

# Simone de Beauvoir The Ethics of Ambiguity Essay Sample

[Law](#), [Security](#)



Simone in her book *The Ethics of Ambiguity* vividly describes how genuine freedom can be achieved in the moral relations with others. The book revolves around the concepts relating to freedom and the importance of others in our personal quest for freedom. It also aims at clarifying that freedom is not the absence of insecurities but the self satisfaction and existence in the natural state of the world where everyone enjoys it and it is not reserved for a certain few. She may be controversial in her explanation and conceptualization of freedom but nonetheless has produced a masterpiece in the modern description of genuine freedom. From this perspective and drawing periodically from the famous work *The Ethics of Ambiguity* by Simone de Beauvoir, I will seek to explain in great detail how we can achieve genuine freedom by relating morally with the rest of the population rather than acting in isolation which leads to seclusion from society. Human beings are social beings hence no real freedom can be achieved by granting all the rights and privileges but denying a person the right of interaction or giving him a choice to interact with others of his kind. Simone describes the characteristics of oppression as that with the objective of treating others more so like objects and excluding those subjected to that treatment from the general society. From this, she reveals that even those who met such injustices do not really enjoy the fruits of freedom. For genuine freedom to be realized there should be a status of positive morality driven by desire and passion. These two are instrumental in the actualization of genuine freedom. Their main purpose is to create a life of purpose and meaning (Beauvoir, 26). In her opinion as demonstrated in the book, activities done in bad faith are mainly geared towards fleeing our freedom.

She highlights the tendency to run away from freedom that emanates from nostalgia with regard to cheerfulness and security of childhood.

Simone indicates that it is possible for an individual to pursue genuine freedom as long as he or she aims at achieving the various values and morals. The constant refusal to trade in freedom for personal security, the refusal to resign or to deny responsibility, coupled with any additional deed of bad faith is a huge step towards the attainment of genuine freedom (Beauvoir, 32). Freedom is much greater than personal security and the attainment of personal security cannot be deemed to encompass the whole element of genuine freedom mainly because personal security is often at the price of social life and interaction with others. Anyone who denies responsibility cannot claim to be free because he is a subject of his own actions and cannot own up to them for fear of the repercussions. Beauvoir champions for disclosure i. e. disclosive character so that anyone can attain freedom that is genuine. According to her, disclosure can take the form of intelligence, sensitivity and vitality (Beauvoir, 41- 42).

Simone de Beauvoir describes life as a form of “living warmth” and passion which she closely associates with desire and love. These morals when shown towards fellow human beings demonstrate and result in a form of genuine freedom. Desire arises from the persistence and perpetual quest for happiness and freedom for the other people rather than for oneself. An opening to the general society in which the meanings that are made by our actions are of significance is provided by genuine freedom. In most situations regarding oppression, the possibility of a joyful existence is highly unlikely (Beauvoir, 41). This further emphasizes on the big role played by morality

with regard to the achievement of genuine freedom.

Meanings that we make are significant after an opening has been provided for regarding the society as a whole where there is freedom for everybody and not just several isolated individuals who purport to enjoy it at the expense of the vast majority. Values are stressed in the need to attain genuine freedom where every member of the society is left happy or at least contented with the status quo in most events. Freedom for others is an important factor in the definition of genuine freedom because it does not yield inequality in most cases when compared to situations where freedom is only attainable by a chosen few which breeds aristocracy in a nation. The morality of other's freedom is therefore an instrumental part in the pursuit for genuine happiness.

The discussion regarding oppression by Beauvoir stresses the importance of other's freedom and goes further to elaborate the instrumental role of desire when exercising freedom and in the full realization of ecstasies. A social reality exists that is responsible in the provision of a context for somebody's ability to decipher meanings. An individual's participation in the use and generation of various values occurs meaningfully. Freedom of others is said to have a direct impact to the extent at which one can enjoy his or her own genuine freedom. Moral relations with others often result in a better status of freedom for all mainly because when everyone enjoys their freedom, their chances of interfering with other's freedom is subsequently reduced since there is no need for revolt and uprisings. Genuine freedom can indeed be realized in the basic moral relations with other people.

## **Works Cited**

Simone de Beauvoir; Bernard Frechtman The ethics of ambiguity New York, N. Y. : Philosophical Library, ©1948.