non-violent means of protest and, in the context of a society with no free press, there were no alternatives but revolutionary action.

The Iranian Revolution<sup>21</sup> of 1979 is not a good revolution because it fails to establish a more just political system and its aims objectively did not seek to liberate half of the society. As a case study, it reveals the importance of assessing the impact of the revolution objectively rather than evaluating it relative to the standards of the time and values of the revolutionaries. One could argue the Revolutionaries had a noble aim in opposing a corrupt, oppressive<sup>22</sup> and unpopular Westernised Shah.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, the Revolutionaries also minimised the use of violence towards civilians. The consequences of the Revolution for women<sup>24</sup> must be taken into account, however, even if improving equality and freedom for women was not a stated goal of the revolutionaries. An article by BBC<sup>25</sup> displays images of Iranian women shoe-shopping before the revolution to show that women were originally allowed buy Westernised clothing and it was

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<sup>19</sup> ‘Gwangju apology: South Korea sorry for rape and torture committed by troops against protesters after 1980 coup’, 2018, *South China Morning Post*, 7 November, viewed 26 May 2019, <<https://www.scmp.com/news/asia/east-asia/article/2172098/gwanju-apology-south-korea-sorry-rape-and-torture-committed>>.

<sup>20</sup> UNESCO, n.d., *The May 18 Democratic Uprising*, United Nations, Gwangju, viewed 26 May 2019, <<http://www.518archives.go.kr/eng/?PID=008>>.

<sup>21</sup> The Iranian Revolution, 2007, In: *Tensions in the Gulf, 1978-1991*, Mason Crest Publishers, US, pp. 22–33, viewed 1 June 2019, <<http://search.ebscohost.com.ascham.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=khh&AN=36158930&site=hrc-live>>.

<sup>22</sup> Mehmet Ozalp, 2018, ‘World politics explainer: the Iranian Revolution’, *THE CONVERSATION*, 18 September, viewed 1 June 2019, <<https://theconversation.com/world-politics-explainer-the-iranian-revolution-10045>>.

<sup>23</sup> Suzanne Maloney, & Keian Razipour, 2019, *The Iranian revolution—A timeline of events*, BROOKINGS, Washington, viewed 1 June 2019, <<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2019/01/24/the-iranian-revolution-a-timeline-of-events/>>.

<sup>24</sup> Nassim Hatam, 2018, ‘Iranian women threw off the hijab - what happened next?’, *BBC News*, 19 May, viewed 1 June 2019, <<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-44040236>>.

<sup>25</sup> ‘Iranian women-before and after the Islamic Revolution’, 2019, *BBC News*, 8 February, viewed 11 June 2019, <<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-47032829>>.

permissible to avoid covering one's head. This is contrasted with a post-Revolutionary image of the family heading to Friday prayers in 1980, it shows the women completely covered in chador. In the workforce, Iranian women are allowed to work but under Article 1117 of the Civil Code, her husband is able to ban her from working if he believes it will ruin his or her dignity.<sup>26</sup> Even if the society had an understandable interest in having religious values in the public sphere and a more conservative morality, it does not need to be mandated in the constitution. A different 1979 Revolution could have removed the Shah<sup>27</sup> and instituted a democratic society rather than one built on conformity and coercion.

The archetypal revolution in modern western history, the French Revolution,<sup>28</sup> reveals the complexities of assessing what constitutes a just revolution. The French Revolution aimed to remove their corrupt king, King Louis XVI, from absolute power. After centuries of the *Ancien Regime*<sup>29</sup>, the citizens of France were no longer willing to have their taxes constantly raised to support the extravagances of the nobility.<sup>30</sup> The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen<sup>31</sup> stated that "men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good." However, Robespierre<sup>32</sup> undermined revolutionary ideas of equality during the Reign of Terror<sup>33</sup> by claiming that any anti-revolutionaries were no longer considered citizens and therefore were no longer protected by The Rights of Man. If one only considered aims and intentions, the French Revolution ought to be considered good. In terms of

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<sup>26</sup> *THE CIVIL CODE OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN*, 1985, World Intellectual Property Organisation, pdf, viewed 1 June 2019, <<https://www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/ir/ir009en.pdf>>.

<sup>27</sup> The Shah is Overthrown During the Iranian Revolution, 1999, in *Great Events*, vol 8, Salem Press, US, p. 1015, viewed 14 July 2019, <<http://search.ebscohost.com.ascham.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=khh&AN=6349872&site=hrc-live>>.

<sup>28</sup> John Ruddy, 2015, *French Revolution in 9 Minutes*, online video, 13 January, viewed 11 June 2019, <[https://youtu.be/X1\\_2NwmlobU](https://youtu.be/X1_2NwmlobU)>.

<sup>29</sup> 'Ancien régime', 2019, in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. USA, viewed 14 June 2019, <<https://www.britannica.com/event/ancien-regime>>.

<sup>30</sup> Lynn Hunt & Jack Censer, 2001, *LIBERTY, EQUALITY, FRATERNITY: EXPLORING THE FRENCH REVOLUTION*, American Social History Productions, viewed 14 June 2019, <<http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/exhibits/show/liberty--equality--fraternity/item/3259>>.

<sup>31</sup> *The Declaration of the Rights of Man*, 2008, HistoryWiz, USA, viewed 14 June 2019, <<https://www.historywiz.com/rightsofman.htm>>.

<sup>32</sup> Brian Doone, Jennifer Llewellyn & Steve Thompson, 2011, *ROBESPIERRE JUSTIFIES THE USE OF TERROR* (1794), Alpha history, viewed 14 June 2019, <<https://alphahistory.com/frenchrevolution/robespierre-revolutionary-terror-1794/>>.

<sup>33</sup> Ken Nelson, *French Revolution for Kids: Reign of Terror*, Ducksters, Technological Solutions, Inc. (TSI), viewed 20 June 2019, <[www.ducksters.com/history/french\\_revolution/reign\\_of\\_terror.php](http://www.ducksters.com/history/french_revolution/reign_of_terror.php)>.

consequences, however, the story is more complicated: the revolution abolished Feudalism<sup>34</sup>, but France returned to a tyrannical leadership. The case of France thus reveals that the assessment of the consequences of a Revolution<sup>35</sup> may vary based on the time frame you adopt, and on which aspects of social structure one thinks are most important. Arguably, the most relevant period to consider immediate decade after the revolution since that time most closely causally linked to the revolution. In this sense, France's Revolution was bad for the nation. The benefits to society most important to assess are those specifically advanced by the revolutionaries. If one considers the counterfactual, feudalism was also abolished elsewhere in Europe without a violent revolution. This means that, in general, the French Revolution cannot be considered good.

Revolutions are complex phenomena. The American Revolution and Gwangju Revolution were good revolutions with both positive intentions and outcomes. In contrast, the Iranian, Russian and French Revolutions were ultimately bad because of some combination of poor aims and damaging social outcomes. By discussing whether there ever was a good revolution, one gains insight into the nature of revolutions that could happen in the future. There are currently revolutions occurring in Syria and Sudan, meaning that discussion of good revolutions is still relevant today. A good revolution requires a just cause, just means, and a just outcome, and unless all of these criteria are met, a revolution is not good.

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<sup>34</sup> Thomas E. Kaiser, 1979, *Feudalism and the French Revolution*, History Teacher 12, 2, pp. 203-216, viewed 20 June 2019

<sup>35</sup> 'French Revolution', 2019, in *Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia*, 6th Edition, pp. 1–3, viewed 20 June 2019, <<http://search.ebscohost.com.ascham.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=khh&AN=134515474&site=hrc-live>>.

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