

Liberty and political liberalism term paper

Philosophy, Freedom



Liberty refers to the concept of free will. It introduces the principle of agency over one's own actions and control. In that strain, liberty refers to the aspect of being free to act as one pleases without having to be accountable and responsible to another. In practical terms, absolute liberty is impossible for society imposes the fact one must enjoy his liberty only to the extent that it does not infringe on the liberty of others. In that strain, liberty can be seen as the rights attendant to one's own person. Liberty can be categorized into two broad categories, these are, negative and positive liberty. Negative liberty refers to the liberty that gives freedom from coercion from outside forces. On the hand, positive liberty refers to the liberty derived from social structures and tends to favor an egalitarian approach to life. In that context, the positive liberty attempts to achieve equality of man before the law and the society in general.

Political liberalism refers to the absence of disabling conditions and the presence or fulfillment of the enabling conditions relative to a man's desires and interest. Political liberalism is premised on the government through the social contract. In that context it is the government that would determine and avail the political liberalism availed to man in the society. Political liberalism informs the extent of liberty in the society. It is from the political system, that society achieves liberty of persons. For that reason the limitation of political liberalism automatically affects liberty of persons. Finally, it needs to be appreciated that liberty enables the actualization of freedom. The extent of personal agency and accountability determines whether one enjoys freedom and to what extent. Freedom entails free will with full pursuit of interests and self-determination.

References

Schaffner, B. F. (2010). Politics. New York: Cengage Learning.