

David Nava

Instructor Alexander Izrailevsky, Ph.D

Phil 1120-002

Jul.17, 2012

### Freedom

Freedom has different views and opinions on what it actually is. In the U.S. it is commonly misrepresented that there is unlimited freedom or like the old saying, "It's a free country". Many Americans know that we have many rights and liberties yet we may not have unlimited freedom for it will infringe upon the rights of others. It is not safe to say that we have absolute or even close to absolute freedom due to viewing one persons actions which can in turn affect thousands directly or indirectly. Limited freedom is more suitable and practical when viewed in the perspective of a community surrounding where individuals have limits to as far as they can expand their freedom. Such as amendments, laws and the constitution which grant liberties yet limit or outlaw actions based upon the morality of the situation. Many times it is highly tied with religious viewpoints.

**Eportfolio link- <http://davidnava.yolasite.com> Philosophy 1120-002 eportfolio**

The road for all U.S. citizens to gain the right to vote has been a long and hard fought path. It started when the U.S. constitution was set in place yet at the time only Caucasian male property owners were able to vote due to lack of clarification and discriminative actions taken towards different groups within our society, two of these major groups being African Americans and Women. Prior to the 15<sup>th</sup> amendment and the 19<sup>th</sup> amendments being passed. As free as we would like to think that this country is, in reality it is not. Other groups were discriminated against such as non property owners and those of Irish decent. There were many ways that

privileged Americans would limit the freedoms and or rights of individuals such as taxing, verbal



abuse and physical threats.

Groups such as the KKK would lynch and threaten African American people in order to keep power in the voting polls. There were many methods of intimidation for instance throughout the civil rights movement bombings, beatings as well as homicides were common in order to intimidate those fighting for their freedoms that are granted in the Constitution as citizens of the United States. Leaders arose such as Martin Luther King Jr., John F. Kennedy, WEB Dubois, Malcolm X, and historical figures such as Rosa Parks. African Americans were deprived of their freedoms and liberties although it was constituted that all men were equal. Many individuals had no say in politics and the future of this nation due to their ethnic background. This is a limitation in historical context of the rights and liberties being equal for all citizens.

Women Suffrage has also been a big issue with the fact that women were also deprived of their rights and freedoms. Throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century women were perceived to not be as intelligent and able to make decisions when compared to men. This was due to misconceptions and deprivation of rights due to biased and sexist acts in order to maintain masculine power in political issues and at home issues. Some women that stood up and were at the forefront of

change in the history of this nation were Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Susan B. Anthony, Ema Hart Willard and many others stood up for their rights by petitioning and picketing the government. Other methods included women rights conventions like the one in 1848 in Seneca Falls, New York and convincing of their husbands by refusing to have sex and some things in the household as well as going against public views.



#### Historical Events

- In 1790 the right to vote was for white male property owners.
- It gradually became more open for other groups of U.S. citizens as laws and amendments were passed to protect this right for all U.S. citizens.
- In 1870 the 15<sup>th</sup> amendment is passed granting former slaves voting rights.
- Literacy test were set in place aimed towards African American voters
- 1920 women were granted their constitutional right to vote with the passing of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment.
- 1924 Natives were granted U.S. citizenship along with the right to vote.
- 1957 civil rights act was passed to protect rights of Colored U.S. voters.
- 1965 voting rights act is passed

- 1971 18 yrs. became the minimum voting age.

Freedom in the sense of how it is viewed today is far different from how it was viewed in the past. Though we have gained freedoms and rights it seems that history repeats itself all too often. We currently have a system that tailors to those power elite or those who have the financial background and assets to implement laws and rules to better benefit them.

Corporations seem to have unlimited freedom yet are bound by the people who purchase products from them. People have lost freedom to do certain things due to the executive and legislative branches being corrupted by greed and power hunger. Yet a fully democratic government would be viewed in the eyes of Aristotle as anarchy and would not be functional.

## Bibliography

<http://www.infoplease.com/spot/womenstimeline1.html/>

African american civil rights, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African-](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African-American_Civil_Rights_Movement_(1955%E2%80%931968))

[American\\_Civil\\_Rights\\_Movement\\_\(1955%E2%80%931968\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African-American_Civil_Rights_Movement_(1955%E2%80%931968)), Web.

[Infoplease.com/votingrights.hist](http://www.infoplease.com/votingrights.hist)

<http://womensworld.onsugar.com/>