

Defining and analysing freedom of expression philosophy essay



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\n[[toc title="Table of Contents"](#)]\n

\n \t

1. [Introduction](#) \n \t
2. [A Means of Speaking Out](#) \n \t
3. [Free Expression and the Internet](#) \n \t
4. [Pros and cons](#) \n \t
5. [Origins Of Freedom Of Expression](#) \n \t
6. [Conclusion:](#) \n

\n[/toc]\n \n

“ The freedom to communicate ideas, thoughts or any form of message through any type of medium freely without any censorship or limitations” “ Freedom of expression is sometimes used to indicate not only freedom of verbal speech but any act of seeking, receiving and imparting information or ideas, regardless of the medium used.” “ Freedom of expression is the right of an individual to express his/her feelings and thoughts in any manner what so ever through any medium.”

Introduction

Freedom of expression is a cornerstone of democratic rights and freedoms. In its very first session in 1946, before any human rights declarations or treaties had been adopted, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 59(I) stating “ Freedom of information is a fundamental human right and ... the touchstone of all the freedoms to which the United Nations is consecrated.”

Freedom of expression is essential in enabling democracy to work and public participation in decision-making. Citizens cannot exercise their right to vote effectively or take part in public decision-making if they do not have free access to information and ideas and are not able to express their views freely. Freedom of expression is thus not only important for individual dignity but also to participation, accountability and democracy. Violations of freedom of expression often go hand in hand with other violations, in particular the right to freedom of association and assembly.

Progress has been made in recent years in terms of securing respect for the right to freedom of expression. Efforts have been made to implement this right through specially constructed regional mechanisms. New opportunities are emerging for greater freedom of expression with the internet and worldwide satellite broadcasting. New threats are emerging too, for example with global media monopolies and pressures on independent media outlets.

A Means of Speaking Out

Freedom has provided a forum to countless other individuals and groups in the interest of justice and reform. Freedom of expression is a cornerstone of democratic rights and freedoms. In its very first session in 1946, before any human rights declarations or treaties had been adopted, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 59(I) stating “ Freedom of information is a fundamental human right and ... the touchstone of all the freedoms to which the United Nations is consecrated.”

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Free Expression and the Internet

Aside from supporting freedom of expression for others, Freedom has been in the forefront of reporting on issues which directly concern the freedom itself.

During the 1990s, freedom of expression has extended to include the computerization of the way we live, work, and conduct our day to day affairs. Due to its capability for instantaneous global communication, the Internet has provided a new frontier for free speech and its protection within the parameters of responsibility and lawfulness. For the same reason, it has also put freedom of speech to its most crucial test.

The right to one's own thoughts and their disposition is a fundamental human right. Authors, artists, designers, and the myriad of others in creative
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and intellectual fields have the right to share their words or ideas with others or not. If they choose to share them, they also have the right to control the way in which they may be shared. In this way, intellectual property rights and free expression are inextricably linked.

Freedom has championed the application of existing laws regarding intellectual property rights to the Internet, and supported responsible self-restraint by individual users.

Self-policing by Internet users is ultimately the means by which to ensure continued freedom from over-regulation. However, Freedom has expressed the view that some regulation may become necessary if free speech is abused, thus has also presented the view that existing intellectual property laws be applied where necessary to those who violate the rights of others. Freedom of speech means neither the freedom to steal, nor the right to claim another's speech as one's own, nor to copy another's writing and sell it or give it away without the author's permission.

Freedom has also informed officials, community leaders, and the media on copyright issues pertaining to the Internet, including its in-depth coverage of court cases that are setting precedents for the protection of intellectual property rights on the Internet.

Due to continued support and dedication to the freedom of expression, Freedom has been able to provide a wide variety of views and accounts of news over the past 30 years. In a world where the public is majorly informed by means of fragmentary day-to-day news processed through a few news media who, because of their size, dominate the flow of information, accounts <https://assignbuster.com/defining-and-analysing-freedom-of-expression-philosophy-essay/>

by other media such as Freedom - who can provide different views-are increasingly important to a free society.

Pros and cons

Freedom of expression is a double edged sword in that it has its positive side as well as a negative aspect. Freedom of expression does not give any person, group, institution or a nation to abuse, degrade and mock other people's religion, culture or their beliefs. Freedom of expression has to be used entails that exceptional care is to be taken when dealing with such sensitive matters where emotions run high. It does not give anybody the license to make a mockery of other people's beliefs and cultures just because it is different from their own.

Where as in purely democratic sense this is considered to be a very good thing, it carries its own responsibilities. The sign of a civilized and educated nation is that everybody is free to express whatever they like as long as it is within certain limits of decency and ethics and is not considered to be beyond a certain legal boundary. Whereas there are laws in a proper democratic society that protects the individual's right to freedom of expression. There are also laws to protect individuals from grief and loss incurred as a result of another person's actions taken in the name of freedom of expression. In other words one person cannot go beyond the law and cite his right to freedom of expression to insult, degrade and defame any another person, group and institution. Freedom of expression without responsibility is no freedom what so ever and can be termed as sheer arrogance.

Origins Of Freedom Of Expression

The right to freedom of speech is recognized as a human right under Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and recognized in international human rights law in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). The ICCPR recognizes the right to freedom of speech as “ the right to hold opinions without interference. It is different from and not to be confused with the concept of freedom of thought.

Conclusion:

Freedom of speech and Ethics:

Every individual has their own personal space, within which they have freedom of doing anything. But this freedom remains only till the time it doesn't interfere with the personal space of some any other individual other than you. Now days this term has gained a lot of popularity, individuals and groups either separately or collectively have started abusing each other's or a set of people's rights in the name of so called “ Freedom of Speech”. We know what and where our boundaries are but give the least consideration about it when it comes to others, we have forgotten that where our limits end someone else's boundaries might begin from just there.

Freedom of Speech and Media:

Media is a very powerful tool, if used appropriately it can do miracles, but if misused it can cause harm like no other thing can. Tools as we know are not harmful or useful, it is their use that categorizes them in a certain way, and so same is the case with media be it of any form, print media or electronic

media. The purpose that it fulfills is what makes it either good or bad; freedom of speech is one such issue that came into limelight by media's propagation regarding this issue. Media's approach is very wide and is followed by a large number of populations anywhere, so whatever is portrayed regarding any issue gains hype instantly and leaves a deep impact on the minds of masses. With such powers come great responsibilities as well, and to make sure these responsibilities are met some laws had to be laid down to keep a proper check.

Freedom of Speech and Laws:

Laws hold a great importance to maintain a balance and a sound society and are mainly responsible for maintaining the attained freedom. Laws are made to protect the rights of individuals, or groups living in a society. Rules and regulations help set a boundary to an extent till which individuals or groups prevailing in the society can interfere others freedom, be it freedom of speech, expression or any other kind of freedom that an individual or a group of people can possibly have. Freedom has always has its price, be it in any form, responsibility is the price that is and should be paid to maintain its true essence. Everyone should be responsible for their actions, implied or not and words either spoken or written, only then we will have nearly idealistic societies.