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History and Anthropology

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Political Revolutions

# Compare analysis of the Constitution of the United States and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen. What is each document attempting to convey?

The constitution of the United States includes a series of articles that guarantee human rights provisions. These articles have been amended and are in line with the customary laws throughout the world. Some also believe that the US constitution inhibits some of the very ideal formations of human rights provision (“The Constitution of the United States”). These constitutional provisions are enacted through a concrete Congressional procedure. The Supreme Court of the United States also overlooks the provision of these laws. Interestingly, unlike many other historical documents, the Constitution of the United States guarantees an inalienable right to its citizens (*Avalon Project - Declaration of the Rights of Man - 1789*). Different from it, many other laws from that time were specific to males or females.

On another hand, the deceleration of rights of men and citizens passed and enacted by the French National Assembly in 1789, defined and categorized the individual and collective rights of Men and other citizens during the times of French revolution. However at that time, some delegates held the Magna Carta supreme and expressed confidence over Magna Carta, and other documents like declaration of Independence, but the officials paid a little heed toward these documents. Finally, the French constituent assembly passed the declaration on August 1789. Some of the important clauses of the Declaration of Rights of Men and Citizens included that no person will be accused or imprisoned (except those established by law) and taxation will be raised by the common consent.

An analysis of both documents suggests that human rights were not defined in a subjective and clear manner. For example, the declaration of rights of men conditioned freedom with the absence of certain circumstances. Similarly, the constitution of the United States preserves the provision of human rights concerning certain conditions. Although many institutions guarantee the provision of human rights in the United States but conditioning rights subject to certain provisions suggest a subjective nature of both the documents.

# What was the rationale for the publication of the Declaration of the Rights of Women? How does it compare to the Declaration of the Rights of Man?

Declaration of Rights of Women published in France was no different in spirit to the declaration of rights of men. Gouge's manifesto who held extreme importance during those times illustrated that owing to an improving social structure and circumstances, the increasing role of women in national and international affairs cannot be neglected. In addition to this, there were many social movements that started propagating some charters concerning an increased social status to women. One reason for their such characterization was the passage of the declaration of the rights of men, which remained the ultimate source of direction for them.

Concerning the social structure of that time, it remains evident that social classification was largely changing. There remained wide scope for women and they practically manifested this. They were largely becoming interested in taking leadership roles, they started raising their voices for justice and they started rejecting minor roles in social affairs (*Declaration of the Rights of Woman, 1791*). The historical documents from that time also suggested that those who remained at the helm of affairs were convinced that women have a major say in matters of social and political importance. It was for such reason that the preamble of the Gouges pamphlet included that women should be made part of the National Assembly.

The declaration of rights of men and the declaration of rights of women are although two different documents, and the basic layout of the documents remain unlike, but they relate to each other in many ways. For example, the passage of the later ignited an urge in women to raise voice for themselves. Similarly, both documents included a voice that those who come forward in meeting national needs should be compensated for their works. Lastly, the major difference exists in the spirit of both the documents; the declaration of rights of men was conditioned with certain clauses, whereas the declaration of rights of women was to providing rights to women.

# Discuss the significance and influence of John Locke on these documents.

John Locke is one of the great writers who influenced policy making through his writings. The concept of Freeborn Englishmen influenced many historical documents and limited those documents form making larger claims (*Locke, Second Treatise, 1690*). This period of enlightenment helped changed the English traditions and those who restricted themselves to reforms helped changed the American offshoots. The declaration of independence which called the human rights inalienable was the foundation of all kinds of governments. The constitution of the United States, the declaration of rights of men and the declaration of rights of women all remained alienated to each other. Primarily these documents talked about human rights and maintained the provisions of these rights unalienable to any phenomenon.

Although at times these documents were being written, there was an increasing trend of change and reformations. Much literature was being developed and people were largely getting influenced by the changes being made in the society. John Locke who has widely contributed to writing about human rights and has influenced many coming writers. His conceptualization of human rights was not narrow, rather expanded. It was his ideas that influenced many coming people and literary writings. The American Constitution which keeps the provision of human rights unchallengeable and absolute draws its spirit from Locke’s interpretation of Human Rights. Similarly, both other documents base the ideas of human rights different and separate from the social conceptualization of things. It is the primary way John Locke’s interpretation of human rights has influenced the three documents. Not only in this manner, but rather many other enlightenment writers have also propagated the provision of human rights like how John Locke has called out.

Works Cited:

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