

The Seven Deadly Social Sins

Mohandas Gandhi

- ❖ Politics without Principle
- ❖ Wealth without Work
- ❖ Commerce without Morality
- ❖ Education without Character
- ❖ Science without Humanity
- ❖ Pleasure without Conscience
- ❖ Worship without Sacrifice

Research-Based Persuasive Essay: *The Seven Deadly Social Sins*

In 2000, *Time* named Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948) as one of the three most influential persons of the twentieth century; the other men honored were Albert Einstein and Franklin Roosevelt. In her featured article on Gandhi in the January 3, 2000 issue, Johanna McGeary made the following observation about this great leader:

The Mahatma, the Great Soul, endures in the best part of our minds, where our ideals are kept: the embodiment of human rights and the creed of nonviolence. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi is something else, an eccentric of complex, contradictory, and exhausting character most of us hardly know. It is fashionable at this *fin de siecle* to use the man to tear down the hero, to expose human pathologies at the expense of larger-than-life achievements. No myth-raking can rob Gandhi of his moral force or diminish the remarkable importance of this scrawny little man. For the 20th century — and surely for the ones to follow — it is the towering myth of the Mahatma that matters.

One of the enduring legacies of Gandhi is the force of his moral philosophy recorded in his many writings (refer to www.mkgandhi.org/philosophy/main.htm for on-line sources of the Mahatma's writings). Of particular significance is his statement of "The Seven Deadly Social Sins," a modern re-invention of the Seven Deadly Sins of medieval Catholicism:

- ❖ Politics without Principle
- ❖ Wealth without Work
- ❖ Commerce without Morality
- ❖ Education without Character
- ❖ Science without Humanity
- ❖ Pleasure without Conscience
- ❖ Worship without Sacrifice

In these seven "sins" Gandhi has clearly articulated the central problems of modern twentieth and twenty-first century society.

Which of Gandhi's Seven Deadly Social Sins do you believe to be most significant in twentieth and twenty-first century society? In what areas of modern life do you see this particular sin clearly revealed? What can be done to rectify the wrong created by this societal sin? For this assignment, you will **select one of the Seven Deadly Social Sins as a broad subject for an original research-based persuasive essay**. You should follow the steps listed below in completing this assignment:

- Choose a subject that interests you.
- Narrow the subject to fit your paper's length.
- Perform extensive research using a variety of sources to gather information about the subject.
- Organize your research and plan your persuasive essay.

- Form a thesis statement and support it with the information you gathered in your research.
- Document parenthetically the research sources you use in arguing your thesis.
- Complete a list of works cited.

(adapted from “Research Paper Writing,” p. 478 [GCH])

As you research the subject, please use a variety of resources available in the school media center and in the community. You may include interviews of persons affected by the subject or authorities on your chosen subject as valuable resources. You may also consider using Internet sources; just be sure to document the sources appropriately in your essay and in your list of works cited.

Completed research-based essays should **follow the Modern Language Association style and format for research writing**, outlined in the school-adopted texts and further explained in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*:

“Research Paper Writing.” *Glencoe Grammar and Composition Handbook, High School 2*. New York: Glencoe McGraw-Hill, 2000, 478-507

Kirszner, Laurie G. and Stephen R. Mandell. “Appendix: Writing a Research Paper.” *Patterns for College Writing: A Rhetorical Reader and Guide*. Eighth edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s. 2001.

Many on-line sources are available to help you in documenting your research sources.

Your finished written presentation should include the following items:

1. **Outline of essay:** Typed and double-spaced; use MLA format.
2. **Research-based essay:** Typed and double-spaced; use MLA format. You may use photographs, illustrations, timelines, and other graphics in your paper to enhance the effectiveness of your presentation, but these should be used appropriately within the framework and guidelines of MLA papers.

Within the paper, be certain that you address the following aspects of the subject:

- Your understanding of what is meant by this particular “social sin”
- Where, when, how, and why this “sin” exists in modern society
- Ways that modern society should and can rectify the wrong created by this “sin”
- The immediate and long-term significance of this “sin” in modern society

3. **Works Cited page:** Typed and double-spaced; use MLA format.

