

Good example of how
gender, race,
ethnicity, orientations,
and global influence
h...

[Philosophy](#), [Freedom](#)



Inequalities in terms of religion, race, age, sexual orientation, and gender has a deep-rooted history, yet is rarely openly discussed in the past even by those who directly experience discrimination. Women were discriminated upon when it comes to employment during World War I and continued on to World War II. There was initial fear that men could lose their jobs or affect men's wages when they return to work as the government also provided the same salary to women who performed men's jobs. With the continued employment of women, instances of discrimination increased and solidified resulting to women slowly finding their voice and fighting for their rights. The same thing can be said about racial discrimination, which contributed to the great wealth gap that exists between whites and non-whites. Upon return from World War II, veterans were allowed to purchase land and property. However, non-Americans living in America such as Mexicans, Japanese, and Chinese immigrants, among others became the targets of employment and property ownership discrimination. Many of them, including African Americans, became victims of fraud and foreclosure. As most of them were denied citizenship until the 1950s, they had very limited access to job opportunities and were forbidden to purchase property. Public policies, such as the GI Bill of Rights of 1944, paved the way for veterans to obtain education, buy farm lands, and purchase homes that tremendously helped the veterans in raising their families and providing for the children's needs. However, not all Americans benefited from these policies as they were only applicable to white Americans. Hispano Americans, African Americans, and the American women in general, were excluded, which further fired up the desire to obtain their freedom and civil

rights based on the promises of the Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution during the post-war era (Johnson). Such was the case prior to 1945, but things have already improved since then.

Attempts to Seek Genuine Freedom and Equality in the American Society

Recognizing the inequalities and injustices occurring all over America, men and women began understanding the need to change the system in order for the country to move forward and towards modernization. Groups and staunch supporters of various causes obtained entitlements, legal rights, cultural recognition, and social respects, which were otherwise inconceivable in 1945.

Race and ethnicity movements

After the Second World War, African Americans had the strong urge to fight for their rights considering their service in the military and other forms of services and sacrifices. They demanded for protection and exercise of their constitutional rights in the United States. Women's enlightenment from being second-class citizens gave birth to women advocates who became the voice of change and freedom. Women such as Addie Wyatt tirelessly campaigned for everyone whom she felt was not being treated correctly, including rights of women and African Americas. During those times, labor feminists used " collective bargaining to force employers to improve pay and working conditions, and they lobbied the government for laws that would protect and benefit workers" (Johnson). This was because more women worked outside the home and they believed that if they were paid higher

despite working fewer hours, they will still be able to fulfill their roles as wives and mothers. From about 800, 000 thousand organized women workers, the number grew by the millions during World War II.

Gay rights movement

While the social history of homosexuality was already rampant during World War I, it was after World War II that homosexuality became a huge issue nationwide. As numerous young individuals joined the military for wartime employment, after the war, many of them decided to declare their gay identities after meeting other gays and lesbians during their military service. They created their own subculture that focused on friendship and socializations in bars, thus, cities such as New Jersey and New York witness the mushrooming of gay bars in the 1940s. As the public was not used to such open displays of gender and sexual orientations, prejudice against them grew, resulting to some being fired from their jobs or removed from military service (“ Milestones in the Gay Rights Movement”). When President Dwight D. Eisenhower disqualified the employment of gay and lesbian people from federal jobs through an executive order in 1953, “ many state and local governments and private corporations followed suit [as] FBI began a surveillance program against homosexuals” (“ Milestones in the Gay Rights Movement”). This also resulted to harassments, raids of gay bars, and arrests, among others, of gay and lesbian citizens.

This then led to the organization and establishment of a gay rights movement called the Mattachine Society that was headed by Harry Hay and Chuck Rowland in 1950 in Los Angeles. Initially, the society was composed of

gay people until a lesbian organization in San Francisco merged with it in 1955, called the Daughters of Bilitis, instituted by Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon. Starting out as a small organization, the group eventually launched chapters in various other U. S. cities and published magazines, which served as inspiration and hope to others in the same plight (“ Milestones in the Gay Rights Movement”).

This spawned the institution of more gay and lesbian organizations to the consternation of some political leaders and the general public. As harassments and protests became widespread, the more the gay citizens encountered clashes with the police force. A raid at the Stonewall Inn gay bar in June 27, 1969 resulted to three nights of riot as patrons of the bar fought back. Supporters of the gay movement’s protest included blacks, college students, and women, among others. Protesting all forms of discrimination and hostility against the gay and lesbian community, more people opted to come out of the closet, proclaim their gay identity, and demand equality.

In the succeeding years, many states legally recognized homosexual behavior resulting to decreased incidences of police harassment. Other positive changes include updating civil rights statutes to include sexual orientation, the elimination of employment bans on homosexuals in most federal jobs, acceptance of the gay community in society, including some religious organizations such as Unitarianism and Reformed Judaism, which allowed gays and lesbians to serve as ministers and rabbis (“ Milestones in the Gay Rights Movement”). From once being an underground society, the gay and lesbian community has emerged as a structured and well-ordered

group composed of respectable people who are also successful in their businesses, communities, political clubs, and religious congregations, among others.

Despite the seeming success of the gay and lesbian community, detractors still flourished. With singer Anita Bryant at the helm, a gay rights regulation in Dade County, Florida was repealed. This move has so inspired others who are against the gay and lesbian community to come up with their own anti-gay attacks. Senator Jesse Helms of North Carolina collaborated with Jerry Falwell, a fundamentalist minister, among others, to decelerate the growth and advancement of the gay movement.

“ Liberty and Justice for All” – How America Can Embrace this Idea

America has always been associated with the land of milk and honey, the country that will help others realize their great American dream because of the freedom and opportunities it offers. This great American promise has attracted different races and ethnicities into its fold in the hope that in America, they will experience equality and opportunity. Immigrants are not the only ones wishing for equality and opportunity, but also people who experience discrimination due to gender and sexual orientation. As a nation, America embraces the idea that everyone is created equal, which further strengthens the belief that migrants can be taught and will actually hold on to the American way of living. However, the many instances of discriminations contradict the idea of a unified America as generally, some Americans regard foreigners as beneath them, which is the first step towards racism (van der Vilke). There is no true acceptance of the individualism of

each person. What America needs to realize is that diversity is good. Diversity is what will help propel the American nation to greatness, especially since the country can benefit from the many characteristics and uniqueness of each individual – American or non-American alike.

Role of the United States in the World from 1945 to Present

What World War II established is the power and influence of the United States in the world. If it is not the super country, then most definitely, it was one of the super countries aside from the Soviet Union (USSR). This was highly evident after the devastation of Europe and Asia in 1945, which assured both USSR and America powerful influence in countries in both continents, respectively. They strategically assembled their resources, including weapons and citizens to establish themselves, and “ expanded their territorial control and influence far beyond [their] previous limits” (Suri). The meeting between US President Harry Truman and Soviet General Secretary Josef Stalin in Germany in July 1945 left observers surmising that whatever decisions these two leaders made would “ determine the future course of world history” (Suri). While initially both USSR and America joined forces to topple down Japanese invasion of various countries in World War II, in time, they realized each other’s strength and recognized that each could be a rival and threat for domination over Asia and Europe. Both considered that the other would convert the resources of their newly-colonized countries into weapons for war and train for stronger war-fighting capabilities. Coming from different beliefs, the war of ideas between the two super countries convinced them that each one could use existing and newly developed

resources and ideas against each other.

Emerging from World War II stronger than when it entered the war, the United States surfaced as a super country that helps other nations develop and succeed, too. The United States controlled countries in Southeast Asia, particularly the Philippines. It also helped the Philippines achieve independence by liberating the country from the hands of the Japanese (Wilson).

The United States also experienced a huge economic boom that helped most of its citizens improve their lives. Developments in suburbs and changes from the old industrial states to modernized cities were the main themes of growth after World War II. Apart from growth and development, concerns pertaining equality among women and minorities still abound alongside struggles each sector experienced. As expectations of Americans rose, the belief that everything can be solved by America, regardless if the problem was of economic or social nature, grew, which contributed to Americans' high confidence in themselves and in their country. Citizens also believed that their country had the economic and military power to manage and control the behavior of other nations. They also embraced the idea that America is the country to help maintain world peace (" Overview of the Post-War Era").

America has also been involved in many issues concerning other countries, especially the ones that go into war. While it started as an ally of the Soviet Union, soon, the United States found itself clashing with the Soviet Union when it comes to political ideologies and the USSR's dominance over Eastern Europe. America also became involved in issues against China in 1949 and

North Korea in 1950 when North Korea launched an attack against South Korea. This propelled the Cold War into a global conflict involving allied countries (“ Overview of the Post-War Era”). Because America strongly believed in democracy, it was expectedly against communism, thus, America “ would confront Communism in Iran, Guatemala, Lebanon, and elsewhere” (“ Overview of the Post-War Era”).

Because the United States was a strong believer of democracy, it ensured that fascism was not exercised in other countries. Along the way, the United States would promote its own political beliefs and ideals all over the world. Understanding and recognizing that another depression was what most people feared, the United States used this as a strategy when it comes to sharing its ideals and political beliefs to other nations. This helped the United States form the idea that they can lead the world in the 20th century, which was similar to the British Empire. As a result, the United States worked hard in establishing itself as a “ go-to” country when it comes to opportunities, equality, improved living conditions, and more. By spreading their beliefs everywhere, projecting a strong and stable image for America, and being one of the first countries to respond when another country is in crisis, America was able to prove that its political structure is the “ epitome of political power and stability” (“ The Soviets and U. S.”).

Global Controversy: America’s Iraqi Invasion

One of the more controversial issues that the United States found itself embroiled in was the Iraqi invasion in 2003, later called the Iraq War. When the United States planned on invading Iraq, it did so in the belief that the

Iraqi government had something to do with the 9/11 U. S. bombing in 2001. The United States was ready to go to war in the pretense that it wanted to eradicate weapons of mass destruction, which America believed Iraq was in possession of (Blix). Based on surveys, about 42 percent of Americans “ believed that Saddam Hussein was directly responsible for the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon” (Roy). An ABC news poll also revealed that “ 55 percent of Americans believed that Saddam Hussein directly supported Al-Qaeda” (Roy). However, these allegations and beliefs were purely based on allusions and auto-suggestions by US media only. There were no hard evidence pointing to Hussein’s or Iraq’s involvement in the 9/11 attacks. Based on Roy’s analysis (2014) everything was founded on deceit and misinformation orchestrated by the US government. The war wanted to eradicate weapons of mass destruction, but none were found in Iraq. The war also wanted to crush the al Qaeda in Iraq, and again, the terrorist group did not have anything to do with Iraq during that time. America wanted Iraq to be a model democracy based on law, but the war only substituted tyranny with anarchy, with the United States violating various laws of war. If ever, the only good thing that came out of the war was the death of the dictator, Saddam Hussein (Blix), but not with the death of thousands of innocent people, including children.

When the Iraq War ended, the Central Intelligence Agency initiated an investigation on whether the American intelligence unit committed a mistake in assessing the role of Hussein in the attacks and Iraq’s weapons programs. In addition, if the decision to go to war initially had the support of the public back in 2003, a Pew Research report in 2008 shows that 54% of Americans

now believe the use of military force in Iraq was a mistake, while 38% believed it was a right decision (Pew Research). The decrease in support was spawned by results of the CIA's study showing that the decision to go to war was not fully thought out, the Intelligence unit's failure to make accurate and thorough investigation, and was based on propaganda.

On Liberty and Security

Liberty is all about the different values of people, such as freedom of expression, freedom of speech, freedom of association, and freedom of religion, among others. In America, these are considered vital for the individual in order to live a well-balanced life. In the same manner, they also value their security and expect the government to protect individual security in all aspects. For instance, an individual has the liberty to use the internet according to his needs, but also expects that security measures are in place to ensure protection for the user's identity and personal information. An individual expects to be able to relate freely with other individuals from different nations on a personal basis, but wants the assurance that he or she is secure in dealing with them.

This can also be applied to how individuals communicate with other people worldwide. As the internet age is here, sharing information about oneself has become rampant, thus, the individual's security might be at risk, especially when dealing with people who are capable of digging information on the internet. While it may appear that liberty and security contradict one another in the sense that one aspect expects a certain degree of freedom, while the other one expects protection against those who could use the information

negatively, liberty and security can be mutually supportive of the other. The understanding is in the foundation of each other's culture and rights and the respect and acceptance that everyone should give one another.

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