

## Forces

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# Rehearsal

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individuals and society begins to shift; instead of society holding influence over a single person, the single person holds influence over society. Rather than reflecting the image of society, mirroring its beliefs and traditions, the individual molds society to resemble his own likeness. Prior to the influence of William Wilberforce, who was instrumental in the abolishment of the English slave trade, 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century England bore the image of its society, which was deeply entrenched in the notion that the slave trade was morally permissible. After Wilberforce's death, the society had begun to mirror Wilberforce's anti-slavery ideals. He overtook society rather than it overtaking him.

Of course, the ideals of individuals can be equally unjust—that is, they fail to render “to each man his own rights”—as those

imposed by society (qtd. in Lewis 85). Like a painting that is incomplete, each entity, whether it is society or a single individual, has the potential to become unspeakably beautiful or obscene. As a corollary, the ideals of modern American society urge citizens to be tolerant and respectful toward those who are different. On the other hand, the rhetoric of Adolf Hitler, a single man, persuaded a nation to slaughter those who did not fit his concept of normalcy. The distinction between angelic benevolence and demonic tyranny lies merely in the nature of the entity, not its structure, for each entity has an equal potential for control. A man can just as soon shape an entire society as an entire empire can mold a single man.

Works Cited

Lewis, C.S. *The Abolition of Man or Reflections on Education with Special Reference to the Teaching of English in the Upper Forms of Schools*. New York: HarperCollins, 1974. Print.



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