

Personal Statement 3

Democritus remarked "Justice is doing what should be done, injustice is not doing what should be done but turning away from it" and the sentiment remains as relevant today on both a personal and global scale as it was over 2,000 years ago. It is this which makes PPE such an interesting subject: we are exploring questions that have dominated human thought and development since the dawn of civilisation and will continue to do so. As someone who loves learning and being extended intellectually, PPE offers me the chance to build on my natural analytical skills as well as learn more about the world in which we live.

Economics was the subject that first inspired my deeper curiosity about the world. This arose in 2008, when seemingly uncontrollable market forces caused a recession. As the son of a small business owner, I remember firsthand how damaging this was. I further cultivated this interest at the start of my A level course, where learning the fundamentals of demand and supply encouraged me to embark on independent study. I have read widely; sampling work from Adam Smith's seminal 'The Wealth of Nations', to Hetzel's 'The Great Recession' and attended the RES public lectures in 2012 and 2013. Outside of typical economic history and thought, one period I find enthralling is the utopian societies of the late 18th and 19th centuries, as the optimism of Henri de Saint-Simon highlights the immense promise that economics holds. This promise is what ultimately attracts me to the discipline.

With this in mind I have a keen interest in different forms of governance and love learning more about their effects on ordinary people. This is complemented by an interest in current affairs, as the modern world constantly provides case studies, helping us form modern answers to age-old problems. Ever since reading Fenby's 'Tiger's Head, Snake Tails', I have been interested in China. Can China maintain growth without shifting to democracy? Questions like this are what fuels my engagement in politics, encouraging me to read further to delve into global issues and challenge my preconceptions.

For example, independent inquiry and work experience have led me to question the superlative importance of GDP growth. These ideas were formalised and extended by reading Lanyard's 'Happiness'. This is a major part of my attraction to philosophy - everyone ponders philosophical questions. Studying the subject helps us understand our own beliefs and feelings with greater clarity. I am particularly interested in philosophers' answers to what the 'best' society is, and how to live the 'best' life. This has inspired me to undertake extensive reading around these subjects ranging from J.S. Mills 'On Liberty', to Aristotle's 'Nicomachean Ethics' and I hope to explore these themes in a university setting.

Beyond the formal syllabus, I have entered several essay competitions- one highlight was a commendation from the IEA. I enjoyed participating in the school academic society, honing my debating and reasoning skills. My scholarship has been extended by varied work experience, ranging from Accenture to working with the financial director of a small manufacturing company. I have a wide range of interests and responsibilities. I was an NCO in my school CCF force and organising activities for younger pupils enabled me to develop strong leadership and communication skills. This has been combined with regular presentations to my school house- improving my public speaking skills and encouraging me to learn more about what drives people. These responsibilities are coupled with a love of sports and physical activity. I have a passion for rugby, MMA and weightlifting and I am a proponent of the mind/ body connection- I believe that intense physical activity improves my focus. This will help me cope with the hard work needed for university life, as I enhance my knowledge of PPE - a course that I believe synthesises today's truly important issues.