

- Freedom and resistance:
- Conservative activism and the film festival

- "Where there is power there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power"

- Foucault

Research Practices

Aims of today

To plan a dissertation idea

To contextualize it within a possible MP product

To test its feasibility

To challenge the student to ask yourself "am I a totalitarian baddie?"

KEYWORDS & THINKERS



Keywords:
Freedom.
Resistance,
Democracy



Key thinkers: J.S
Mill, John
Rawls, Henry David
Thoreau

Context

1

Understanding the
current political and
social climate

2

Sleepwalking into a
totalitarian state

3

Creating a film festival
promoting conservative
films and debates
(Leviathan Film Festival.)



De-platforming

Demonetizing

Shadow banning

Doxing

White privilege

Male privilege

CIS privilege

Able privilege

Questions for you



Do you have the right to offend someone?



Is freedom of speech unlimited?



What constitutes hate speech?



Is freedom of speech linked to a healthy democracy?



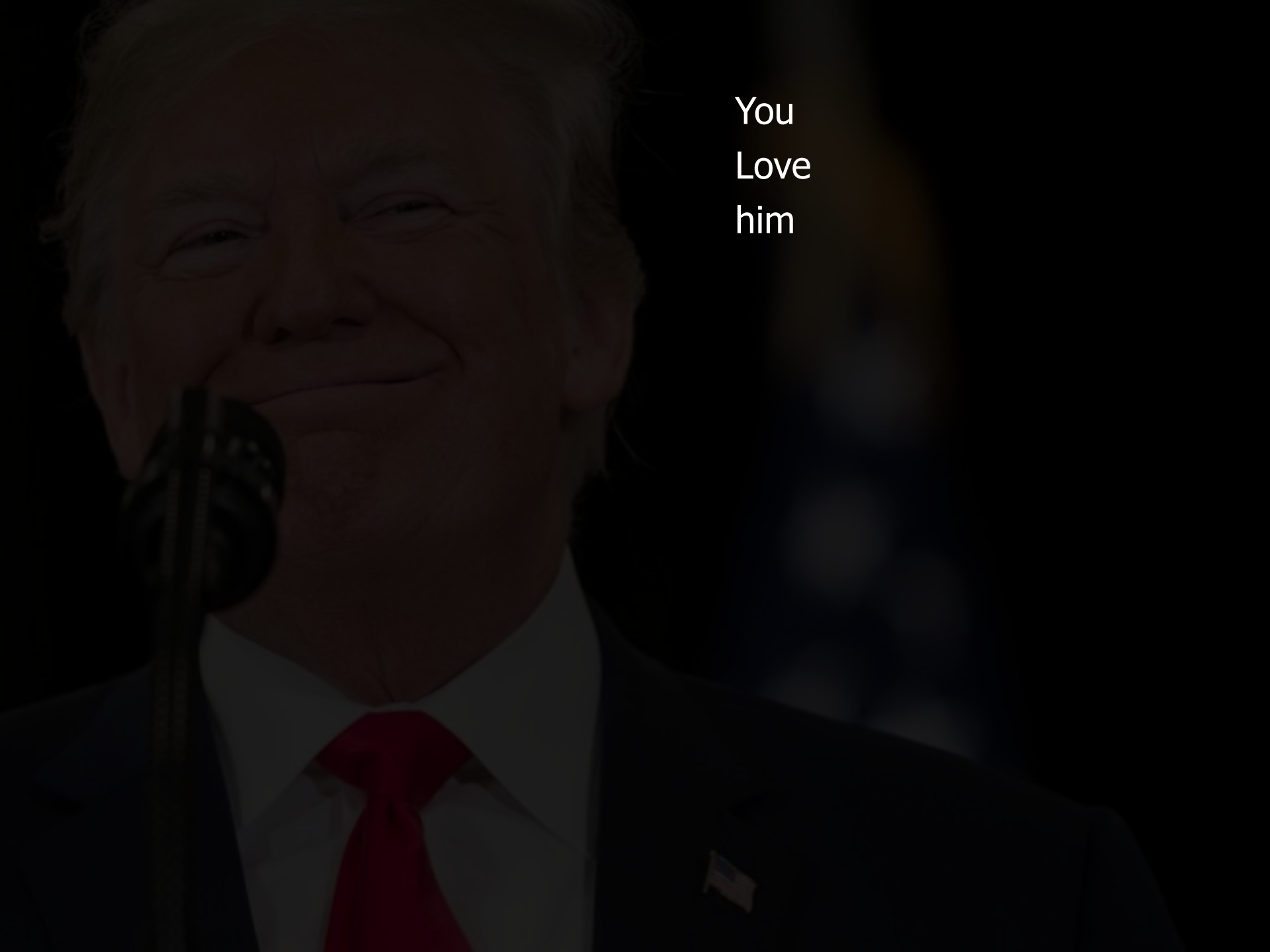
Should debates be banned from universities?



What is democracy to you?



Is it ever right to engage in civil disobedience?



You
Love
him

J.S Mill

“If all mankind minus one, were of one opinion, and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person, than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind.”

On Liberty p 10

Question

A woman objects to a transgender female student using the female toilet – is she transphobic?

Question

A woman objects to a transgender female student using the female toilet – is she transphobic?

What if she is a Muslim or Jew?

Articles

“Theresa May criticises university 'safe spaces' for shutting down debate”

“Oxford students shut down abortion debate. Free speech is under assault on campus”

“Universities should not protect students from ‘uncomfortable’ views by stopping debates, regulator warns”



Freedom fighters or hate
speakers?



Write down your thoughts?

Introducing Utilitarianism

What it means: the most moral action is the one that causes the most good for the most people over the longest period of time.

In other words, we should consider the happiness and well-being of the majority over the individual

Focuses on the effects of the action

Utilitarianism continued

This theory attempts to define the scope of freedom & liberty for the individual under a state's authority

Because it focuses on rights of the individual vs. others' rights, utilitarianism is a form of justice.

Two types of U: act & rule

- Act utilitarians uphold two ideals:
 1. The worth of an act should be judged according to its unpleasant consequences
 2. That a person should act in such a way that his act does the most good for the greatest number
- ▶ Jeremy Bentham is an act utilitarian.

Jeremy Bentham's basic assumptions:



Humans by nature avoid pain and seek pleasure



Individual happiness is the supreme good



Happiness should be measured on a quantitative scale



Example: punishment – those who commit crimes should be punished by the amount of unhappiness they create; punishment must create more pain than the pleasure gained from committing the crime.

Two flaws of act U:



It ignores the
distribution of
happiness



It ignores other
important values that
a state ought to
consider



Example: minority
rights are overlooked

Rule Utilitarianism

- Three main ideas
 1. the moral worth of an act is judged according to the good or bad consequences that result from following a moral rule of conduct
 2. a person should follow a moral rule that brings more good consequences than another rule would
 3. all moral rules which produce the greatest happiness for the greatest number should be obeyed



John Stuart Mill

happiness is determined by the individual

one individual can determine what will produce happiness for every individual

Thus, he believes that a democracy (which provides for maximum individual participation and creates an environment for the pursuit of happiness) is the best way to secure liberty (man's quest for his own good) and promote happiness.

Mill's Rule

Thus, democracy is an avenue to provide individual happiness to the greatest number.

Happiness should be measured on a qualitative scale (unlike Bentham)

In other words, Mill wants the best quality of life and happiness for the greatest number (vs. quantity)

Mill's "Harm Principle"

Used to define the extent that an individual should be allowed to exercise his liberty

says that the only good reason for restricting a person's liberty is to prevent harm to others

Mill argues that punishment should only be used if it would lead to better consequences than non-punishment

“The peculiar evil of silencing the expression of an opinion is, that it is robbing the human race; posterity as well as the existing generation; those who dissent from the opinion, still more than those who hold it. If the opinion is right, they are deprived of the opportunity of exchanging error for truth: if wrong, they lose, what is almost as great a benefit, the clearer perception and livelier impression of truth, produced by its collision with error.”

“Every man who says frankly and fully what he thinks is so far doing a public service. We should be grateful to him for attacking most unsparingly our most cherished opinions.”

Civil Disobedience

Civil disobedience is the theory that one should break a law or rule in order to make society better.

The person who practices civil disobedience believes that the society should be respected overall, but that some specific parts of it need to be changed.

He respects the idea of the law or rule in general, but believes that a specific law or rule is unjust.

Henry David Thoreau

Believes that if a law or rule is unjust, civil disobedience is automatically justified

if an individual decides to practice civil disobedience, he or she must be willing to accept the consequences of that decision; whether positive or negative, the individual must be willing to live with them

- There are three components used to determine whether or not a law or rule is unjust:
 1. common sense - ideas should be examined and re-examined; time honored ideas shouldn't be viewed as sacred
 2. individualism - important because morality is a matter of individual conscience. The state does not have a moral worth of its own—only what the people give it. It is the individual's obligation, then, to resist unjust laws and rules.
 3. supremacy of conscience - what individuals use to determine right from wrong

Critics attack Thoreau by saying:



Individuals lack the courage needed to disobey when they should



there is no clear standard of morality



that the individual is less important than the states



that conscience is not the most important value

John Rawls' civil disobedience

Used to test his theory of justice

should be used when there is a conflict between having to comply with laws and defending liberties

believes that when this conflict arises one of two principles (which compose his theory of justice) has been broken: equal liberty or fairness.

Unlike Thoreau, Rawls does not believe CD is automatically justified

Rawls – equal liberty vs. fairness

Equal liberty - the belief that everyone should be granted the same freedoms and rights to begin with

Fairness - the idea that these freedoms should be equally distributed to all persons

If a person had on a “veil of ignorance” and had to make a decision not knowing what social class he would be in, he would make a fair decision.

Rawls lists
three
conditions
under which
civil
disobedience
is
permissible:

one, it is limited to instances of substantial and clear injustice

two, it must be used as a last resort after all normal appeals within the system have been made (except in extreme cases)

three, the intent of civil disobedience must be balanced with the possible ill effects so that it won't endanger society

MLK and Ghandi also promoted CD

Leviathan - Thomas Hobbes used this as a metaphor for the state, the Leviathan is described as an artificial person whose body is made up of all the bodies of its citizens, who are the literal members of the Leviathan's body. The head of the Leviathan is the sovereign. The Leviathan is constructed through contract by people in the state of nature in order to escape the horrors of this natural condition. The power of the Leviathan protects them from the abuses of one another.

Leviathan film festival

The demands of
democracy are clear
— the elevation and
transformation of
your very self

Introduction – 700
words

Chapter 1 – Freedom
and resistance (1500
words)

Chapter 2 – YouTube
and twitter de-
platforming (1500
words)

Chapter 3 –
Leviathan Film
Festival (1200 words)

Conclusion – 700
words