

1969-06-30

# Two USD Philosophers Debate Freedom and Authority

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## Digital USD Citation

Office of Public Information, "Two USD Philosophers Debate Freedom and Authority" (1969). *News Releases*. 236.  
<http://digital.sandiego.edu/newsreleases/236>

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# NEWS RELEASE



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### IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### TWO USD PHILOSOPHERS DEBATE FREEDOM AND AUTHORITY

SAN DIEGO, Calif.---High school students and their beards, Berkeley riots and dissent in the church are symptoms of a crisis on freedom and authority, contend two University of San Diego philosophers in a current lecture and discussion series at USD.

"The problem of unrest in the schools, in political institutions and in the church is, I think, a crisis in community -- a crisis in the relationship of the individual and the group," said the Reverend William L. Shipley.

"Any team requires implicit structure. Though needs are individual, a community means team effort, a working together in certain ways for an agreed upon goal, with some kind of leadership," he said.

Dr. John W. Swanke, sharing the series, but not necessarily the opinions of Father Shipley, held that freedom is limited by definition. "Authority is also a limitation on man, and law is how he expresses it." Swanke raised the problem of who referees the exercise of authority, citing the case of the Berkeley People's Park. "Does the governor have the right to call out the national guard against citizens," Swanke asked?

In a unique, three-way class discussion, the priest and Swanke, a professor of philosophy at USD, present their views to evoke student comment and rebuttal.

The class meets for five more weeks at the USD College for Men at 6:30 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays. The course began June 24. The credit course is also open to non-credit students at \$2.00 a session.

The rapid pace of change and the problems brought about by the population explosion are underlying factors in today's problem, Father Shipley contends. Though some adjust readily to change, others tend to be rigid and defensive. "Institutions by their very nature -- whether a political group, a church or school, are less able to change."

There is a crisis in leadership today, Father Shipley asserted. The new emphasis on sensitivity, on the self, on pleasure, all work to make

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teamwork difficult. Community depends on the cooperation of its members and today that cooperation is being undermined, and the community is endangered, he contends.

Tearing apart the word freedom into various components, Swanke took a different approach. He separated freedom into seven forms: the freedom of choice, of action, of power, from law, in law, from God, and the freedom created in necessity. "I have to do things because I am and because I am the man I am." In a dynamic, changing world even change is limited since not everything can be done, Swanke said.

"In philosophy we must deal with the real world," he said, "with the rights of students to step on my rights and my right to defend my rights. What power is to prevent me and my family from being exploited by Madison Avenue? Does the television in the living room violate my rights?"

"Does being in a community mean that I lose my individual rights? I scream at my children and the neighbor's children when they chalk on my car, even if they are not all my children."

"One's relations to a child and to the community will define neighborhood and brotherly love," Swanke added.

Though freedom is a limitation, freedom is a requisite of moral activity," according to Swanke. "Freedom is a limited reality. I am six feet tall and though I can grow to be six foot one, I am not free to be six foot."

The two philosophers differ on the freedom of choice.

"Choice is an illusion," Swanke held. "It is not me who made me what I am, and I am as free to change as I was to make myself. My ability to modify is influenced by what I am to start with. My goals are not chosen by me. I have as much chance of being Mother of the Year as of being the Pope. No man is even free to do without other men because he is a man."

"The freedom of choice is important," Father Shipley countered, "but

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of choice

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not as much as the freedom of action - the freedom to love. The freedom of choice is a way of achieving the freedom to love. To say that a man is so programmed that he makes no choice of his own is to make man like a robot.

"Freedom is a universal experience of people, we like to feel we are free. We cannot really define freedom, cannot prove we are free. However, if one has not experienced some freedom, then it cannot be defined for you. The highest degree of freedom is the ability to love and the opportunity to love."

The difference in their views, Swanke said, is in what each understands by freedom and a difference on labeling freedom.

Future sessions in the series will deal with questions such as Has modern man outgrown law?, We've got our rights!, Society, a limit on Freedom?, Obligation: obedience vs. conscience?, Leadership as authority?, Cooperation: capitulation to coercion?, Civil rights vs. civil authority?, Teaching or indoctrination? and Do freedom and authority conflict?

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