

Freedom and bravery

Sociology



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

It is evident that one of the necessary conditions of freedom is the absence of oppression by an external actor, whether it be another individual, group of individuals, or a government or society. One is free when they are not restrained and regulated by the mandates made by others than themselves. 18th Century political philosopher contributed to this conception of freedom in his Second Treatise of Civil Government. Locke defined freedom as " that all things equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his Life, Health, Liberty or Possessions." (Locke, 318). In this definition, Locke concluded that freedom consisted of an individual's rights to their life and health in addition to their freedom to pursue happiness that includes the protection of private property and the liberty to pursue their own living. While Locke wrote this with the intent of establishing the foundations of a just government and civil society, the very meaning of freedom must first be defined and justified in order to set the framework for any form of civil society. The definition of freedom has been expanded to more positive rights, or entitlement rights and freedoms in the political and socio-economic discourse, which include the freedom from poverty and famine, freedom to be educated, or pursue the career one wishes to pursue. Ultimately, freedom, at least in terms of political and socio-economic contexts, has connotations of restraint from oppression and the ability to chose the means to sustain one's own life.

Bravery is often invoked in the face of conflict or mystery. Whereas freedom could pertain to a set of political, legal, and socioeconomic codes, in addition to how one can live their life, bravery is an actual action or set of actions. It can also relate to the testament of one's character, where someone who is considered heroic or virtuous often displays bravery, courage, or other

synonymous terms and concepts. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defined bravery as "displaying courage," with courage meaning "mental or moral strength to venture, preserve and withstand danger, fear or difficulty." (Merriam Webster English Dictionary). From this definition, the presence of conflict or some form of difficulty is necessary in order for one to be brave. It is also defined as the quality of one's person.

Does bravery mean to recklessly endanger one's life and limb to battle such dangers? The Japanese kamikazes of the Second World War interpreted this as such as they engaged in suicide missions to fight the Allied Forces in the Pacific and East Asia? Within the context of that culture, bravery was taken to the extreme of self-sacrifice in order to defend the society as a whole. The belief in the community adjudicated the sustainability of the individual.

Whereas in some contexts of Western culture, the bravery that included kamikaze like actions of self-sacrifice might not be of a virtuous character. The ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle determined that bravery is a more moderate virtue between two extremes of cowardice and fool-hearted recklessness. To wantonly waste one life for a cause was not courage or bravery, but recklessness according to Aristotle. But, one must face dangers and overcome them to be brave. (Nicomachean Ethics, Book II, Ch. V). But there are other elements in Western society where self-sacrifice is part of bravery. For example, in Christian theological thought, Jesus was considered courageous and brave when he accepted his destiny as the Son of God and sacrificed himself to forgive humanity of their sins and wrongdoings.