

13.1 | *Freedom in Society*

As the title of this section indicates, the subject treated is not freedom in general, nor liberty in all its diverse forms, but the individual's freedom of action within the social group and in relation to other individuals. This freedom is variously described, in the quotations assembled, as freedom from coercion, impediment, or duress; freedom to do as one pleases or wishes; the liberty to live or act as one chooses; or the liberty to act according to one's own rules or directions, not those of another.

The last of these formulations raises one of the central issues disputed by the authors represented here. On the one hand, there are those—for example, Montesquieu, Locke, and Rousseau—who maintain that just laws or laws made with the consent and suffrage of the governed in no way infringe or diminish individual freedom; freedom in society cannot be an unlimited freedom; it is a freedom regulated by law, and to act contrary to law is not liberty, but license. On the other hand, the reader will find passages from Hobbes, Bentham, and J. S. Mill setting forth the contrary view: that one has freedom of action only about matters con-

cerning which the law is silent; and that as the sphere of law enlarges, the sphere of liberty diminishes. Yet both groups of authors agree that freedom in society must be limited freedom, a liberty to do as one pleases only to the extent that one's actions cause no injury to others or do not have an adverse effect on the welfare of the community itself.

Other problems or issues are discussed: the relation of liberty and equality, the character of freedom in a democracy, the difference between freedom in a state of nature and freedom in civil society, and the relation of political liberty to moral freedom. For the consideration of moral freedom, which is quite a different thing from social or political freedom, the reader is referred to Section 9.4; and for the controversy over freedom of choice, or of the will, the reader is referred to Section 5.7. The discussion of subjects related to the materials covered here will also be found in Section 13.2 ON FREEDOM OF THOUGHT AND EXPRESSION: CENSORSHIP, Section 13.3 ON EQUALITY, Section 10.4 ON GOVERNMENT OF AND BY THE PEOPLE: REPUBLIC AND DEMOCRACY, and Section 10.7 ON SLAVERY.

1 Proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof.

Leviticus 25:10

2 *Pericles*. Our constitution . . . favours the many instead of the few; this is why it is called a democracy. If we look to the laws, they afford equal justice to all in their private differences; if no social standing, advancement in public life falls to reputation for capacity, class considerations not being allowed to interfere with merit; nor again does poverty bar the way, if a man is able to serve the state, he is not hindered by the obscurity of his condition. The freedom which we enjoy in our government extends also to our ordinary life.

There, far from exercising a jealous surveillance over each other, we do not feel called upon to be angry with our neighbour for doing what he likes, or even to indulge in those injurious looks which cannot fail to be offensive, although they inflict no positive penalty. But all this ease in our private relations does not make us lawless as citizens. Against this fear is our chief safeguard, teaching us to obey the magistrates and the laws, particularly such as regard the protection of the injured, whether they are actually on the statute book, or belong to that code which, although unwritten, yet cannot be broken without acknowledged disgrace.

Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*, II, 37

- 3 *Socrates*. The ruin of oligarchy is the ruin of democracy; the same disease magnified and intensified by liberty overmasters democracy—the truth being that the excessive increase of anything often causes a reaction in the opposite direction; and this is the case not only in the seasons and in vegetable and animal life, but above all in forms of government. . . .
The excess of liberty, whether in States or individuals, seems only to pass into excess of slavery.
Plato, *Republic*, VIII, 563B
- 4 Every man should be responsible to others, nor should any one be allowed to do just as he pleases; for where absolute freedom is allowed there is nothing to restrain the evil which is inherent in every man.
Aristotle, *Politics*, 1318^b39
- 5 The measures which are taken by tyrants appear all of them to be democratic; such, for instance, as the licence permitted to slaves (which may be to a certain extent advantageous) and also that of women and children, and the allowing everybody to live as he likes. Such a government will have many supporters, for most persons would rather live in a disorderly than in a sober manner.
Aristotle, *Politics*, 1319^b27
- 6 If the people are sovereign in a state and the government is run according to their will, it is called liberty. But it is really licence.
Cicero, *Republic*, III, 13
- 7 Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.
II Corinthians 3:17
- 8 By *liberty* is understood . . . the absence of external impediments; which impediments may oft take away part of a man's power to do what he would, but cannot hinder him from using the power left him according as his judgement and reason shall dictate to him.
Hobbes, *Leviathan*, I, 14
- 9 Liberties . . . depend on the silence of the law. In cases where the sovereign has prescribed no rule, there the subject hath the liberty to do, or forbear, according to his own discretion. And therefore such liberty is in some places more, and in some less; and in some times more, in other times less, according as they that have the sovereignty shall think most convenient.
Hobbes, *Leviathan*, II, 21
- 10 I did but prompt the age to quit their cloggs
By the known rules of antient libertie,
When strait a barbarous noise environs me
Of Owles and Cuckoes, Asses, Apes and Doggs.
As when those Hinds that were transform'd to
Froggs
Raid at *Latona's* twin-born progenie
Which after held the Sun and Moon in fee.
But this is got by casting Pearl to Hoggs;
That bawle for freedom in their senceless mood,
And still revolt when truth would set them free.
Licence they mean when they cry libertie;
For who loves that, must first be wise and good;
But from that mark how far they roave we see
For all this wast of wealth, and loss of blood.
Milton, *I did but prompt the age to quit their cloggs*
- 11 None can love freedom heartily but good men; the rest love not freedom but license, which never hath more scope or more indulgence than under tyrants.
Milton, *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*
- 12 The natural liberty of man is to be free from any superior power on earth, and not to be under the will or legislative authority of man, but to have only the law of Nature for his rule. The liberty of man in society is to be under no other legislative power but that established by consent in the commonwealth, nor under the dominion of any will, or restraint of any law, but what that legislative shall enact according to the trust put in it. Freedom, then, is not what Sir Robert Filmer tells us: "A liberty for every one to do what he lists, to live as he pleases, and not to be tied by any laws"; but freedom of men under government is to have a standing rule to live by, common to every one of that society, and made by the legislative power erected in it. A liberty to follow my own will in all things where that rule prescribes not, not to be subject to the inconstant, uncertain, unknown, arbitrary will of another man, as freedom of nature is to be under no other restraint but the law of Nature.
Locke, *II Civil Government*, IV, 21
- 13 The freedom . . . of man, and liberty of acting according to his own will, is grounded on his having reason, which is able to instruct him in that law he is to govern himself by, and make him know how far he is left to the freedom of his own will. To turn him loose to an unrestrained liberty, before he has reason to guide him, is not the allowing him the privilege of his nature to be free, but to thrust him out amongst brutes, and abandon him to a state as wretched and as much beneath that of a man as theirs.
Locke, *II Civil Government*, VI, 63
- 14 I think the question is not proper, *whether the will be free, but whether a man be free*. Thus, I think,
First, That so far as any one can, by the direction or choice of his mind, preferring the existence of any action to the non-existence of that action, and *vice versâ*, make it to exist or not exist, so far he is free. For if I can, by a thought directing the

motion of my finger, make it move when it was at rest, or *vice versa*, it is evident, that in respect of that I am free: and if I can, by a like thought of my mind, preferring one to the other, produce either words or silence, I am at liberty to speak or hold my peace: and as far as this power reaches, of acting or not acting, by the determination of his own thought preferring either, so far is a man free. For how can we think any one freer, than to have the power to do what he will? And so far as any one can, by preferring any action to its not being, or rest to any action, produce that action or rest, so far can he do what he will. For such a preferring of action to its absence, is the willing of it: and we can scarce tell how to imagine any being freer, than to be able to do what he wills. So that in respect of actions within the reach of such a power in him, a man seems as free as it is possible for freedom to make him.

Locke, *Concerning Human Understanding*,
Bk. II, XXI, 21

- 15 Is it worth the name of freedom to be at liberty to play the fool, and draw shame and misery upon a man's self? If to break loose from the conduct of reason, and to want that restraint of examination and judgment which keeps us from choosing or doing the worse, be liberty, true liberty, madmen and fools are the only freemen: but yet, I think, nobody would choose to be mad for the sake of such liberty, but he that is mad already.

Locke, *Concerning Human Understanding*,
Bk. II, XXI, 51

- 16 He that has his chains knocked off, and the prison doors set open to him, is perfectly at liberty, because he may either go or stay, as he best likes; though his preference be determined to stay, by the darkness of the night, or illness of the weather, or want of other lodging. He ceases not to be free; though the desire of some convenience to be had there absolutely determines his preference, and makes him stay in his prison.

Locke, *Concerning Human Understanding*,
Bk. II, XXI, 51

- 17 It is true that in democracies the people seem to act as they please; but political liberty does not consist in an unlimited freedom. In governments, that is, in societies directed by laws, liberty can consist only in the power of doing what we ought to will, and in not being constrained to do what we ought not to will.

We must have continually present to our minds the difference between independence and liberty. Liberty is a right of doing whatever the laws permit, and if a citizen could do what they forbid he would be no longer possessed of liberty, because all his fellow-citizens would have the same power.

Montesquieu, *Spirit of Laws*, XI, 3

- 18 Liberty consists principally in not being forced to do a thing, where the laws do not oblige: people are in this state only as they are governed by civil laws; and because they live under those civil laws, they are free.

Montesquieu, *Spirit of Laws*, XXVI, 20

- 19 Liberty . . . is only and can be only the power to do what one will. That is what philosophy teaches us. But if one considers liberty in the theological sense, it is a matter so sublime that profane eyes dare not raise themselves to it.

Voltaire, *Philosophical Dictionary*:
Free-Will

- 20 To renounce liberty is to renounce being a man, to surrender the rights of humanity and even its duties. For him who renounces everything no indemnity is possible. Such a renunciation is incompatible with man's nature; to remove all liberty from his will is to remove all morality from his acts.

Rousseau, *Social Contract*, I, 4

- 21 In order . . . that the social compact may not be an empty formula, it tacitly includes the undertaking, which alone can give force to the rest, that whoever refuses to obey the general will shall be compelled to do so by the whole body. This means nothing less than that he will be forced to be free; for this is the condition which, by giving each citizen to his country, secures him against all personal dependence. In this lies the key to the working of the political machine; this alone legitimises civil undertakings, which, without it, would be absurd, tyrannical, and liable to the most frightful abuses.

Rousseau, *Social Contract*, I, 7

- 22 What man loses by the social contract is his natural liberty and an unlimited right to everything he tries to get and succeeds in getting; what he gains is civil liberty and the proprietorship of all he possesses. If we are to avoid mistake in weighing one against the other, we must clearly distinguish natural liberty, which is bounded only by the strength of the individual, from civil liberty, which is limited by the general will; and possession, which is merely the effect of force or the right of the first occupier, from property, which can be founded only on a positive title.

We might, over and above all this, add, to what man acquires in the civil state, moral liberty, which alone makes him truly master of himself; for the mere impulse of appetite is slavery, while obedience to a law which we prescribe to ourselves is liberty.

Rousseau, *Social Contract*, I, 8

- 23 *Johnson*. We are all agreed as to our own liberty; we would have as much of it as we can get; but we

- are not agreed as to the liberty of others: for in proportion as we take, others must lose.
Boswell, *Life of Johnson* (Apr. 8, 1779)
- 24 In general, if any branch of trade, or any division of labour, be advantageous to the public, the freer and more general the competition, it will always be the more so.
Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, II, 2
- 25 That degree of liberty which approaches to licentiousness can be tolerated only in countries where the sovereign is secured by a well-regulated standing army. It is in such countries only that the public safety does not require that the sovereign should be trusted with any discretionary power for suppressing even the impertinent wantonness of this licentious liberty.
Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, V, 1
- 26 The liberty, the only liberty, I mean is a liberty connected with order; that not only exists along with order and virtue, but which cannot exist at all without them. It inheres in good and steady government, as in its substance and vital principle.
Burke, *Speech on Arrival at Bristol* (Oct. 13, 1774)
- 27 The extreme of liberty (which is its abstract perfection, but its real fault) obtains nowhere, nor ought to obtain anywhere; because extremes, as we all know, in every point which relates either to our duties or satisfactions in life, are destructive both to virtue and enjoyment. Liberty, too, must be limited in order to be possessed. The degree of restraint it is impossible in any case to settle precisely. But it ought to be the constant aim of every wise public counsel to find out by cautious experiments, and rational, cool endeavors, with how little, not how much, of this restraint the community can subsist: for liberty is a good to be improved, and not an evil to be lessened. It is not only a private blessing of the first order, but the vital spring and energy of the state itself, which has just so much life and vigor as there is liberty in it.
Burke, *Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol* (Apr. 3, 1777)
- 28 The effect of liberty to individuals is, that they may do what they please: we ought to see what it will please them to do, before we risk congratulations, which may be soon turned into complaints.
Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*
- 29 There is, indeed, an innate equality belonging to every man which consists in his right to be independent of being bound by others to anything more than that to which he may also reciprocally bind them. It is, consequently, the inborn quality of every man in virtue of which he ought to be his own master by right.
Kant, *Division of the Science of Right*, B
- 30 The liberty which the law ought to allow of, and leave in existence—leave uncoerced, unrestrained—is the liberty which concerns those acts only, by which, if exercised, no damage would be done to the community as a whole; that is, either no damage at all, or none but what promises to be compensated by at least equal benefit. Accordingly, the exercise of the rights allowed to and conferred upon each individual, ought to have no other bounds set to it by law, than those which are necessary to enable it to maintain every other individual in the possession and exercise of such rights as . . . is consistent with the greatest good of the community.
Bentham, *Anarchical Fallacies*, 4
- 31 Liberty is to faction what air is to fire, an aliment without which it instantly expires. But it could not be less folly to abolish liberty, which is essential to political life, because it nourishes faction, than it would be to wish the annihilation of air, which is essential to animal life, because it imparts to fire its destructive agency.
Madison, *Federalist* 10
- 32 If a man has freedom enough to live healthy, and to work at his craft, he has enough; and so much all can easily obtain.
Goethe, *Conversations with Eckermann* (Jan. 18, 1827)
- 33 Me this unchartered freedom tires;
I feel the weight of chance-desires:
My hopes no more must change their name,
I long for a repose that ever is the same.
Wordsworth, *Ode to Duty*
- 34 Two Voices are there; one is of the sea,
One of the mountains; each a mighty Voice:
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
They were thy chosen music, Liberty!
Wordsworth, *Thought of a Briton on the Subjugation of Switzerland*
- 35 Nuns fret not at their convent's narrow room;
And hermits are contented with their cells. . . .
In truth the prison, into which we doom
Ourselves, no prison is: and hence for me,
In sundry moods, 't was pastime to be bound
Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground;
Pleased if some Souls (for such there needs must
be)
Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,
Should find brief solace there, as I have found.
Wordsworth, *Nuns Fret Not at Their Convent's Narrow Room*

36 Yet, Freedom, yet thy banner, torn but flying,
Streams like the thunder-storm against the wind.
Byron, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, IV, 98

37 My very chains and I grew friends,
So much a long communion tends
To make us what we are:—even I
Regain'd my freedom with a sigh.
Byron, *The Prisoner of Chillon*, XIV, 389

38 The idea which people most commonly have of freedom is that it is arbitrariness—the mean, chosen by abstract reflection, between the will wholly determined by natural impulses, and the will free absolutely. If we hear it said that the definition of freedom is ability to do what we please, such an idea can only be taken to reveal an utter immaturity of thought, for it contains not even an inkling of the absolutely free will, of right, ethical life, and so forth: Reflection, the formal universality and unity of self-consciousness, is the will's abstract certainty of its freedom, but it is not yet the truth of freedom, because it has not yet got *itself* as its content and aim, and consequently the subjective side is still other than the objective; the content of this self-determination, therefore, also remains purely and simply finite. Instead of being the will in its truth, arbitrariness is more like the will as contradiction.

Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*,
Introduction, 15

39 The conjunction of duty and right has a twofold aspect: what the state demands from us as a duty is *eo ipso* our right as individuals, since the state is nothing but the articulation of the concept of freedom. The determinations of the individual will are given an objective embodiment through the state and thereby they attain their truth and their actualization for the first time. The state is the one and only prerequisite of the attainment of particular ends and welfare.

Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*,
Additions, Par. 261

40 Freedom is nothing but the recognition and adoption of such universal substantial objects as right and law, and the production of a reality that is accordant with them—the state.

Hegel, *Philosophy of History*,
Introduction, 3

41 Freedom has appeared in the world at different times and under various forms; it has not been exclusively bound to any social condition, and it is not confined to democracies. Freedom cannot, therefore, form the distinguishing characteristic of democratic ages. The peculiar and preponderant fact that marks those ages as its own is the equality of condition; the ruling passion of men in those periods is the love of this equality.

I think that democratic communities have a natural taste for freedom; left to themselves, they will seek it, cherish it, and view any privation of it with regret. But for equality their passion is ardent, insatiable, incessant, invincible; they call for equality in freedom; and if they cannot obtain that, they still call for equality in slavery. They will endure poverty, servitude, barbarism, but they will not endure aristocracy.

This is true at all times, and especially in our own day. All men and all powers seeking to cope with this irresistible passion will be overthrown and destroyed by it. In our age freedom cannot be established without it, and despotism itself cannot reign without its support.

Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*,
Vol. II, II, 1.

42 Nothing is more disgusting than the crowing about liberty by slaves, as most men are, and the flippant mistaking for freedom of some paper preamble like a Declaration of Independence or the statute right to vote, by those who have never dared to think or to act.

Emerson, *Fate*

43 Of old sat Freedom on the heights,
The thunders breaking at her feet;
Above her shook the starry lights;
She heard the torrents meet.

Tennyson, *Of old sat Freedom on the heights*

44 Pursue, keep up with, circle round and round your life, as a dog does his master's chaise. Do what you love. Know your own bone; gnaw it, bury it, unearthen it, and gnaw it still. Do not be too moral. You may cheat yourself out of much life so. Aim above morality. Be not simply good; be good for something. All fables, indeed, have their morals; but the innocent enjoy the story. Let nothing come between you and the light. Respect men and brothers only. When you travel to the Celestial City, carry no letter of introduction. When you knock, ask to see God,—none of the servants. In what concerns you much, do not think that you have companions: know that you are alone in the world.

Thoreau, *Letter to Mr. B (Mar. 27, 1848)*

45 Why should we be in such desperate haste to succeed and in such desperate enterprises? If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away. It is not important that he should mature as soon as an apple tree or an oak. Shall he turn his spring into summer? If the condition of things which we were made for is not yet, what were any reality which we can substitute?

Thoreau, *Walden: Conclusion*

46 The soul selects her own society
Then shuts the door.
On her divine majority
Obtrude no more.

Unmoved, she notes the chariots pausing
At her low gate.
Unmoved, an emperor is kneeling
Upon her mat.

I've known her from an ample nation
Choose one,
Then close the valves of her attention
Like stone.

Emily Dickinson, *The Soul Selects*

47 The world has never had a good definition of the word liberty, and the American people, just now, are much in want of one. We all declare for liberty; but in using the same word we do not all mean the same thing. With some the word liberty may mean for each man to do as he pleases with himself, and the product of his labor; while with others the same word may mean for some men to do as they please with other men, and the product of other men's labor. Here are two, not only different, but incompatible things, called by the same name—liberty. And it follows that each of the things is, by the respective parties, called by two different and incompatible names—liberty and tyranny.

Lincoln, *Address at Sanitary Fair*
(Apr. 18, 1864)

48 The realm of freedom does not commence until the point is passed where labor under the compulsion of necessity and of external utility is required. In the very nature of things it lies beyond the sphere of material production in the strict meaning of the term. Just as the savage must wrestle with nature, in order to satisfy his wants, in order to maintain his life and reproduce it, so civilized man has to do it and he must do it in all forms of society and under all possible modes of production. With his development the realm of natural necessity expands, because his wants increase; but at the same time the forces of production increase by which these wants are satisfied.

Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, VII, 48

49 In bourgeois society . . . the past dominates the present; in Communist society, the present dominates the past. In bourgeois society capital is independent and has individuality, while the living person is dependent and has no individuality.

And the abolition of this state of things is called by the bourgeois, abolition of individuality and freedom! And rightly so. The abolition of bourgeois individuality, bourgeois independence, and bourgeois freedom is undoubtedly aimed at.

By freedom is meant, under the present bour-

geois conditions of production, free trade, free selling and buying.

But if selling and buying disappears, free selling and buying disappears also. This talk about free selling and buying, and all the other "brave words" of our bourgeoisie about freedom in general, have a meaning, if any, only in contrast with restricted selling and buying, with the fettered traders of the Middle Ages, but have no meaning when opposed to the Communist abolition of buying and selling, of the bourgeois conditions of production, and of the bourgeoisie itself.

Marx and Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, II

50 What the proletarian needs, he can obtain only from this bourgeoisie, which is protected in its monopoly by the power of the State. The proletarian is, therefore, in law and in fact, the slave of the bourgeoisie, which can decree his life or death. It offers him the means of living, but only for an "equivalent" for his work. It even lets him have the appearance of acting from a free choice, of making a contract with free, unconstrained consent, as a responsible agent who has attained his majority.

Fine freedom, where the proletarian has no other choice than that of either accepting the conditions which the bourgeoisie offers him, or of starving, of freezing to death, of sleeping naked among the beasts of the forests! A fine "equivalent" valued at pleasure by the bourgeoisie. And if one proletarian is such a fool as to starve rather than to agree to the equitable propositions of the bourgeoisie, his "natural superiors," another is easily found in his place; there are proletarians enough in the world, and not all so insane as to prefer dying to living.

Engels, *The Condition of the Working-Class in England in 1844*, III

51 The state is the sum of all the negations of the individual liberty of all its members; or rather that of the sacrifices which all its members make, in renouncing one portion of their liberty to the profit of the common good. We have seen that, according to the individualist theory, the liberty of each is the limit or rather the natural negation of the liberty of all the others. Well! this absolute limitation, this negation of the liberty of each in the name of the liberty of all or of the common right—that is the State. Thus, where the State begins, individual liberty ceases, and vice versa.

Bakunin, *Philosophical Considerations*

52 The sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number, is self-protection. . . . The only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilised community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others.

Mill, *On Liberty*, I

53 As it is useful that while mankind are imperfect there should be different opinions, so it is that there should be different experiments of living; that free scope should be given to varieties of character, short of injury to others; and that the worth of different modes of life should be proved practically, when any one thinks fit to try them. It is desirable, in short, that in things which do not primarily concern others, individuality should assert itself.

Mill, *On Liberty*, III

54 There is no reason that all human existence should be constructed on some one or some small number of patterns. If a person possesses any tolerable amount of common sense and experience, his own mode of laying out his existence is the best, not because it is the best in itself, but because it is his own mode. Human beings are not like sheep. . . . The same things which are helps to one person towards the cultivation of his higher nature are hindrances to another. The same mode of life is a healthy excitement to one, keeping all his faculties of action and enjoyment in their best order, while to another it is a distracting burthen, which suspends or crushes all internal life. Such are the differences among human beings in their sources of pleasure, their susceptibilities of pain, and the operation on them of different physical and moral agencies, that unless there is a corresponding diversity in their modes of life, they neither obtain their fair share of happiness, nor grow up to the mental, moral, and æsthetic stature of which their nature is capable.

Mill, *On Liberty*, III

55 As soon as any part of a person's conduct affects prejudicially the interests of others, society has jurisdiction over it, and the question whether the general welfare will or will not be promoted by interfering with it, becomes open to discussion. But there is no room for entertaining any such question when a person's conduct affects the interests of no persons besides himself, or needs not affect them unless they like (all the persons concerned being of full age, and the ordinary amount of understanding). In all such cases, there should be perfect freedom, legal and social, to do the action and stand the consequences.

Mill, *On Liberty*, IV

56 The preventive function of government . . . is far more liable to be abused, to the prejudice of liberty, than the punitory function. . . . If either a public officer or any one else saw a person attempting to cross a bridge which had been ascertained to be unsafe, and there were no time to warn him of his danger, they might seize him and turn him back, without any real infringement of his liberty; for liberty consists in doing what one desires, and he does not desire to fall into the riv-

er. Nevertheless, when there is not a certainty, but only a danger of mischief, no one but the person himself can judge of the sufficiency of the motive which may prompt him to incur the risk: in this case, therefore (unless he is a child, or delirious, or in some state of excitement or absorption incompatible with the full use of the reflecting faculty), he ought, I conceive, to be only warned of the danger; not forcibly prevented from exposing himself to it.

Mill, *On Liberty*, V

57 First and foremost of the necessary means towards man's civilisation we must name *expansion*. The need of expansion is as genuine an instinct in man as the need in plants for the light, or the need in man himself for going upright. All the conveniences of life by which man has enlarged and secured his existence—railroads and the penny post among the number—are due to the working in man of this force or instinct of expansion. . . .

The love of liberty is simply the instinct in man for expansion. Not only to find oneself tyrannised over and outraged is a defeat to this instinct, but in general, to feel oneself over-tutored, over-governed, *sate upon* (as the popular phrase is) by authority, is a defeat to it.

Arnold, *Mixed Essays*, Pref.

58 It is by the goodness of God that in our country we have those three unspeakably precious things: freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the prudence never to practise either of them.

Mark Twain, *Pudd'nhead Wilson's New Calendar*, XX

59 Freedom means that the manly instincts that delight in war and victory have gained mastery over the other instincts—for example, over the instinct for 'happiness'. The man *who has become free*—and how much more the *mind* that has become free—spurns the contemptible sort of well-being dreamed of by shopkeepers, Christians, cows, women, Englishmen and other democrats.

Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols: Expeditions of an Untimely Man*

60 Liberty means responsibility. That is why most men dread it.

Shaw, *Man and Superman, Maxims for Revolutionists*

61 "Freedom" in its most abstract sense means the absence of external obstacles to the realization of desires. Taken in this abstract sense, freedom may be increased either by maximizing power or by minimizing wants. An insect which lives for a few days and then dies of cold may have perfect freedom according to the definition, since the cold may alter its desires, so that there is no moment when it wishes to achieve the impossible. Among

- human beings, also, this way of reaching freedom is possible. . . . It is obvious that a community who all wish to murder each other cannot be so free as a community with more peaceable desires. Modification of desire may, therefore, involve just as great a gain to freedom as increase of power.
Russell, *Sceptical Essays*, XIII
- 62 The freedom we should seek is not the right to oppress others, but the right to live as we choose and think as we choose where our doing so does not prevent others from doing likewise.
Russell, *Sceptical Essays*, XIII
- 63 Choice would hardly be significant if it did not take effect in outward action, and if it did not, when expressed in deeds, make a difference in things. Action as power would hardly be prized if it were power like that of an avalanche or an earthquake. The power, the ability to command issues and consequences, that forms freedom must, it should seem, have some connection with that something in personality that is expressed in choice. At all events, the essential problem of freedom, it seems to me, is the problem of the relation of choice and unimpeded effective action to each other. . . . There is an intrinsic connection between choice as freedom and power of action as freedom. A choice which intelligently manifests individuality enlarges the range of action, and this enlargement in turn confers upon our desires greater insight and foresight, and makes choice more intelligent. There is a circle, but an enlarging circle, or, if you please, a widening spiral.
Dewey, *Philosophies of Freedom*
- 64 If we want individuals to be free we must see to it that suitable conditions exist:—a truism which at least indicates the direction in which to look and move.
It tells us among other things to get rid of the ideas that lead us to believe that democratic conditions automatically maintain themselves, or that they can be identified with fulfillment of prescriptions laid down in a constitution. Beliefs of this sort merely divert attention from what is going on, just as the patter of the prestidigitator enables him to do things that are not noticed by those whom he is engaged in fooling. For what is actually going on may be the formation of conditions that are hostile to any kind of democratic liberties. This would be too trite to repeat were it not that so many persons in the high places of business talk as if they believed or could get others to believe that the observance of formulae that have become ritualistic are effective safeguards of our democratic heritage.
Dewey, *Freedom and Culture*, II
- 65 The only freedom that is of enduring importance is freedom of intelligence, that is to say, freedom of observation and of judgment exercised in behalf of purposes that are intrinsically worth while.
Dewey, *Experience and Education*, V
- 66 Freedom from restriction . . . is to be prized only as a means to a freedom which is power: power to frame purposes, to judge wisely, to evaluate desires by the consequences which will result from acting upon them; power to select and order means to carry chosen ends into operation.
Dewey, *Experience and Education*, V
- 67 To say that a man is free to choose to walk while the only walk he can take will lead him over a precipice is to strain words as well as facts.
Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, IV, 3
- 68 To admit ignorance and uncertainty in man while denying them to nature involves a curious dualism. Variability, initiative, innovation, departure from routine, experimentation are empirically the manifestation of a genuine *nisus* in things. At all events it is these things that are precious to us under the name of freedom. It is their elimination from the life of a slave which makes his life servile, intolerable to the freeman who has once been on his own, no matter what his animal comfort and security. A free man would rather take his chance in an open world than be guaranteed in a closed world.
Dewey, *Human Nature and Conduct*, IV, 3
- 69 A man lives not only his personal life, as an individual, but also, consciously or unconsciously, the life of his epoch and his contemporaries. . . . All sorts of personal aims, ends, hopes, prospects, hover before the eyes of the individual, and out of these he derives the impulse to ambition and achievement. Now, if the life about him, if his own time seem, however outwardly stimulating, to be at bottom empty of such food for his aspirations; if he privately recognize it to be hopeless, viewless, helpless, opposing only a hollow silence to all the questions man puts, consciously or unconsciously, yet somehow puts, as to the final, absolute, and abstract meaning in all his efforts and activities; then, in such a case, a certain laming of the personality is bound to occur, the more inevitably the more upright the character in question; a sort of palsy, as it were, which may even extend from his spiritual and moral over into his physical and organic part. In an age that affords no satisfying answer to the eternal question of "Why?" "To what end?" a man who is capable of achievement over and above the average and expected modicum must be equipped either with a moral remoteness and single-mindedness which is rare indeed and of heroic mould, or else with an exceptionally robust vitality.
Mann, *Magic Mountain*, II

70 If we have defined man's situation as a free choice, with no excuses and no recourse, every man who takes refuge behind the excuse of his passions, every man who sets up a determinism is a dishonest man.

The objection may be raised, "But why mayn't he choose himself dishonestly?" I reply that I am not obliged to pass moral judgment on him, but that I do define his dishonesty as an error. One cannot help considering the truth of the matter. Dishonesty is obviously a falsehood because it belies the complete freedom of involvement. On the same grounds, I maintain that there is also dishonesty if I choose to state that certain values exist prior to me; it is self-contradictory for me to want them and at the same state that they are imposed on me. Suppose someone says to me, "What if I want to be dishonest?" I'll answer, "There's no reason for you not to be, but I'm saying that that's what you are, and that the strictly coherent attitude is that of honesty."

Besides, I can bring moral judgment to bear. When I declare that freedom in every concrete circumstance can have no other aim than to want itself, if man has once become aware that in his forlornness he imposes values, he can no longer want but one thing, and that is freedom, as the basis of all values. That doesn't mean that he wants it in the abstract. It means simply that the ultimate meaning of the acts of honest men is the

quest for freedom as such. A man who belongs to a Communist or revolutionary union wants concrete goals; these goals imply an abstract desire for freedom; but this freedom is wanted in something concrete. We want freedom for freedom's sake and in every particular circumstance. And in wanting freedom we discover that it depends entirely on the freedom of others, and that the freedom of others depends on ours. Of course, freedom as the definition of man does not depend on others, but as soon as there is involvement, I am obliged to want others to have freedom at the same time that I want my own freedom. I can take freedom as my goal only if I take that of others as a goal as well. Consequently, when, in all honesty, I've recognized that man is a being in whom existence precedes essence, that he is a free being who, in various circumstances, can want only his freedom, I have at the same time recognized that I can want only the freedom of others.

Therefore, in the name of this will for freedom, which freedom itself implies, I may pass judgment on those who seek to hide from themselves the complete arbitrariness and the complete freedom of their existence. Those who hide their complete freedom from themselves out of a spirit of seriousness or by means of deterministic excuses, I shall call cowards.

Sartre, *Existentialism*