

# Democracy and freedom



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Democracy gives people the freedom to do things his way within the bounds of the state. Democracy is often the most desired goal of every nation. It can uniquely become an instrument of freedom if it allows the people meaningful voting choices during elections and if democracy warrants that the people have the nonpartisan and untwisted information required to make a choice that is in their interest. Sometimes, however, some nations would opt to use their democratic rights to limit freedom such as in cases involving gun ownership, pedophilia or fox hunting.

These days, democracies are growing more inimical to being agents of freedom. Our selection of political party during election time is particularly limited while the mass media is practically owned by corporations making them easy to get influenced. This scenario tends to lead to government influence by means of payback for political favours to these corporations. We can say that individual preferences is being highly wielded to constitute voting choices that are not really in their best interest but that of the politicians and the corporations.

This paper will present scenarios or faces of freedom and democracy that are simultaneously happening across the globe. Democracy and Freedom Can democracy really succeed in respecting individual preferences? What is freedom, and why should we value it? This dilemma is best illustrated by Wollstein (2006) when he listed down the many aspects of freedom and democracy in one article. According to Wollstein (2006), democracy is as oftentimes a disguise for dictatorship as it is a safeguard for liberty.

Some countries see themselves democracies and have regular elections but methodically cast down their own people. It was cited that the countries of North Korea and China call themselves Democratic People's Republic of Korea and People's Republic of China, respectively, but in reality, it's untrue. Voting in these countries are mandatory and the only party permitted to run candidates is the Communist Party. Anyone who disapproves deeply on this set-up ends up dead or in a slave labour camp (Wollstein 2006).

There are also other countries in Africa, Asia and in Latin America that have multi-party democracies but with little or no freedom at all. Cheating during elections is enormous, opposition aspirants are frequently vanquished or killed by government thugs. In these countries, the citizens have very little freedom, but suffer tremendously. Even in the United States, many people have complained about their votes not getting counted during elections. Only the Republicans and the Democrats are allotted the most televised political debates.

Oftentimes, third-party election results are not even announced by the media. The Libertarians and the Greens parties confront roughly indomitable snags, including severe ballot-access and campaign-finance laws.

Democracy is a system of determining who shall govern. However, it does not decide on the morals of the resulting government. Downs (1957) reports that democracy will be effective only if most voters advocate freedom of speech, press, religion, association, and enterprise while the elected government will likewise value these freedoms.

Meanwhile, freedom must be valued entirely other than protecting the consequences of that freedom that we only wish to favour. Following the 9/11 incident in the United States, there was evidence of detestable prejudice within the US to anyone who countered the unlawful invasion of Iraq, considering that Iraq had been proven to have no part in 9/11, posed no threat to any of the marauders and had no weapons of mass destruction (Center for Systemic Peace, 2006).

Conclusion There are however threats to freedom and democracy which we must always watch out for. R. J. Rummel (2006) listed these threats to include the idea that one person can't make a difference; fear of standing up and defying authority; media censorship and the polarisation of debate; the national and global debt-based banking system; neoliberalism and corporate globalisation; patriotism, flag waving and fervent nationalism; corrupt officials focusing on special interests rather than the general interests; international economic and political unification schemes such as the European Union; superpower states with global domination agendas; and Gung-ho and reactive antiterrorism legislation.

Individual preferences are sometimes being sacrificed for freedom and democracy. Freedom House (1999) suggests that democracy may be implemented either narrowly to depict a nation-state or more widely to describe a free society. As a form of government, a democracy is the people reigning over themselves wholly, usually through majority rule utilising some method of voting and representation. However, as a liberal society, democracy is the people ruling themselves individually via private property,

civil rights and civic duties, which lengthens the concept of diffused power all of the way to individual nationals.

It is indeed safe to say that in a democratic society, freedom emanates in the people and is delegated to government rather than vice versa.

Democracy is often misunderstood when people depend on all of the benefits of democratic society to happen from the scant snaring of majority rule. While a democratic league may only have a democratic government, it does not warrant that a democratic government is a democratic society. In the Philippines, for instance, street protests were everywhere to call for the resignation of its president who admitted to have called an elections officer at the heat of the counting of ballots ([www. pcij. org](http://www.pcij.org)).

The President, issued proclamation after another to control the ever-growing number of protests. She issued a presidential proclamation so her men can arrest any person who is found asking for her ouster. the Supreme Court later issued a statement saying the move was illegal. It may be recalled the Philippine President was sworn to office in 2001 when her predecessor resigned after a series of similar protests. Filipinos are identified for initiating what is called People Power, the peaceful political revolts that overthrow corrupt or dishonest leaders.

In the Philippines, People Power ousted two presidents namely Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 and Joseph Estrada in 2001. The word democracy has received a deeply positive association over the second half of the 20th century to a magnitude that even extensively notorious dictators ordinarily announce their support for democracy and often handle pre-arranged shows

elections. Approximately all of the world's governments demand to be democratic. Most contemporary political ideologies include at least nominal support for some kind of democracy, no matter what they do support.

Consequently, there are several distinctions between important kinds of democracy. In the United States, force is often being used to achieve democracy. Every war since the Revolutionary War was defended as necessary to obtain survival, augment freedom or conquer a dictatorship which threaten democracy. Fighting in the name of democracy is a big factor of American military culture to achieve complete victory. To prove this point, we can always look back in history and put into consideration the wars perpetrated by the U. S. on Iraq, Vietnam, among other countries.

Historically, democracy is referred to as a form of government and only to government. A government can only claim to be democratic when people have a share, direct or more often indirect, through election of its agents or representatives, in deciding the nature of the resolutions. It's hard to overestimate the horror left by the First World War in the minds of a generation who grew up in the years where freedom and peace are relative.

Before, according to author Dos Passos (1956) little military service in America was voluntarily given, taxes were imperceptible, while traveling was so easy that if you could pinch up the price of a ticket you could travel anywhere in the world except through Russia and Turkey, without telling boo to a bureaucrat. Taking a job then was likewise easy in the U. S. since it was nobody's business but yours and the boss's. We have come to realized that

the wars had left an aftermath of ruins everywhere. the effects go beyond the scars that afflicted our soldiers.

The psychological effect of the wars is more horrendous than the physical pain. Dislocated populations starved and died in the process. War was ruining civilization. Everywhere the plain people wanted peace. Only the bankers and businessmen had profited by the war. Merchants of death. Down with the bankers and businessmen. With the working class in power, peace would be assured. Wars are the biggest threat to democracy and freedom. History will tell us that there are no real winners in whatever war, only losers. We lose our brothers, we lose our hopes and even our dreams.

Wolsten (ret. May 4, 2006) illustrates that freedom must be valued at all times. But it is also necessary to take part in guarding our freedom to keep our individual preferences. It is important that despite the ever-changing democratic situations across the globe, we should continue to arm ourselves with the thought that we are an individual with unique needs and capabilities apart from the ones we show as a citizen. Let's take the case of Argentina. In 1982, Argentina exercised de facto sovereignty over the seas around the Malvinas.

Previously, there was no legal precedent for obtaining title to waters by economically expanding them, nor was there precedent for acquiring title to land by first acquiring title to its surrounding waters. Argentina's creeping title would have been at best political and de facto, little worse than Britain's title to the Falklands based on contested acquisitive prescription. Had

Argentina continued to license oil exploration around the islands, it is hard to imagine how Britain could have ceased it.

A use of pressure by Britain against foreign corporations working under a Third World nation's sanction would have been most improbable. U. S. support for such a use of force would have been equally unlikely. Only first use of force by Argentina, which threatened not only British oil stakes around the Falklands but also world peace and the kelpers, could have created European and North American support for England. Had Argentina took up the policy of unilaterally oil progress that it had been following since the late seventies, it would have taken de facto sovereignty of the Falklands' waters.

Without reason or knack to oppose this, Britain could have only clamored about its sovereign rights. With the decision to close a scientific station and scrap of the Endurance, Britain established it was once again considering the Falklands an inessential expense. Individual preferences are threatened by democracy when we refuse to take part and take things easily for granted. It is important that our individual preferences are respected because what is the use of having a democratic country when our freedom to do things our way, within the bounds of law, are violated?