

The Danger of a Silent World

Imagine our world if freedom of speech did not exist. Scientific discoveries may not be allowed to be published, knowledge may be withheld, minority groups' voices may not be heard, and the government could suppress the people.

In the 1600s Galileo discovered that the earth moved around the sun. The Catholic church believed that the sun moved around the earth and tried to keep Galileo silent. If they had succeeded our science would be skewed and scientific discoveries would have been slowed. It is important for us to have good knowledge even if it disagrees with tradition, religion, or previous scientific thoughts. Without freedom to speak about and publish scientific discoveries medicine may not have seen as many cures, outer space might still be untouched by man, and travel may still be limited to trains and cars.

Women and men's voices have not always been considered equal. Men were able to vote and have a say in elections while women were not. Esther Hobart Morris advocated for women's rights in the state of Wyoming and it has been named as the first government in the world to give women equal rights to men. Women voting in this state paved the way for the first female governor to be elected, Nellie Tayloe Ross. She paved the way for other women in government such as our immediate past governor, Mary Fallon. There have been many other important women in government since their introduction to politics in the 1800s such as Frances Perkins, Sandra Day O'Connor, Madeleine Albright, Condoleezza Rice, Sarah Palin and Hillary Rodham Clinton. There are still more men in political positions than women but 2018 brought a record high of women in congress after the midterm election. Womens' voices are important because they can represent womens' issues from a different view point. Without womens' voices our world would miss out on an important perspective.

African americans' voices have not always been heard equally in our country. Everyone should be treated equally in this world but unfortunately not everyone is. Some people are treated equally but many more wish to be treated equally. Martin Luther King Jr advocated for equal rights for all people. He dreamed that one day all colors of people would have equal voices and be treated equally. In the same way women can represent other womens' issues perhaps more accurately, African americans can represent issues affecting them more accurately. A major step for our country was the election of President Barack Obama as the first African American president. All minority groups' voices are important in our country that is meant to be a melting pot. Lady Liberty stands at the entrance to New York and says "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door." Our country is a great place of freedom where people want to come to have an equal voice and opportunity.

In 2018 president Trump blocked people from his Twitter account that were disagreeing with his Tweets. This was ruled a violation of the first amendment. A government official cannot block opinions that do not match with theirs. In our free country of democracy we are allowed to disagree. Instead of blocking tweets that disagree with his opinions, he could ignore these tweets or he could read them with an open mind and see if they could help him make our country better. We should never fear opposing opinions. We should believe in our own opinions but also have an open mind to hear other people's advice or opinions. Allowing people the freedom to speak these opinions is important to our country being the great place that it is.

Freedom for all to speak allows opportunities to learn new things, see new perspectives and develop in new ways and prevents ignorance and oppression. Our nation's first president summarized it well; "If the freedom of speech is taken away then dumb and silent we may be led, like sheep to the slaughter." (George Washington).