

# Should society limit the freedom of individuals

[History](#)



Should society limit the freedom of individuals? Historically society has always been struggling for its main principles and rights. The initial reason of the majority of all wars and rebellions was the fight for freedom. Every time when group of individuals felt that their rights were infringed, it started to call upon for opposition raising masses to protect own liberty and restore the justice. Today a lot of countries keep the status of “ democratic states”, of which the most important principle is freedom. However, despite popularity and propaganda of democratic issues, it is fair to mention that in the reality not all countries comply with constitution and laws that are provided to ensure liberty. Frequently governmental structures interfere and limit freedom of individuals, considering such measure as essential one for keeping order and stability in society. Many famous economists and philosophers argued the necessity of government’s intervention, believing that economy is able to develop by its own more effectively than with any possible regulations. Nowadays the question of freedom’s boundaries is still opened, being often lighted up in mass media. Analyzing vital needs of society and notorious ideas of different specialists, it is important to implement the most effective plan of social and economic development, preferring any kind of proposed policies. A philosopher, John Stuart Mill, in his article on liberty stated rather persuasive and reasonable arguments, making a great contribution to the theory of liberalism. Beginning his research of liberalism in the nineteenth century, John Mill in most notions could be considered as supporter and follower of Adam Smith’s ideas, who believed that each market was controlled by “ invisible hand”, which stimulated economy and created prosperity more effectively than government protection. Due to the notions of John Mill, there are two factors

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of person's development - freedom and the diversity of situations (Andrewes, 2011. p. 13). The policy of "laissez-faire" propagandizes sensible notions about the fact that each market categories should be formed only under the influence of demand and supply, eliminating the government interference. It is well known that providing sellers and buyers with a full freedom will give opportunity to fill the market with qualitative and inexpensive goods and services. This happens because producers are more aware about market needs than authority is. Providing sellers with a total freedom allows them to choose those spheres of business, which can use their potential in the fullest way, and produce those products, which are needed by customers of paramount importance. Free pricing with a help of demand and supply finally will set the equilibrium price, which is most preferable as for the sellers as for buyers. Therefore, the market structure will work effectively, helping its players to grow and prosper. In this respect, it is rational to restrict government influence in cases when individuals are able to succeed and perform the business more effectively than it can be done by government. Elimination of government intervention, first of all, is based on the restraining of wide spreading governmental power that frequently is not required by society. According to John Mill's statement, "If the Americans were left without a government their citizens would be able to improvise one, and to carry out governing with intelligence, order, and decisiveness" (Andrewes, 2011, p. 16). When government gains additional unnecessary power, this gives a birth to over bureaucracy and provides infringement of society's interests. Each democratic state must ensure its citizens with the freedom of speech, religion, expression, assembly, movement, tastes and pursuits. For vital functions and human development, <https://assignbuster.com/should-society-limit-the-freedom-of-individuals/>

every individual should be secured and confident in governmental protection of his rights. This will not only help people to ensure normal conditions of life and provide opportunities for own growth, but also will be able to benefit the whole society. For instance, liberty of press raises people's awareness about main social and economic problems and gives stimulus for paying more thorough attention to the instruments and methods of possible solutions.

When there is not enough freedom of speech, some important points of views and ideas can be left unheard, so due to this society may lose opportunity to find the right and most efficacious propositions for problem-solving forever.

Disproving an opinion always has to take place, because it is well known that only controversies are able to reveal truth that occasionally is vital for the process of making decision. John Mill stated, " To silence opinions is to

assume our own infallibility" (Andrewes, 2011, p. 11). According to the fact that general point of view is seldom completely true, that is why only clash of various opinions is able to restore the required truth. In spite of

importance to ensure freedom of individuals, there are cases when government intervention is essential for providing people's protection with a help of limiting the freedom of actions. It is fair to admit that person's behavior is able to affect other people, causing harm and inconveniences.

For instance, if a man has addiction to gambling, he harms not only himself, losing money and property, but also his family and other people, who count on him. In addition, if this person sees gambling as the purpose of his life, spending all his time, sources, strength and attention for this entertainment, disregarding his family, he also damages society that expects him to find a job, provide services and benefit community, instead of get under the force

of own weaknesses and addictions. In this respect, government must pass

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laws for avoiding such situations and encouraging social disapproval and penalties. Also there are some functions that should be left only for government obligations, for example, emission of money or communal services, such as cleaning or lighting the streets. In this respect, John Mill found, “ government interference should only be allowed when there is strong case of expediency” (Andrewes, 2011, p. 17). Consequently, taking into account main ideas of John Stuart Mill’s article on liberty, it is important to conclude that freedom is one of the most essential social needs in each democratic state. In most cases it is imperative to limit governmental power and provide individuals with a freedom to behave as they choose, but only on terms of acknowledging and accepting the consequences of own behavior. References Andrewes, F., & Neild, J. 2011, ‘ Introduction: John Stuart Mill and liberalism’, HOI Feb Intake Second Essay Q1, pp. 6-20.