



I wrote this five years ago during my service, as I felt the need to express my feelings, secretly, about being gay and in the military:

As a citizen of a democratic society, with freedom as its foundation and core, I stand, proud to serve my country and defend all this nation stands for. I am prepared to fight for and protect freedom in our homeland. I am also prepared to fight for others, so that those who do not understand or feel the slightest bit of freedom may share and know the freedoms that we have been blessed with as Americans. Yet in that alone, there is a world of irony: I am not free, we are not free.

Freedom is defined as having liberty and privilege — independence of thought, choice and action; the ability to move or act without interference, coercion or restraint. Freedom implies that determining what is right to do or think is an internal matter, whether personally or politically, and is not to be decided by an outsider. Liberty suggests having the power to do those things that freedom permits one to do.

Sure, in America we are free, free to vote a single person into office whose job in and of itself is to limit the so-called freedoms that we stand and fight to protect. Yes, I suppose we do have a say as a whole, but it is society that chooses. Who is society, anyway? I am definitely not society.

Love is defined as profound affection and deep devotion between people, involving compassion and concern for others. To be in love is to feel enamored with love.

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