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"A free society is a community of free beings, bound by the laws of sympathy and by the obligations of family love. It is not a society of people released from all moral constraint– for that is precisely the opposite of a society. Without moral constraint there can be no cooperation, no family commitment, no long-term prospects, no hope of economic, let alone social, order."

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Roger Scruton: "The Limits of Liberty" (2008) The American Spectator, https://spectator.org/ (Dec. 2008)

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While freedom has not always been considered important by the majority of people throughout time, most citizens in today's modern, western world looks at freedom as one of the most important fundamentals in society. This view began to gain more and more praise in the Age of Enlightenment in the 1700s, when the philosophers of that time began to spread ideas of universal human rights, democracy, and freedom for the people. After several hundred years dominated by a system of government where the Church or a royal had all power, giving very little freedom to normal citizens, people had gotten tired. More and more people wanted to have freedom, to be able to control their own lives more. They began fighting for freedom of speech, democracy rather than dictatorship, and other ideas which had the goal to create more individual freedom. Today, over 300 years later, these ideas, and the importance of individual freedom, are principles in most of the world's leading countries. It is also often regarded as ideals all countries and societies should strive to achieve. This raises questions such as: what is freedom, and what is a free society? Is there able to have fully individual freedom in a society?

A view many people have, especially in today's age of capitalism and individualism, is that freedom means nearly no limits. With full freedom, there should be none or as few limitations as possible. Consequently, one should be able to spend one's money as one pleases, live as one pleases, and therefore the government should be very careful to interfere with people's lives. Although it is met with opposition, most people agree that the government making us pay taxes is an okay thing to do, even though it reduces the freedom we have over our money. However, more people are skeptical to things such as whereas the government should be able to control how long alcohol should be sold, how many weeks men and women can have parental leave, and how many restrictions and laws private companies should have to follow. In my view, these are all examples of how the government tries to put moral constraints on their citizens. They are laws to reduce to which extent people's alcohol consumption interferes with their families and daily lives, to promote equality between the sexes, and to make sure workers in companies have rights and are treated well. However, these laws do without a doubt limit many people's individual freedom to do what they want to, and I understand how people might wonder if society really should put moral constraints on their citizens in this way.

Scruton suggests that without moral constraints, there can be no society, at least not a well-functioning one with economic or social orders. If everyone has full individual freedom, people will truly have very different ways of living their lives, which can easily create chaos and make cooperation very hard. As Scruton mentions, it would also make it very hard to create long term goals for the society, as people would be able to deviate from these goals whenever they'd like to. Therefore, a society without moral constraints, is in many ways a

society without meaning, without any ideas on how to improve the society, without a compass to follow when solving problems.

Additionally, there is often a very blurred line between where one person's freedom stops, and another's begins. This means that giving full individual freedom to all people, usually means making sure that the most powerful, resourceful individuals, can live their lives in a way which reduces the freedom of those who are not as fortunate. In my view, this can be seen in both today's society and many societies before ours, where a boss in a company has the freedom to push his workers to work for as long as he likes for very little pay, reducing the freedom of these workers. One could argue that the workers have the freedom to stop working there, but if the alternative is not being able to find another job, and therefore starve, I would argue that it is not really a freedom of choice. Privilege becomes an assumption for full individual freedom, and it is therefore not possible for everyone to achieve it, in a society which does not have morals to try and secure the freedom of those without privilege.

I therefore agree with Scruton, I believe that some moral constraints must be present in a society in order for it to function, as well as be a free society. Full individual freedom is therefore not possible, as it limits the freedom for the society's people as a whole. In order to secure freedom for all people in a society, one must have sympathy with each other, take care of each other and have moral constraints. However, I believe that the distinction between moral constraints securing everyone's freedom, and taking it away, lies in who creates these moral constraints, and whereas they apply for everyone in the society or not. For example, the Church and the royals in the Middle Ages created lots of moral constraints, but these were not based on the views of their people, and they did not apply to those with power. The moral constraints were used to limit many citizens' freedom, so that those with power could have more power over them. In order for a society to truly be free, I believe the moral constraints must be chosen by the people, and that no power instances in society should be able to differ from them. Only then, will the beings of the society truly be free, as it will be in a way where freedom is given to everyone, not only those with power or privilege.