

The Meaning of American Life

By Natalie Ivanova

"America is another name for opportunity." -Ralph Waldo Emerson. America, some call it the land of opportunity; some call it the land of freedom. When asked about what the United States of America means to me, I can respond only with these two words – freedom and opportunity. American life gives you the chance to do what you want to, say what you want to and most importantly, think what you want to. The USA has various types of freedom and lifestyles that are provided to its citizens.

The types of freedom are: freedom of speech, of press and spiritual and political freedom, etc. "If the freedom of speech is taken away then dumb and silent we may be led, like sheep to the slaughter" - George Washington. Freedom of speech is the right of an individual to unreservedly convey his ideas and thoughts. This type of freedom is believed to be one of the most important rights of humans. It gives people the right to say what they want, when they want to, as long as it does not offend anyone else that is. However, religious freedom is no less important than the freedom of speech.

Another reason why I look up to the American Government is because I adore the fact that it is actually a huge melting pot of religions. With your neighbor being Jewish and your colleague being Buddhist, you would get to learn more about the assortment of cultures from all over the world represented in just one country, America. All of this is possible because America like many other countries in the world has separated the church from the state. Aside from the religious freedom, political freedom and the freedom of the press also have an immense impact on society.

Political freedom is basically the ability to vote for and support the political party of your choice. Some countries are ruled by a dictator which gives its citizens no freedom at all. Along with the citizens, the press also has very limited rights. Most dictators force the media to write only about the "happy-go-lucky" side of their nation. This way, other countries will not be able to get a glimpse of the actual situation of the nation. This is yet another reason for my admiration of the US. AS a result of the freedom of the press, US journalists are allowed to publish different points of views on one specific subject, which to an outsider would be a really helpful tool in order to learn more about the mesmerizing country.

Many different kinds of freedom and lifestyles are offered to Americans by their government. In conclusion, I believe that all of the privileges of American

citizens are essential human needs that should be granted to everybody. In this land, no authority or group can ever hush the people from speaking out for their freedom. Overall, America opens the door to those who knock for an opportunity of freedom, a freedom difficult to find in most countries.

"For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others."

- Nelson Mandela