

What does freedom of speech mean to you?

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Freedom of speech is our first amendment in the bill of rights. The freedom to speak our minds, to have opinions, and to express our concerns is key to move forward as a society. Simple things such as amazon reviews can make a vast difference. Let's say someone decided to write a review criticising a lamp saying that it's not sturdy. Just one comment like that can initiate a change. The other customers who were interested in that lamp can now know how flimsy it is, therefore, they can look for other lamps instead of wasting their money. Furthermore, the lamp company can improve their product by adding more support to the lamp since they know the customer's concerns. If the concerned customer had never left that review, the company's lamp sales would decline and the company wouldn't even know why. They won't be able to change their product for more customer satisfaction. Without the freedom of speech and negative comments, the company would not be able to grow.

Recently, a 35 year old former kickboxer, Andrew Tate, has been trending over the internet. He is known for his harsh misogynistic statements and his outdated mindset. Tate has gathered a massive audience, mostly teenage boys, and he gives advice on how to attract "females". His extremely sexist remarks are spreading on social media. Young boys are looking up to him, taking his advice, quoting him, and developing this toxic, misogynistic mindset. He is not just an internet troll trying to be funny either. He has multiple rape accusations and said that he moved solely because it is easier to get off rape charges in that area. A criminal is influencing millions of young men. Of course Tate can say whatever he wants with the first amendment, but the words coming out of his mouth are negatively impacting the future generation's mindset on women. All of the hard work women went through for equal rights and their accomplishments are being buried with toxic masculinity coming back. As we step into the future, our society should evolve and improve, but Andrew Tate's words and influence are pushing us back. Individuals like Tate use their freedom of speech to negatively impact our society. Since everyone has the right to express their opinions, it can be difficult to block out the harmful comments. But, like the negative amazon review, we can use Tate's antagonism to change our world for the better by using him to address issues in our society.

As Andrew Tate grew bigger, numerous people have called him out on his actions. They used Tate as an example to educate younger audiences about the misogyny and sexism that still exists today. They used his quotes to further explain our history as well as why people find him to be offensive. While it is true that everybody has the right to have an opinion, certain opinions like Tate's can stump us. Accordingly, we can turn the table around and use his negative speech to teach others to prevent harmful statements from bringing our accomplishments down in the future. So instead of being set back by influences like him, we can use our freedom of speech to educate and spread accurate information to improve.

However, countries without freedom of speech are not able to initiate any sort of change. In North Korea, where the people have no freedom of speech, expression, or belief, it is impossible to evolve as a society. Not being able to express your opinion is extremely detrimental. Freedom of speech allows us to share our views and also criticise issues as well as create solutions so we can take a big step forward together. Whether it is negative or positive, the first amendment allows us to make an impact. Spreading information, giving constructive criticism, and using negative impacts to educate others on what's right is all part

of improving. Freedom of speech to me is a way for our society to progress. There may be obstacles in our path, such as harmful opinions, but we should figure out a way to take advantage of those obstacles and use our freedom of speech to benefit our society.