

Makaylah Badua

American Studies

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Equality and Freedom Has Been Stripped Away

Alan Moore a famous English writer emphasizes two core values when he states, “equality and freedom are not luxuries to lightly cast aside. Without them, order cannot long endure before approaching depths beyond imagining.”. Meanwhile, it is so unfortunate that in America these values have been cast aside. Equality and freedom are two powerful words people have heard about since before they could remember. They are the rights that have been fought for and promised to every American. In the American Revolution the Americans lost 25,000 of their men in order to gain freedom, equality, and set the premise for many core American values. In addition, these values also came from the Puritans, Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution. It's a tragedy to see how many lives were sacrificed and afterwards comparing it to where Americans are now. American's have completely demolished and overthrown the equality and freedom that has been created. Specifically, equality and freedom of speech are core values that Americans have not lived up to today.

Equality was fought for and created to be an American value, yet unfortunately it is not lived up to today. The color of one's skin causes oppression, discrimination, and hatred and has been engraved in society. It's the reality that all people are forced to learn to accept racism. It's something that has formed the past, burdens the present, and has threatened the future. In America, countless numbers of individuals deal with it, such as a North Carolinian man who sat

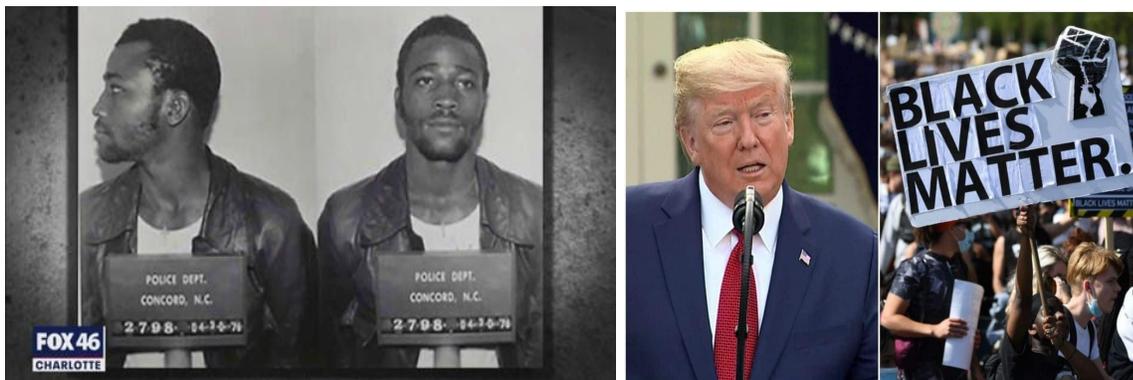
in a courtroom 44 years ago knowing he didn't commit a crime. A man named Ronnie Long was accused of raping a white woman. Tests and evidence was collected, such as the 43 fingerprints at the scene and “although there was no physical evidence tying Long to the crime, he was convicted by an all-white jury, and given an 80 year sentence(...) they took my life away from me when I was 20 years old.” A piece of hair, a rape kit, fingerprints were all taken in as evidence, which did not match Ronnie Long. Why did Ronnie long get convicted of a crime he didn't do, sentenced for 80 years, spending 44 years of his life in jail? The full answer will remain unknown. Something that can be evaluated as true is that an innocent black man was prosecuted by an all-white jury, by a white woman, after all the evidence wasn't aligned to him. Racism can be compared to air , the second someone is born they breathe it in. It's taught and is a disease that spreads across the world. If Ronnie Long was a white man would he have been accused of a crime he didn't do? The fact that one even has to wonder the answer to this question proves that equality has been crushed and isn't an American value that is lived up to. Equality and freedom wasn't given to Ronnie Long as he was scared sitting in front of the court of law, sitting beside an all-white jury. In the year of 2020, 44 years later the court system finally re-evaluated the case. This was after his whole life was stripped away from him, he didn't get to start a life of his own, instead he was released after half of his life was already over. This act was unfair, equality used to be a core value in American but now it has been completely overthrown.

Freedom of speech, worship what you wish, pursuit of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are just three examples of what America promises , and they have broken those promises. Freedom also means giving the ability to believe in what you choose, while also having a say on whatever you want. It's given people the ability to preach and stand up for what

they think is right. Such as on August 30, 2020, when two groups were protesting their beliefs. In neighboring streets there was a Black Lives Matter protest, and on the other there was a pro-Trump group. Based on American values people claim they have, Americans should be able to safely fight for what we believe in. These two opposing protests groups bumped into each other. More specifically, there were two men in this protest on opposite sides as the groups were talking making “back-to-back political conventions (...) when it left two protesters dead.” Two innocent men dead, taken away from their lives incapable of creating any more memories. Worrying about being shot while protesting is not a normal thing to worry about, yet in America it is. There is no such thing as freedom in America. Freedom is defined as the power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants without hindrance or restraint. In this case, and thousands of cases in America the people involved were not given freedom. Protesting turned into a crime scene, and a horrifying event for hundreds to see. The black lives matter protesters are all fighting for the equality african americans are not getting in America. It’s been proven that freedom doesn’t exist in a country that has promised and fought for it. America must do better because as of right now equality or freedom are two core values that are not lived up to today.

Equality can be described that all men and women should be given equal rights in order to succeed, live, and grow as individuals from the moment someone was born. While freedom can be defined as the ability to speak, act, and think whatever is on one’s mind. Americans have not lived up to either one of these core values. The fact of the matter is that these core values are the basic principles that American’s should have. People need to fight for their beliefs and what America once had. The lives of many have been taken away from them, for reasons that shouldn’t have occurred. People must work and strive in order to make America a better place to

live. A place that includes being able to have freedom while also having the ability to have the equal rights another person may have. Every person should be able to wake up each morning knowing that they won't be oppressed upon or killed for speaking up for their beliefs. Equality and freedom have been preached about, yet it hasn't been enough. All people must do their role and fight for what's best for their country and themselves. Just as Martin Luther King preached about as he said that "This will be the day when we shall bring into full realization the dream of American democracy-a dream yet unfulfilled. A dream of equality of opportunity, of privilege and property widely distributed; a dream of a land where men will not take necessities from the many to give luxuries to the few." As Americans, people must do what they can to make this country a better place to live in. A country that wanted these American values to last, instead of not having them being lived up to today. People must make a change.



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