
Subject: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Spoony](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 14:25:07 GMT

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another of spoony's "had a thought..." moments; strap yourself in, because it might be a bumpy ride.

it should be fairly evident that i'm a secularist. now, the first thing secularists usually say when advancing their arguments is something along the lines of "of course have freedom of religion, but..."

here's a question. why is it freedom of religion? why isn't it opinion or belief? let's start from the assumption that in any society that wants to call itself modern and free, you can't have thoughtcrime. orwell put the name to what must be the most extreme form of totalitarianism and dictatorship; the idea that you can be convicted because of what you think, what you privately want. that must be inalienable. (i could digress and say that several religions do teach that thoughtcrime is indeed a crime, Islam and Christianity being the most obvious examples... once again one side of the chess game says you aren't allowed to move on his side of the board... but that's besides the point.

actually, no, it isn't)

but religion isn't just what you think; it's generally a combination of thoughts AND actions. sometimes those actions are clearly in violation of laws and what are generally considered to be morals... i'll just pluck the islamic commandment to kill homosexuals as an example, it's as good as any. well, if we have freedom of religion... don't we have to allow them to do so? oh dear...

so why isn't it freedom of opinion or of belief rather than freedom of religion? you cannot allow religious freedom without severely hampering a whole bunch of human rights and democratic principles...

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [GEORGE ZIMMER](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 14:32:22 GMT

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Although I disagree with your beliefs, I agree that it should be freedom of beliefs. I mean shit, should we allow someone to eat someone else because it's "part of their religion"?

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Spoony](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 14:36:37 GMT

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which of my beliefs do you disagree with?

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [cheesesoda](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 14:39:56 GMT

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Now I just think you're going off on a stupid tangent, Spooky.

Why is it "freedom of religion"? Simple. Just like Americans have the right to own guns, the right to free speech, the right to vote, the right to deny unwarranted searches, etc... that doesn't mean you have to exercise the right.

I believe, "freedom of opinion" is covered by free speech, anyway. However, say that it WAS freedom of "opinion" rather than "religion". What do we end up with? We end up with state religions, but the ability to disagree with them. Think of it as a slightly less violent version of Constantine forcing Romans to be Christian. Therefore, nobody's given the choice to practice differently. It'd be just like work. You are forced to protocol, and you can bitch about it, but in this case you don't have the ability to quit.

Edit: As for allowing people to eat others because of their religion... that's just stupid. That's a clear impediment of another's rights and it would never be legalized even under the guise of "religion".

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Ryu](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 14:41:05 GMT

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you've got a point.. I'd like to point out though that America certainly lost the "freedom of religion" right when you put "In God We Trust" on your money.

imma' stating the obvious..

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Spooky](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 16:23:15 GMT

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cheesesoda wrote on Sun, 12 October 2008 09:39Now I just think you're going off on a stupid tangent, Spooky.

Why is it "freedom of religion"? Simple. Just like Americans have the right to own guns, the right to free speech, the right to vote, the right to deny unwarranted searches, etc... that doesn't mean you have to exercise the right.

that's just nonsense. The right to own a gun is not the same as the right to shoot somebody; in exactly the way as the right to personally believe whether there is a god is not the same as to use your beliefs to interfere with other peoples' lives.

cheesesoda wrote on Sun, 12 October 2008 09:39I believe, "freedom of opinion" is covered by free speech, anyway. However, say that it WAS freedom of "opinion" rather than "religion". What

do we end up with? We end up with state religions, but the ability to disagree with them. Think of it as a slightly less violent version of Constantine forcing Romans to be Christian. Therefore, nobody's given the choice to practice differently. It'd be just like work. You are forced to protocol, and you can bitch about it, but in this case you don't have the ability to quit. secularism means you don't end up with a state religion...

cheesesoda wrote on Sun, 12 October 2008 09:39Edit: As for allowing people to eat others because of their religion... that's just stupid. That's a clear impediment of another's rights and it would never be legalized even under the guise of "religion".

Just to take one example, would you not agree that circumcision is a clear impediment of another's rights? Shouldn't a person have the right to decide for yourself, once you've reached an age where you're capable of making and expressing an informed decision, whether you want a scalpel taken to your genitalia?

Why's it even allowed? Religion. Why do authorities turn a blind eye to the thousands of girls who are victims of the female version (and like I said before in other threads, if there is anything more disgusting and barbaric going on in this day and age than that, I'm unaware of it)? Putting a stop to that should be the absolute number one fucking priority in this country as far as I'm concerned, but nobody cares. Why? Religion.

Imagine for a second if a political party, not a religion, did this. Or imagine if a political party said that people who don't vote for them are in for an eternity of torture. (The only flaw is that children can't vote, otherwise I'd have said "children" rather than "people" since the appalling doctrine of telling people they'll be tortured for ever after they're dead is even worse when an adult 'authority figure' applies it to the innocent, unformed mind of a child).

It is not hard to imagine the outcry if it was a political party rather than a religion who did these despicable things religions do. When it's religion, there seems to be a get out of jail free card. Why?

Little exercise for my fellow Brits. Next time you read Islam doing something unpleasant, a Muslim suing somebody because they're "offended" or demanding Islamic values enforced onto other people etc... read the article and note the automatic deference to religion. Then read it again but mentally substitute "Islam" for "the BNP", and think about whether the outcome would be the same. I've started doing this myself recently. Since nobody has ever successfully explained why religion actually deserves the automatic respect it always seems to get, try mentally substituting religions for political parties. It isn't hard to see the elephant when you do.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [cheesesoda](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 16:48:39 GMT

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You're clearly not understanding what the fuck I'm talking about.

I'm not making an argument for religion. Like you, I hate religion. I am fully aware of the horrors that go about under the guise of religion. You don't have to convince me that religion is dangerous, but that's not the point I'm making.

As I said, the reason why it's freedom of "religion" instead of "beliefs" or "opinion" is simple. The founding fathers worded that intentionally.

Using the second amendment right as an example that you misinterpreted... just because you have the right to bear arms does not mean you're forced to own a gun. You can choose to waive that right to own a gun. You, again, have the right to freedom of speech. You can shout to the high heavens, or you can censor yourself. You can choose to be a part of a religion, or you can choose to ignore religion completely.

If they had used the word opinion or beliefs, that still opens the doors widely for a state religion. Good luck trying to get everybody to believe in secularism, and good luck getting politicians to abandon their beliefs when their constituents are too fucking stupid to vote for a candidate that renounces religion. There's a reason why neo-cons have been trying to label Obama as a Muslim... because Christianity is held in high regard by both liberals and conservatives.

What if the founding fathers said you had a right to protect yourself instead of the right to bear arms? You'd see gun-hating liberals trying to get rid of guns because guns aren't the only thing that is needed to protect one's self. If they said the right to beliefs or opinion, they would still say that you have the right to believe what you want as long as you're a part of the state religion.

Don't think state religions are unusual or improbable because history would laugh in your face.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?
Posted by [Herr Surth](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 17:03:34 GMT
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Quote:
As I said, the reason why it's freedom of "religion" instead of "beliefs" or "opinion" is simple. The founding fathers worded that intentionally. founding fathers?

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?
Posted by [cheesesoda](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 17:07:51 GMT
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I'm talking about the "freedom of religion" in the U.S. Constitution. The founding fathers are the few men that pretty much led the charge against the British and signed the Declaration of Independence and drafted the U.S. Constitution.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?
Posted by [futura83](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 18:54:36 GMT
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cheesesoda wrote on Sun, 12 October 2008 18:07 I'm talking about the "freedom of religion" in the

U.S. Constitution. The founding fathers are the few men that pretty much led the charge against the British and signed the Declaration of Independence and drafted the U.S. Constitution.

Yes, but by 'state' religion, spoony means the 'official' religion of a country, not a specific state in America...so how the founding fathers worded it doesn't affect the entire world.

I'm mostly against religion, as their idea of right and wrong can get so twisted it's unbelievable. What's annoying is when Religion dictates media, or so to speak. By that, I mean TV can't show a specific thing just because it's against a certain religion...or any belief actually, not just religion.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?
Posted by [cheesesoda](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 19:12:57 GMT
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facepalm

You've completely missed the point. Even if I DID mean individual states having religions, that's beside the fucking point.

My whole argument was about how "freedom of religion" makes more sense than "freedom of opinion" and "freedom of beliefs". Then I made a comment about how, at least for America, the wording was intentional and makes sense.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?
Posted by [jnz](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 19:55:41 GMT
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You're supporting "freedom to religion" implying that anyone can believe in any religion, but you're also saying they can't practice it. Big contradiction there, and since they can't practice it, there is no freedom to religion.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?
Posted by [cheesesoda](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 20:34:18 GMT
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Nobody has said that. Nobody has implied that.

You two have absolutely no fucking clue what you're talking about.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [futura83](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 21:24:41 GMT

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Alright, you asked for it:

cheesesoda wrote on Sun, 12 October 2008 15:39

Why is it "freedom of religion"? Simple. Just like Americans have the right to own guns, the right to free speech, the right to vote, the right to deny unwarranted searches, etc... that doesn't mean you have to exercise the right.

You start that paragraph off like you might be going someone then don't.

Quote:

I believe, "freedom of opinion" is covered by free speech, anyway. However, say that it WAS freedom of "opinion" rather than "religion". What do we end up with? We end up with state religions, but the ability to disagree with them. Think of it as a slightly less violent version of Constantine forcing Romans to be Christian. Therefore, nobody's given the choice to practice differently. It'd be just like work. You are forced to protocol, and you can bitch about it, but in this case you don't have the ability to quit.

How would that work out? I mean, you say changing it to 'freedom of opinion' would make it a state religion where, essentially, people would be forced to believe whatever the highest authority believes....i see contradiction there mate.

Quote:

Edit: As for allowing people to eat others because of their religion... that's just stupid. That's a clear impediment of another's rights and it would never be legalized even under the guise of "religion".

Nobody here said that was right.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [cheesesoda](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 21:30:41 GMT

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Holy shit, you're an idiot. I really didn't want to have to result to insults, but holy shit.

The first thing you quoted is all that really needed to be said. Changing it from freedom of "religion" to freedom of "opinion" or "beliefs" opens up the law for the government to establish a state religion.

Trust me, if you give the government an inch of power, they'll take a mile. It's just how government is. It's evil, and it will always be evil. It's power-hungry, and if you give it a chance to seize power

and control the people, it will.

You don't seem to get it, at all. Having the freedom to think differently is not the same as having the freedom to practice differently. If the government controls your actions, having the ability to think differently really doesn't mean shit.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [futura83](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 21:37:30 GMT

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cheesesoda wrote on Sun, 12 October 2008 22:30 Holy shit, you're an idiot. I really didn't want to have to result to insults, but holy shit.

I notice you do that alot anyway.

Quote:

The first thing you quoted is all that really needed to be said. Changing it from freedom of "religion" to freedom of "opinion" or "beliefs" opens up the law for the government to establish a state religion.

Trust me, if you give the government an inch of power, they'll take a mile. It's just how government is. It's evil, and it will always be evil. It's power-hungry, and if you give it a chance to seize power and control the people, it will.

You don't seem to get it, at all. Having the freedom to think differently is not the same as having the freedom to practice differently. If the government controls your actions, having the ability to think differently really doesn't mean shit.

You could say they control us now anyway. I mean, i'm 17 so can't legally drink yet if i wanted too, which is the government controlling me.

There are some 'religious practises' people would find inhumane, and i still don't see how your reductio ad absurdum is right...

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [cheesesoda](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 21:41:50 GMT

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How in the Hell is that reductio ad absurdum? History is a great teacher, and all throughout history we can see how willing government is to force people to adhere to religious practices that it deems correct.

When did I ever imply that the government doesn't already control us? I'd argue to the contrary. Which is why freedom of religion was established in the first place to help keep the government

from controlling every aspect of one's life. Besides, one of the main reasons why America was colonized in the first place, besides fur trade, was to get away from state religion.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [futura83](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 21:46:00 GMT

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cheesesoda wrote on Sun, 12 October 2008 22:41: How in the Hell is that reductio ad absurdum? History is a great teacher, and all throughout history we can see how willing government is to force people to adhere to religious practices that it deems correct.

History might say that, but in these modern times there would be a lot more civil unrest as there is one hell of a lot more varieties in how people think.

We aren't living in a time where a leader's will is law, there are a lot more complications than that and control over us at the level you say would always have far too much opposition.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Aircraftkiller](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 21:47:38 GMT

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Ryu wrote on Sun, 12 October 2008 10:41: you've got a point.. I'd like to point out though that America certainly lost the "freedom of religion" right when you put "In God We Trust" on your money.

imma' stating the obvious..

"imma" stating the obvious? What's good, my nigga?

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [cheesesoda](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 21:49:21 GMT

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insert_name_here wrote on Sun, 12 October 2008 17:46: cheesesoda wrote on Sun, 12 October 2008 22:41: How in the Hell is that reductio ad absurdum? History is a great teacher, and all throughout history we can see how willing government is to force people to adhere to religious practices that it deems correct.

History might say that, but in these modern times there would be a lot more civil unrest as there is one hell of a lot more varieties in how people think.

We aren't living in a time where a leader's will is law, there are a lot more complications than that and control over us at the level you say would always have far too much opposition.

You're assuming this because we're already living in a society with these precautions as law.

What if freedom of religion was never given?

The whole idea that we allow inhumane activities because of religion is a little absurd. In fact, allowing freedom of religion actually helps to protect people from this. Ignoring the subject of circumcision, you're not allowed to sacrifice your neighbor for the sake of your religion because that would be forcing him to adhere to your religion's practices. That wouldn't be allowed under freedom of religion.

As for circumcision, it's no longer a practice of religion, for the most part. It's so common that it would still exist even as Christianity dwindles. It's a prime example of tradition of religion becoming a societal norm without the religion having any influence over the act.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [futura83](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 21:58:20 GMT

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cheesesoda wrote on Sun, 12 October 2008 22:49insert_name_here wrote on Sun, 12 October 2008 17:46cheesesoda wrote on Sun, 12 October 2008 22:41How in the Hell is that reductio ad absurdum? History is a great teacher, and all throughout history we can see how willing government is to force people to adhere to religious practices that it deems correct.

History might say that, but in these modern times there would be a lot more civil unrest as there is one hell of a lot more varieties in how people think.

We aren't living in a time where a leader's will is law, there are a lot more complications than that and control over us at the level you say would always have far too much opposition.

You're assuming this because we're already living in a society with these precautions as law.

What if freedom of religion was never given?

That's a good question.

What could have happened is:

Religion was very strict, and people lived in fear, which would cause more country rivalries as they have different beliefs and there could be wars....so basically how it was before freedom of speech.

But saying that, I'll admit I don't know what truly came first; freedom of religion or freedom of speech.

I'd say that (in America) it was freedom of speech, as I know in the 1800s Mormons were prosecuted for their beliefs (namely marrying multiple women...the term of which slips my mind) whereas freedom of speech was done by the founding fathers years before.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [cheesesoda](#) on Sun, 12 Oct 2008 22:06:46 GMT

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One thing you have to realize is that the government doesn't always listen to law, too. Unfortunately, you can only put things in law, regulating government in hopes that government officials adhere to the laws. In America, we've seen the Constitution become less and less important.

Freedom of Religion and Freedom of Speech, in America, came hand-in-hand with the Constitution. However, as I said above, that doesn't mean the government obeys the restrictions it's given... as you referenced with the persecution of Mormons, and as we see with the persecution/prejudice of Islam.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Canadacdn](#) on Mon, 13 Oct 2008 02:50:15 GMT

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Oh, fuck. Here we go again...

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [R315r4z0r](#) on Mon, 13 Oct 2008 05:37:46 GMT

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I really don't understand the point and meaning of the question of this topic.

Freedom of opinion is the right to express yourself and think what you want, see the 1st Amendment.

Religion is just another word for belief. The word "religion" just means an idea or basis for believes. A religion does not have to be some "holy, I believe in god" thing... a religion is just something you believe in.

Now the reason why it doesn't say freedom of belief over religion is because:

1. Beliefs are forms of opinions which are already granted to us when it says "freedom of speech" and what not.
 2. Beliefs can range from anything... be it choosing if someone is lying or not, choosing what you think happened at a certain event, or choosing an idea for were humans came from. Religion is more or less limited to a specific belief.
 3. When you break it down, "religion" and "beliefs" really are the same thing... so when it comes down to it, saying "religion" instead of "beliefs" is just a matter of word selection.
-

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Spoony](#) on Mon, 13 Oct 2008 11:27:52 GMT

cheesesoda wrote on Sun, 12 October 2008 11:48 Using the second amendment right as an example that you misinterpreted... just because you have the right to bear arms does not mean you're forced to own a gun. You can choose to waive that right to own a gun. You, again, have the right to freedom of speech. You can shout to the high heavens, or you can censor yourself. You can choose to be a part of a religion, or you can choose to ignore religion completely. your complete lack of understanding of this entire thread is very nicely illustrated by this paragraph. Read each post from me again until you get it. I am talking about the automatic deference we seem to give to religion to interfere in other people's lives, when no secular excuse would be allowed. I am talking about the fact that while letting someone believe there is a God is okay because the Bible says so, letting someone kill homosexuals because the Bible says that too is not okay. What's the difference? Not religion, clearly.

cheesesoda wrote on Sun, 12 October 2008 11:48 If they had used the word opinion or beliefs, that still opens the doors widely for a state religion. Good luck trying to get everybody to believe in secularism, and good luck getting politicians to abandon their beliefs when their constituents are too fucking stupid to vote for a candidate that renounces religion. There's a reason why neo-cons have been trying to label Obama as a Muslim... because Christianity is held in high regard by both liberals and conservatives.

The first sentence in this paragraph is the really puzzling one. Freedom from religion would open the door to a state religion... okiedokie. Freedom from religion is the POLAR OPPOSITE.

cheesesoda wrote on Sun, 12 October 2008 11:48 If they said the right to beliefs or opinion, they would still say that you have the right to believe what you want as long as you're a part of the state religion.

When you pay taxes and extraordinary amounts of money go to undeserved religious causes, when religions are allowed to get away in court with the kind of crimes no secular organisation would... you are part of the state religion. Just because you can't see it doesn't mean it's not there.

cheesesoda wrote on Sun, 12 October 2008 11:48 Don't think state religions are unusual or improbable because history would laugh in your face.

you're really, really confused. I never said state religions are unusual and improbable. I am arguing against them, dumbass. Secular democracies, they're the unusual and improbable ones; there's only one country's constitution in the history of the world (AFAIK) which says anything about church and state, and it clearly isn't being followed.

cheesesoda wrote on Sun, 12 October 2008 11:48 My whole argument was about how "freedom of religion" makes more sense than "freedom of opinion" and "freedom of beliefs". Then I made a comment about how, at least for America, the wording was intentional and makes sense.

Then you allow anyone to carry out any immoral action as long as they remember to say it's part of their religion?

cheesesoda wrote on Sun, 12 October 2008 11:48 Changing it from freedom of "religion" to freedom of "opinion" or "beliefs" opens up the law for the government to establish a state religion. You already have several state religions. You just can't see them.

cheesesoda wrote on Sun, 12 October 2008 11:48 You don't seem to get it, at all. Having the freedom to think differently is not the same as having the freedom to practice differently.

that's the point I've been unsuccessfully trying to get through to you, einstein...

cheesesoda wrote on Sun, 12 October 2008 11:48 The whole idea that we allow inhumane activities because of religion is a little absurd. In fact, allowing freedom of religion actually helps to protect people from this. Ignoring the subject of circumcision, you're not allowed to sacrifice your neighbor for the sake of your religion because that would be forcing him to adhere to your religion's practices. That wouldn't be allowed under freedom of religion.

As for circumcision, it's no longer a practice of religion, for the most part. It's so common that it would still exist even as Christianity dwindles. It's a prime example of tradition of religion becoming a societal norm without the religion having any influence over the act. sigh...

read this again. Spooky said, regarding circumcision:

Why's it even allowed? Religion. Why do authorities turn a blind eye to the thousands of girls who are victims of the female version (and like I said before in other threads, if there is anything more disgusting and barbaric going on in this day and age than that, I'm unaware of it)? Putting a stop to that should be the absolute number one fucking priority in this country as far as I'm concerned, but nobody cares. Why? Religion.

Imagine for a second if a political party, not a religion, did this. Or imagine if a political party said that people who don't vote for them are in for an eternity of torture. (The only flaw is that children can't vote, otherwise I'd have said "children" rather than "people" since the appalling doctrine of telling people they'll be tortured for ever after they're dead is even worse when an adult 'authority figure' applies it to the innocent, unformed mind of a child).

It is not hard to imagine the outcry if it was a political party rather than a religion who did these despicable things religions do. When it's religion, there seems to be a get out of jail free card. Why?

clearly you've actually read my posts, otherwise you surely wouldn't have the amazing nerve to say things like "Holy shit, you're an idiot. I really didn't want to have to result to insults, but holy shit", "You don't seem to get it, at all", and "You're clearly not understanding what the fuck I'm talking about.". I can only, therefore, assume you have read the post about female circumcision and are unmoved by it.

Firstly, here are some of your responses to that very post whose absurdity I could barely add to if I tried:

"The whole idea that we allow inhumane activities because of religion is a little absurd."

I would be very surprised to find a single case of female genital mutilation, out of the thousands that have been inflicted in this country and are still being inflicted today (in the 21st century in one of the most advanced nations in the world...) that was done for a reason other than Islam.

"In fact, allowing freedom of religion actually helps to protect people from this."

Uh no, the only reason our authorities do nothing about it is because we mustn't offend the religious. Freedom of religion? Children are allowed to be indoctrinated before they're old enough to really decide for themselves what's what, and you think there is such a thing as freedom of religion?

"As for circumcision, it's no longer a practice of religion, for the most part. It's so common that it would still exist even as Christianity dwindles. It's a prime example of tradition of religion becoming a societal norm without the religion having any influence over the act."
Again, the complete lack of response to the really horrific version (where the victims are female) puzzles me. And yet if a law was passed saying you can't take a scalpel to a child's genitalia, and you need informed, adult consent of the person to do anything of the sort, it's not hard to picture the rage it would generate from Christians.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Spoony](#) on Mon, 13 Oct 2008 11:35:33 GMT

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R315r4z0r wrote on Mon, 13 October 2008 00:37: I really don't understand the point and meaning of the question of this topic.

Freedom of opinion is the right to express yourself and think what you want, see the 1st Amendment.

Religion is just another word for belief. The word "religion" just means an idea or basis for beliefs. A religion does not have to be some "holy, I believe in god" thing... a religion is just something you believe in.

Now the reason why it doesn't say freedom of belief over religion is because:

1. Beliefs are forms of opinions which are already granted to us when it says "freedom of speech" and what not.
 2. Beliefs can range from anything... be it choosing if someone is lying or not, choosing what you think happened at a certain event, or choosing an idea for where humans came from. Religion is more or less limited to a specific belief.
 3. When you break it down, "religion" and "beliefs" really are the same thing... so when it comes down to it, saying "religion" instead of "beliefs" is just a matter of word selection.
- You are correct about only one thing in this paragraph... namely the first sentence.

Religion is not just an 'opinion'. If it was, the world would be an infinitely better place. It also tends to be a set of actions that are instructed (or forbidden), and the problem comes when they're imposed on others (and this absolutely does include children).

Stay with me here. If your religion makes you believe God made the world 6000 years ago, that's fine with me (just don't teach it in science class to innocent, unformed minds). If your religion instructs you to kill homosexuals... this is clearly a different scenario, but the difference between the two is NOT RELIGION. The justification for both the two is religious. The only difference is the difference between thinking something for yourself while doing no harm to anyone, and actively taking away the rights of others. If you permit the one under the pretext of religion, you surely have to permit the other. That's why "freedom of religion" is nonsense; you'd have to allow all sorts of atrocities. Which, of course, we do.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Ryu](#) on Mon, 13 Oct 2008 11:50:13 GMT

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TL;DR: Spooky is saying if religion is forcing you to harm others because they don't share the same beliefs or remove body parts that you can't get back and you're forced to believe/ carry out certain acts/ forced acts upon yourself without full understanding because the religion you believes in says so, that's sick to the bone and someone should do something about it?

I'm onto a winner here, yes?

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [cheesesoda](#) on Mon, 13 Oct 2008 13:49:50 GMT

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Spoonyyour complete lack of understanding of this entire thread is very nicely illustrated by this paragraph. Read each post from me again until you get it. I am talking about the automatic deference we seem to give to religion to interfere in other people's lives, when no secular excuse would be allowed. I am talking about the fact that while letting someone believe there is a God is okay because the Bible says so, letting someone kill homosexuals because the Bible says that too is not okay. What's the difference? Not religion, clearly.

I already made it clear what I'm talking about. I was arguing the choice of wording. I'll admit, I didn't fully read your post, so I went on what I read of your last paragraph. However, I did make an edit to a later post that addressed the atrocities being permitted by "freedom of religion". The law doesn't allow for that. The government may look the other way, as it does time and time and time and time and fucking time again, but it's not because of any sloppy wordage used, at least, in the U.S. Constitution.

SpoonyThe first sentence in this paragraph is the really puzzling one. Freedom from religion would open the door to a state religion... okiedokie. Freedom from religion is the POLAR OPPOSITE.

Read it again. I said freedom of BELIFS or OPINION (without freedom of religion) would open the door for a state religion. I guess we're both guilty of ignoring what the other has said.

Spoonyyou pay taxes and extraordinary amounts of money go to undeserved religious causes, when religions are allowed to get away in court with the kind of crimes no secular organisation would... you are part of the state religion. Just because you can't see it doesn't mean it's not there. Err, when did I ever disagree with that? I refer to my first point of this post... just because it's law doesn't change a fucking thing, unfortunately. One can only hope and pray that a government follows the restrictions its given. Obviously, it doesn't. My only point has been that freedom of "opinion" and "beliefs" would make state religion legal. State religion is illegal under "freedom of religion", but again, that doesn't mean the government will actually abide by the law it's supposedly held to. Just look at the Democrats AND Republicans. They fucking hate the Constitution, apparently, because they constantly wipe their asses with it.

SpoonyThen you allow anyone to carry out any immoral action as long as they remember to say

it's part of their religion?

No. I'm not advocating any terrifying action that's put under the guise of religion. That's just fucking absurd. By now, you should know what I meant.

SpoonyYou already have several state religions. You just can't see them.

I never meant for that to imply that the law is being followed. I was just talking about what the law was MEANT to prevent.

Spoonythat's the point I've been unsuccessfully trying to get through to you, einstein...

I was just answering the question "why is it freedom of religion instead of beliefs or opinion?"

I was trying to say that the law doesn't allow for those atrocities. I never denied that they happen, nor that it is done under the guise of religion. I know what people do because of their backwoods, retarded belief systems. Just look at what happened to Matthew Shepherd and what the Westboro Baptist Church did at his funeral. I get it. I was never denying it. Still, the law of "freedom of religion" doesn't allow it. Corrupt politicians and idiotic constituents blindly following their faiths do.

Again, I've been arguing the semantics of why "freedom of religion" is more air tight to protect people than "freedom of beliefs" or "freedom of opinion". I never said they wouldn't be ignored. In fact, I've been repeatedly saying that law is constantly ignored for the sake of pathetic agendas of religions and their faithful.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [R315r4z0r](#) on Mon, 13 Oct 2008 16:36:12 GMT

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Spoony wrote on Mon, 13 October 2008 07:35You are correct about only one thing in this paragraph... namely the first sentence.

Religion is not just an 'opinion'. If it was, the world would be an infinitely better place. It also tends to be a set of actions that are instructed (or forbidden), and the problem comes when they're imposed on others (and this absolutely does include children).

Stay with me here. If your religion makes you believe God made the world 6000 years ago, that's fine with me (just don't teach it in science class to innocent, unformed minds). If your religion instructs you to kill homosexuals... this is clearly a different scenario, but the difference between the two is NOT RELIGION. The justification for both the two is religious. The only difference is the difference between thinking something for yourself while doing no harm to anyone, and actively taking away the rights of others. If you permit the one under the pretext of religion, you surely have to permit the other. That's why "freedom of religion" is nonsense; you'd have to allow all sorts of atrocities. Which, of course, we do.

I'm still not understanding..

Why do you think that? It makes no sense?

You're basically saying something like "freedom to choose a car" should be "freedom to choose a vehicle." Just because there are different types of vehicles doesn't mean it still isn't a car. That just doesn't make sense.

Different religion is a different religion, a different belief.

You can't say freedom of belief because belief is an opinion that is granted for anything you care to believe in. A religion is a specific kind of belief. Just like saying you can't say freedom to choose a vehicle over a car because there are other such vehicles out there other than cars, be it planes, boats, trains, ect.

Someone believing in 1 religion and someone believing in another are two different religions, or two different beliefs. Just because they are both a specific type of belief, doesn't mean they are the same.

Perhaps it would be easier to say "You have the freedom to believe in any religion you want." However, I do see your point in that being contradictory if your religion takes you to remove rights of other people. However that is not a choice between "belief" and "religion." You can believe in a religion, but you don't have to carry it out. Or maybe if you think about it this way, it will make more sense: In the United States, you have the freedom to kill someone if you wanted to. Is it illegal? Yes. Will you get arrested and be punished for it? Yes, but that still doesn't deny the fact that you are still able to physically do it.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Spoony](#) on Mon, 13 Oct 2008 16:54:51 GMT

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cheesesoda wrote on Mon, 13 October 2008 09:49Read it again. I said freedom of BELIFS or OPINION (without freedom of religion) would open the door for a state religion. But you already have one, as do we... the only difference is yours is 'unofficial', but more influential.

cheesesoda wrote on Mon, 13 October 2008 09:49My only point has been that freedom of "opinion" and "beliefs" would make state religion legal. Listen to what you're actually saying. We can't allow people true freedom from religion because if we do, they won't have freedom from religion. Well, admittedly it's hard to debunk an argument like that, if only because it isn't an argument.

cheesesoda wrote on Mon, 13 October 2008 09:49No. I'm not advocating any terrifying action that's put under the guise of religion. That's just fucking absurd. By now, you should know what I meant.

yet you still seem strangely unmoved by either of the two examples I gave, and you claimed that no such thing is happening at all, bizarrely.

cheesesoda wrote on Mon, 13 October 2008 09:49SpoonyYou already have several state religions. You just can't see them.

I never meant for that to imply that the law is being followed. I was just talking about what the law was MEANT to prevent.

Well, if it's obviously failing utterly, what's the harm in getting rid of it and replacing it with something infinitely more sensible and less open to exploitation?

R315r4z0r

wrote I'm still not understanding..

Why do you think that? It makes no sense?

You're basically saying something like "freedom to choose a car" should be "freedom to choose a vehicle" because just because there are different types of vehicles doesn't mean it still isn't a car. That just doesn't make sense.

Different religion is a different religion, a different belief.

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Perhaps it would be easier to say "You have the freedom to believe in any religion you want." However, I do see your point in that being contradictory if your religion takes you to remove rights of other people. However that is not a choice between "belief" and "religion." You can believe in a religion, but you don't have to carry it out.

You say you don't understand, but you also say this:

However, I do see your point in that being contradictory if your religion takes you to remove rights of other people.

That is virtually the entire point.

"You can believe in a religion, but you don't have to carry it out"... well, there you have it. If we had freedom of belief, I might happen to believe that all chavs need a good stabbing, yet I would be quite rightly locked up for carrying it out. Right now, we instead have 'freedom of religion'. That means if a muslim believes he is entitled to mutilate a poor girl's genitals, we mustn't prevent him exercising his religious beliefs. Again, try my political party exercise; try swapping "muslim" for "democrat". When a religious figure very nicely warns children that they'll suffer eternal roasting torment if they don't abide by the correct religion, the emperor's clothes look wonderful. Swap the religious figure for someone from the Democrats, and swap the "believe in Christianity" for "vote for us"... and the emperor's suddenly naked, you see it for the horrific, disgusting thing it is.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [cheesesoda](#) on Mon, 13 Oct 2008 17:13:26 GMT

SpoonyBut you already have one, as do we... the only difference is yours is 'unofficial', but more influential.

I'm sure I agreed to this in my replies...

SpoonyListen to what you're actually saying. We can't allow people true freedom from religion because if we do, they won't have freedom from religion. Well, admittedly it's hard to debunk an argument like that, if only because it isn't an argument.

If you give people freedom of religion, you're theoretically giving them freedom from religion. Obviously, that doesn't always work out the way it should, but that's the case for any "freedom of" regarding beliefs and opinions.

Spoonyyet you still seem strangely unmoved by either of the two examples I gave, and you claimed that no such thing is happening at all, bizarrely.

I claimed it's not being protected under "freedom of religion". It's being protected by governments blindly following illegal state religions.

SpoonyWell, if it's obviously failing utterly, what's the harm in getting rid of it and replacing it with something infinitely more sensible and less open to exploitation?

How is it less open to exploitation? I already explained why it would open up the possibility of a LEGAL state religion. Government will exploit whatever loophole it has, and the southern states here in America would be quick to ban evolution from being taught in school, put the Ten Commandments all throughout courthouses and block any and all social progress while doing it under the name of God.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [R315r4z0r](#) on Mon, 13 Oct 2008 17:30:48 GMT

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Consequences for doing something are not one in the same with the freedom allowed to do that something.

You can follow a religion that takes you to kill 100 people, but you would be arrested for breaking the law of killing someone... not following your religion.

Just like how many of my teachers in school used to say "You are allowed to fall asleep in my class, but you are expected to put in just as much effort into everything as everyone else." So you have the freedom to do what you want, but the consequences are still standing.

Like I said before, you are free to kill someone if you wanted to, be it for religion or your own personal gain, but does that mean you are immune to the consequences? No.

So if there is a religion that requires you to kill a bunch of people, you are free to believe in it, however that doesn't mean you won't be punished for it.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?
Posted by [Rocko](#) on Tue, 14 Oct 2008 02:35:18 GMT
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dam spoony kicked cheesesoda's ass LMAO

fuk religion

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?
Posted by [cheesesoda](#) on Tue, 14 Oct 2008 04:51:25 GMT
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Rocko wrote on Mon, 13 October 2008 22:35dam spoony kicked cheesesoda's ass LMAO

fuk religion

Care to actually add something to the conversation, or are you content being a troll?

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?
Posted by [Spoon](#) on Tue, 14 Oct 2008 20:31:48 GMT
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R315r4z0r wroteConsequences for doing something are not one in the same with the freedom allowed to do that something.

You can follow a religion that takes you to kill 100 people, but you would be arrested for breaking the law of killing someone... not following your religion.

Just like how many of my teachers in school used to say "You are allowed to fall asleep in my class, but you are expected to put in just as much effort into everything as everyone else." So you have the freedom to do what you want, but the consequences are still standing.

Like I said before, you are free to kill someone if you wanted to, be it for religion or your own personal gain, but does that mean you are immune to the consequences? No.

So if there is a religion that requires you to kill a bunch of people, you are free to believe in it, however that doesn't mean you wont be punished for it.

Read my post about female genital mutilation. I was somewhat gobsmacked at cheesesoda's lack of response to it, so I very carefully repeated it and highlighted it.

I would rank this practice, which is happening IN THIS COUNTRY, TODAY, as the most awful and barbaric practice currently happening in the world. We overlook it for one reason: religion.

I'll keep repeating this until you notice it, if you like.

cheesesoda wrote on Mon, 13 October 2008 12:13How is it less open to exploitation? I already explained why it would open up the possibility of a LEGAL state religion. Government will exploit

whatever loophole it has, and the southern states here in America would be quick to ban evolution from being taught in school, put the Ten Commandments all throughout courthouses and block any and all social progress while doing it under the name of God.

So in a nutshell, your argument is: we should continue to allow freedom of religion despite its massive flaws, because if we don't it'll permit a state religion even though you have one anyway.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [R315r4z0r](#) on Tue, 14 Oct 2008 20:49:37 GMT

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Spoony wrote on Tue, 14 October 2008 16:31 Read my post about female genital mutilation. I was somewhat gobsmacked at cheesosoda's lack of response to it, so I very carefully repeated it and highlighted it.

I would rank this practice, which is happening IN THIS COUNTRY, TODAY, as the most awful and barbaric practice currently happening in the world. We overlook it for one reason: religion.

I'll keep repeating this until you notice it, if you like.

I find it horribly disgusting as well, but no matter how disturbed we may think it is, we can't outlaw something because we don't like it. Just because you don't like something, doesn't mean it should be banned, no matter if you are right or wrong.

Quite honestly, there really isn't any law saying they can't do that, and that's why they are allowed to do it.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Spoony](#) on Tue, 14 Oct 2008 21:06:21 GMT

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R315r4z0r wrote on Tue, 14 October 2008 15:49 I find it horribly disgusting as well, but no matter how disturbed we may think it is, we can't outlaw something because we don't like it. Just because you don't like something, doesn't mean it should be banned, no matter if you are right or wrong.

Quite honestly, there really isn't any law saying they can't do that, and that's why they are allowed to do it. [/color]

oh my.

i'm gonna be really generous and assume you don't actually know what the process is.

the process is the surgical removal of the clitoris and the labia, and then the vagina being completely sewn up with twine, to stay stitched up until the girl is married, and her husband will have the priviledge of breaking it.

anyone reading this thread; consider this act (if you can do so without being physically sick, cos I nearly was when I first heard about it), then read the following two quotes:

R315r4z0r wrote on Tue, 14 October 2008 15:49no matter how disturbed we may think it is, we can't outlaw something because we don't like it.

R315r4z0r wrote on Tue, 14 October 2008 15:49Just because you don't like something, doesn't mean it should be banned, no matter if you are right or wrong.

my word...

you think the reason i'm outraged about this is because I don't like it? uh no, I don't like it but it's not that. it's because I have the odd feeling THE INNOCENT DEFENCELESS VICTIM doesn't like it.

still, you must be right; how can we outlaw this? we must allow sick, evil men to mutilate defenceless young girls (when they almost certainly have no choice in the matter) in a way that is undoubtedly incredibly painful, extremely humiliating, and destructive to their future sex life, and probably leaves them mentally scarred for life. Doesn't mean it should be banned!

this is the 21st century. this is england, one of the most advanced nations in the world, and supposedly one of the nations which most values human rights and freedoms. AND WE ALLOW THIS. sometimes I literally feel like crying.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [R315r4z0r](#) on Tue, 14 Oct 2008 22:05:40 GMT

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Just because you think it is sick, disturbing and evil doesn't mean it is and it doesn't mean we should outlaw it. The victim may not like it either but it is still the same as above. Because one person doesn't like it doesn't make it illegal. If they don't want it to happen to them, then they just have to change religions.

They follow a religion in which that is practiced. The act of actually doing it is not illegal and the right for them to practice it for religious purposes is legal, therefore they are allowed to do it and if you don't follow their religion, you have no legitimate say on whether it is right or not. You can express your disgust with it because of the first amendment, but it wont be taken seriously because you don't follow said religion.

Welcome to America!

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [cheesesoda](#) on Tue, 14 Oct 2008 22:16:46 GMT

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SpoonySo in a nutshell, your argument is: we should continue to allow freedom of religion despite its massive flaws, because if we don't it'll permit a state religion even though you have one anyway.

I don't see how changing it is going to do anything. We both agree that the U.S. has a state

religion, even though it's clearly illegal thanks to the Constitution. No matter what we do, local and state governments will overlook religious atrocities because of blind faith. You're not going to fix a broken cell phone by replacing the battery.

Honestly, religion is ingenious. They teach their followers to put their faith first in their life, so that whenever the religious control is questioned, the loyal followers get all offended and dig in their heels.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Starbuzz](#) on Wed, 15 Oct 2008 04:01:53 GMT

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R315r4z0r wrote on Tue, 14 October 2008 17:05 Just because you think it is sick, disturbing and evil doesn't mean it is and it doesn't mean we should outlaw it. The victim may not like it either but it is still the same as above. Because one person doesn't like it doesn't make it illegal. If they don't want it to happen to them, then they just have to change religions.

They follow a religion in which that is practiced. The act of actually doing it is not illegal and the right for them to practice it for religious purposes is legal, therefore they are allowed to do it and if you don't follow their religion, you have no legitimate say on whether it is right or not. You can express your disgust with it because of the first amendment, but it won't be taken seriously because you don't follow said religion.

Welcome to America!

First, he is not in America; he is in the UK: a country that is getting invaded from within.

You are completely missing Spooky's point. This is clearly an example of when a religion is automatically immune to scrutiny.

A young child cannot change religions to escape circumcision which is made through the decision of the parents.

What Spooky wants (or what I think he wants) is some sort of secular rule or just a solid thought that decrees and overrides any religious/cultural norms with a stance that every human being has the right of choice and that the basic human anatomy be preserved and as such PARENTAL CONSENT be outlawed in decisions that negatively scars the body AND/OR reduces/deprives any function of any part of the human body. And that life-long changes to the physical body be made ONLY through SELF-CONSENT of the person in question when of mature responsible age UNLESS otherwise parental consent is necessary in some cases to avert other risks.

Female circumcision is a bastardly act and is even more hideous and damaging than a male circumcision. A circumcised male would have difficulty masturbating due to loss of foreskin (he can still use lubrication) among other inconveniences. But he is still able to have pleasurable sex because the sensitive areas of the penis (glans) are not damaged by circumcision.

However, in a female circumcision, the clitoris (which is equal to the stimulating glans in a penis)

is cut off removing/depriving the woman to feel/enjoy sexual pleasure.

Whats more, the labia minora is cut off as well. The woman is reduced to having a hole, literally. And worse, this is sewn shut using the labia majora. And causing tremendous pain as well.

I do not know what age you are but I cannot imagine a erect penis that cannot feel pleasure. That would be the ultimate form of deprivation. The same can be said for a woman who has undergone circumcision as a child. So should such deprivation be visited upon a child when the child has not had a chance to even know what it is getting deprived off?

I have only explained the procedure since you think it is not wrong. It maybe "right" for religious reasons but I feel it is certainly wrong on so many other levels and should be banned.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [R315r4z0r](#) on Wed, 15 Oct 2008 04:26:55 GMT

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You should of stopped at the word "risks." Because up until there I can agree with you.

But the rest of your post just went downhill. I don't like it as much as you don't like it, if not more, but I respect other's rights, as well as my own, enough to not question their actions or reasons.

But anyway, back onto the actual topic. It is a bit of a dilemma. The reason why there is a freedom of religion is because people from other countries were persecuted for following different religions. America is supposed to be a place were someone can take any religion and practice it any way they want without being discriminated against. However, some times religions can lead to breaking the law. But if someone is arrested for doing something like that, then that means the right "freedom of religion" is a lie.

So which is why I think that instead of religion requirements, the right of freedom of religion and any laws they might conflict with be completely separate.

What I mean is this: you are free to practice any religion you want without being discriminated or persecuted. However, if you are caught doing something illegal, whether you are following your religion or not, you would be arrested. You would be arrested for breaking the law, and breaking the law alone. The fact you were following your religion would have nothing to do with it.

To put it into a perspective: If you follow a religion in which it involves dismemberment of human parts, you cannot be arrested or persecuted for doing so. If you literally act and follow through with the dismemberment of human parts, then for that you can be arrested, as something that has nothing to do with religion.

Doing such allows the freedom of religion and still guarantees it, but it also upholds such laws and rights of the individual without conflicting between the two rights.

Like I said above, actions are not one in the same with consequences. You are free to do what you like, but consequences can and will be implied if needed.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Starbuzz](#) on Wed, 15 Oct 2008 06:08:52 GMT

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R315r4z0r wrote on Tue, 14 October 2008 21:26 You should of stopped at the word "risks." Because up until there I can agree with you.

But the rest of your post just went downhill. I don't like it as much as you don't like it, if not more, but I respect other's rights, as well as my own, enough to not question their actions or reasons.

I don't write posts to look cool. People are generally shy and coy when it comes to talking about sexuality. I hold nothing back and use plain language. Besides you seem to be a bit insensitive to circumcision and it's adverse effects (so why I included detailed description). You cannot agree with the first part of my post and disagree with the rest unless otherwise you meant you were disturbed by the down-to-earth plain language explanation of circumcision.

Anyway, moving on, how can you respect someone's rights if that very same person is taking away the right of someone else? I don't understand! It's like knowingly letting a thief steal just because the thief is your friend but ignoring the fact he stole from an innocent man.

As much as you respect others to let them follow their religion, you are ignoring the fact they are destroying someone else (their OWN child) in the process of upholding the religion.

R315r4z0r wrote on Tue, 14 October 2008 21:26 But anyway, back onto the actual topic. It is a bit of a dilemma. The reason why there is a freedom of religion is because people from other countries were persecuted for following different religions. America is supposed to be a place were someone can take any religion and practice it any way they want without being discriminated against.

Very true but AFAIK, this was applied to religion and worship and any rituals. So, a Hindu can immigrate to the United States, buy a plot of land, build a giant colorful statue, cover it with garlands, start a massive candlefest, firecrackers ftw, and begin chanting away into the night. Oh yes, THAT is allowed and SHOULD be allowed.

I should be allowed to put a giant cross in my front yard EVEN if it causes an eyesore to the Atheist nextdoor. Those rights cannot be taken away.

If my religion demands I buy a dog and beat it to the point of death on Friday mornings with a stick in my front yard, and you were my neighbor, what would go through your mind? Wouldn't you think it was inhumane? Now just switch that dog with a child and think of circumcision. It works the same way. Should it still be allowed?

What we must realize is that the religious rights cannot be applied when it comes to matters of protecting an individual's rights whether it is a child or not. The "freedom of religion" right is taken

advantage of by religions and atrocities committed under this is stupidly ignored by the rest of the population; atrocities we still don't think of as atrocities.

What I HATE about America is that a damn bald eagle has more rights than some HUMAN BEINGS. There needs to be a PLAIN non-religious standard when dealing with the human body and issues of life and personal rights.

R315r4z0r wrote on Tue, 14 October 2008 21:26 However, some times religions can lead to breaking the law. But if someone is arrested for doing something like that, then that means the right "freedom of religion" is a lie.

So which is why I think that instead of religion requirements, the right of freedom of religion and any laws they might conflict with be completely separate.

What I mean is this: you are free to practice any religion you want without being discriminated or persecuted. However, if you are caught doing something illegal, whether you are following your religion or not, you would be arrested. You would be arrested for breaking the law, and breaking the law alone. The fact you were following your religion would have nothing to do with it.

I agree fully but the underlined part is a given! Police catch criminals due to their criminal activity, not because they are Black!

I colored the part wherein lies the major problem. Even now in this day and age, we are still learning what is good and what is bad.

Well, we have not yet defined our boundaries. We still have not realized that circumcision intrudes and mutilates an individual. Once we have defined that as illegal and that it impedes one's rights (I do not know how long it will take), then religion/culture can't be used as excuses to follow the dreaded practice; at least in the so called "civilized" nations.

R315r4z0r wrote on Tue, 14 October 2008 21:26 To put it into a perspective: If you follow a religion in which it involves dismemberment of human parts, you cannot be arrested or persecuted for doing so. If you literally act and follow through with the dismemberment of human parts, then for that you can be arrested, as something that has nothing to do with religion.

I may have misunderstood this line. What are you saying here? A religion that orders barbaric practices can be followed as long as the practice is not put in use OR are you saying such barbaric practices can be done within religion but would warrant an arrest if done in a non-religious setting?

But just incase I misunderstood it, both scenarios and both are unacceptable:

So my religion orders me that I have to cut off my child's little fingers at the 5th birthday. Now, I can be a follower of the religion BUT choose to ignore that law that tells me to cut off the finger. And I would be fine, is that what you are saying? Then it should be OK. But guess what?

I may have chosen to not follow along that requirement but what is stopping some other fundamental nut of the same religion to cut off his child's fingers at the 5th year? Afterall the

religion instructs him to do so, right? You see what I mean? This is where a secular law that supercedes the religious law is required.

BUT if what you are saying above is what I fear, then that's absolutely ridiculous and I can't agree at all. Think for yourself this hypothetical scenario in the year 2008:

The Mayans have survived through the 21st century. And many Mayans have immigrated to the United States. They are upto to their sick ways offering humans as sacrifices and forced bloodletting.

Would or should the police intravene? What YOU are basically saying is that, no, the Mayans are in the middle of a religious ritual, bloodletting and human sacrifices to please their gods and since religious freedoms should not be questioned, the police should get lost.

I find that absolutely ridiculous. And you imply that if that very same Mayan went out at night into a bar and cut someone's heart out, he should be arrested and charges filed! WHAT A FREAKING DOUBLE STANDARD!

There is a reason why humans were barbarians once upon a time. There was killing, cannibalism, and butcherous behavior. As we learned over the years and became more and more civilized, we cut down on these animalistic acts. Now while we in the civilized Western worlds seem to be better off than before, we still have a long way to go.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Spoony](#) on Wed, 15 Oct 2008 15:10:45 GMT

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R315r4z0r wrote on Tue, 14 October 2008 23:26 Just because you think it is sick, disturbing and evil doesn't mean it is and it doesn't mean we should outlaw it. The victim may not like it either but it is still the same as above. Because one person doesn't like it doesn't make it illegal. If they don't want it to happen to them, then they just have to change religions.

They follow a religion in which that is practiced. The act of actually doing it is not illegal and the right for them to practice it for religious purposes is legal, therefore they are allowed to do it and if you don't follow their religion, you have no legitimate say on whether it is right or not. You can express your disgust with it because of the first amendment, but it wont be taken seriously because you don't follow said religion.

Let me isolate the massive flaw.

They follow a religion in which that is practiced.

If they don't want it to happen to them, then they just have to change religions.

Here's another example of the elephant in the room, the emperor's new clothes. We are talking about CHILDREN here. When you refer to a 'Muslim child' (or a 'Christian child') for that matter, what you actually mean is 'a child who has been brought up in a Muslim family' (same for Christian). It is absurd to label a child according to the religious beliefs of their parents; any more than you would call a child a 'Republican child', a 'Marxist child' or, indeed, an 'atheist child' because their parents were. A child, no matter their intelligence, doesn't have their ideas about

religion worked out yet, just like they haven't decided where they stand on economics or foreign policy.

The problem is further complicated by the obvious difficulty a child would have if they DID want to 'change their religion'. In Islam, apostasy (i.e. renouncing your religion) is punishable by death. And it is enforced all the time. Imagine yourself to be a 'Muslim girl' who either doesn't really buy the whole Allah business or thinks Mohammed's revolting teachings are no way to live your life (i.e. imagine you actually have some moral strength in you). There'd be a very real fear of being killed if you spoke up about it; you might probably think it's better to stay quiet and wait for the scalpel.

With Christianity it isn't quite so brutish, but there's still clearly a big problem in society for those who want to say they don't really feel a part of the religion they've been brought up into.

I am absolutely convinced that the world would be a far better place if there was no religious teaching at all until a child had reached an age where they could give it the kind of critical reception it deserves. Absolutely convinced of it. Again, try the 'political party' thought exercise I mentioned on the previous page.

R315r4z0r wrote on Tue, 14 October 2008 23:26 You should of stopped at the word "risks." Because up until there I can agree with you.

But the rest of your post just went downhill. I don't like it as much as you don't like it, if not more, but I respect other's rights, as well as my own, enough to not question their actions or reasons. You used the word 'rights'. It sounds like you're saying a parent has the right to mutilate their daughter's genitalia in a manner which is hideous, extremely painful, damaging to her future sex life, probably a risk to child-bearing, and irreversible. Is that an unfair assumption?

R315r4z0r wrote on Tue, 14 October 2008 23:26 What I mean is this: you are free to practice any religion you want without being discriminated or persecuted. However, if you are caught doing something illegal, whether you are following your religion or not, you would be arrested. You would be arrested for breaking the law, and breaking the law alone. The fact you were following your religion would have nothing to do with it.

To put it into a perspective: If you follow a religion in which it involves dismemberment of human parts, you cannot be arrested or persecuted for doing so. If you literally act and follow through with the dismemberment of human parts, then for that you can be arrested, as something that has nothing to do with religion.

Yes, that's what I've been saying; but to have this, you quite simply have to accept that the whole 'freedom of religion' is an illusion. 'Freedom of belief', on the other hand, covers it all very nicely.

pawkyfox wrote

A young child cannot change religions to escape circumcision which is made through the decision of the parents.

bingo. (I would go further on that point to argue that the child isn't really religious at all until he/she is older and capable of really thinking it through for himself anyway... to say otherwise is basically to admit that religion is not really a matter of intellectual choice but something you can be forced into, and while that's certainly the case in the Muslim world it embarrasses me to think it's the

case in the UK or US)

pawkyfox wrote What Spooky wants (or what I think he wants) is some sort of secular rule or just a solid thought that decrees and overrides any religious/cultural norms with a stance that every human being has the right of choice and that the basic human anatomy be preserved and as such PARENTAL CONSENT be outlawed in decisions that negatively scars the body AND/OR reduces/deprives any function of any part of the human body. And that life-long changes to the physical body be made ONLY through SELF-CONSENT of the person in question when of mature responsible age UNLESS otherwise parental consent is necessary in some cases to avert other risks.

more or less... like I said, I would go further. see above re: religious labelling of children, and my 'political party' thought exercise.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [cheesesoda](#) on Wed, 15 Oct 2008 15:55:25 GMT

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Spooky With Christianity it isn't quite so brutish, but there's still clearly a big problem in society for those who want to say they don't really feel a part of the religion they've been brought up into. I'm glad I don't have that problem. I proudly admit that I'm no longer a Christian, and I argue with Fundamentalist Christians all of the time.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [R315r4z0r](#) on Wed, 15 Oct 2008 16:12:35 GMT

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pawkyfox wrote on Wed, 15 October 2008 02:08 I don't write posts to look cool. People are generally shy and coy when it comes to talking about sexuality. I hold nothing back and use plain language. Besides you seem to be a bit insensitive to circumcision and it's adverse effects (so why I included detailed description). You cannot agree with the first part of my post and disagree with the rest unless otherwise you meant you were disturbed by the down-to-earth plain language explanation of circumcision.

Anyway, moving on, how can you respect someone's rights if that very same person is taking away the right of someone else? I don't understand! It's like knowingly letting a thief steal just because the thief is your friend but ignoring the fact he stole from an innocent man.

As much as you respect others to let them follow their religion, you are ignoring the fact they are destroying someone else (their OWN child) in the process of upholding the religion. I didn't imply it didn't "look cool." Nor did I imply that I was "generally shy and coy when it comes to talking about sexuality." What I mean by "going downhill" is that you sounded smart in the first half of your post and the next half just sounded like baseless facts that you were shooting out that had nothing to do with the topic.

"Besides you seem to be a bit insensitive to circumcision and it's adverse effects (so why I

included detailed description)."

What?! There are no major upfront effects at all. Apparently, since you already seem to know so much about me, I guess I don't need to tell you that I am circumcised! I have absolutely no problem with either circumcision or no circumcision at all.

pawkyfox wrote on Wed, 15 October 2008 02:08

I should be allowed to put a giant cross in my front yard EVEN if it causes an eyesore to the Atheist nextdoor. Those rights cannot be taken away.

If my religion demands I buy a dog and beat it to the point of death on Friday mornings with a stick in my front yard, and you were my neighbor, what would go through your mind? Wouldn't you think it was inhumane? Now just switch that dog with a child and think of circumcision. It works the same way. Should it still be allowed?

What we must realize is that the religious rights cannot be applied when it comes to matters of protecting an individual's rights whether it is a child or not. The "freedom of religion" right is taken advantage of by religions and atrocities committed under this is stupidly ignored by the rest of the population; atrocities we still don't think of as atrocities.

What I HATE about America is that a damn bald eagle has more rights than some HUMAN BEINGS. There needs to be a PLAIN non-religious standard when dealing with the human body and issues of life and personal rights.

Again, you are just going on end, ignoring everything else, and saying things. This will be the 3rd time I'm saying this in this thread:

ACTIONS are not the same as the CONSEQUENCES that are implied. You are FREE TO DO WHAT YOU WANT, whether you break a law or not, whether you're following a religion or not, you are free to do what ever you want, but if what you do breaks a law, regardless if you had the freedom to do the action, you will still suffer the consequences.

If someone follows a religion that requires them to beat up dogs, they have every right to follow it if they want. But the second they DO beat up a dog, they can be arrested for animal cruelty, not because they are following their religion.

pawkyfox wrote on Wed, 15 October 2008 02:08I agree fully but the underlined part is a given!
Police catch criminals due to their criminal activity, not because they are Black!

I colored the part wherein lies the major problem. Even now in this day and age, we are still learning what it good and what is bad.

Well, we have not yet defined our boundaries. We still have not realized that circumcision intrudes and mutilates an individual. Once we have defined that as illegal and that it impedes one's rights (I do not know how long it will take), then religion/culture can't be used as excuses to follow the dreaded practice; at least in the so called "civilized" nations.

What?! You are agreeing with what I said but still criticizing it. It's a given? Not according to what you said in the beginning of your post with not allowing people to follow religions that inflicts harm other people.

Learning what is good and bad? Now you are just making stuff up. If a RELIGION brings someone to KILL someone, a law which is written that you are NOT ALLOWED to do, then they will be arrested. Or are you implying that killing someone is something that you are unsure if it is ok to do or not? What about beating animals? Mutilating kids?

pawkyfox wrote on Wed, 15 October 2008 02:08I may have misunderstood this line. What are you saying here? A religion that orders barbaric practices can be followed as long as the practice is not put in use OR are you saying such barbaric practices can done within religion but would warrant an arrest if done in a non-religious setting?

But just incase I misunderstood it, both scenarios and both are unacceptable:

So my religion orders me that I have to cut off my child's little fingers at the 5th birthday. Now, I can be a follower of the religion BUT choose to ignore that law that tells me to cut off the finger. And I would be fine, is that what you are saying? Then it should be OK. But guess what?

I may have chosen to not follow along that requirement but what is stopping some other fundamental nut of the same religion to cut off his child's fingers at the 5th year? Afterall the religion instructs him to do so, right? You see what I mean? This is where a secular law that supercedes the religious law is required.

It's the first thing you said, not the second. They can follow a religion no matter what it entails but once they break a law then they can be arrested.

It is acceptable because you just can't seem to get the idea that freedom of religion is not immunity to consequence! If you get arrested cutting your kids fingers off, it's because you were committing child abuse. The fact you were following your religion means nothing!

Just because you are being arrested for committing a crime during a religious ceremony, doesn't mean you are being discriminated against because your religion!

@ spoony, I would reply to your post, but I'm in a rush to go somewhere, perhaps when I get home.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Spoon](#) on Wed, 15 Oct 2008 17:49:45 GMT

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R315r4z0r wrote on Wed, 15 October 2008 11:12What?! There are no major upfront effects at all. Apparently, since you already seem to know so much about me, I guess I don't need to tell you that I am circumcised! I have absolutely no problem with either circumcision or no circumcision at all.

oh my.

how many times must either pawky or myself repeat the brutish details of female circumcision in the space of one thread?

it involves the excision of the clitoris and the labia (sometimes with a sharp stone). it's irreversible, undoubtedly extremely painful, humiliating in a way that is barely possible to imagine, destructive to the girl's future sex life, and probably hazardous with regard to childbirth.

but still, there are 'no major upfront effects'. I really do feel like punching you.

as for the male version, it's not anywhere near as horrific and barbaric as the female version, but it's still immoral to do it to someone else without their informed consent (and a child is not capable of giving that). But oh, you were circumcised and you don't mind it, so obviously it's fine for everyone else too.

Listen, asshole, if as an informed adult you wanna take a scalpel to your own genitalia, or sign something saying a doctor can do it for you, you go ahead for all I care. It is IMMORAL AND CRIMINAL (in the moral sense, if not perhaps the legal) to do it to someone else without their informed consent.

R315r4z0r wrote on Wed, 15 October 2008 11:12 Again, you are just going on end, ignoring everything else, and saying things. This will be the 3rd time I'm saying this in this thread: ACTIONS are not the same as the CONSEQUENCES that are implied. You are FREE TO DO WHAT YOU WANT, whether you break a law or not, whether you're following a religion or not, you are free to do what ever you want, but if what you do breaks a law, regardless if you had the freedom to do the action, you will still suffer the consequences.

If someone follows a religion that requires them to beat up dogs, they have every right to follow it if they want. But the second they DO beat up a dog, they can be arrested for animal cruelty, not because they are following their religion.

R315r4z0r wrote on Wed, 15 October 2008 11:12 Learning what is good and bad? Now you are just making stuff up. If a RELIGION brings someone to KILL someone, a law which is written that you are NOT ALLOWED to do, then they will be arrested. Or are you implying that killing someone is something that you are unsure if it is ok to do or not? What about beating animals? Mutilating kids?

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Just because you are being arrested for committing a crime during a religious ceremony, doesn't mean you are being discriminated against because your religion!
you're evidently blind to the fact that WE DO ALLOW people to get away with obvious crimes on the sole pretext of religion. Female genital mutilation is just one example (and probably the most appalling)

R315r4z0r wrote on Wed, 15 October 2008 11:12 spoony, I would reply to your post, but I'm in a rush to go somewhere, perhaps when I get home.

no problem, but before you do, go talk to a woman - any woman - a friend, your girlfriend, your mother, anyone - describe the process of female circumcision to her as pawkyfox and myself have described it, and then say to her the following two things (which you have already said)

"There are no major upfront effects at all."

"I have absolutely no problem with either circumcision or no circumcision at all."
Then ask her if she agrees with you.

I would carry out the same exercise myself, only to be honest I don't dare.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [R315r4z0r](#) on Thu, 16 Oct 2008 00:12:41 GMT

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Go over my thread again and tell me once were I said "female" circumcision.

I'm not talking about female circumcision, I'm talking about male circumcision, hence me replying to pawky who was talking about male circumcision. Not to mention the fact that I'm not a female and I said I was circumcised.

And also, I don't know why you are arguing with me, we have the same opinion, it just took me a while to understand what you were trying to say. (Hence my proposal that I've already explained twice)

However, I will explain myself one more time. Note this is a COMPROMISE OF WHAT SHOULD BE not WHAT IS.

If you are arrested, you are arrested for breaking the law. No matter what reasons you had for breaking the law, you broke the law. So if you kill someone because it is apart of your religion... then, religion aside, you are being arrested for murder. As long as mention of religion is not included in the reason for arresting you, then you are not being denied your freedom of religion.

However, I do not see how changing it to "freedom of belief" will change anything. You are free to follow a religion that asks you to mutilate someone. But you can also simply just believe in mutilating someone for some cause. Either way, it's the same situation and result. Which brings me back to my ignorant first post; why even bother?

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Rocko](#) on Thu, 16 Oct 2008 02:24:18 GMT

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religion is kinda like lettin a monkey loose in the doctors office with a stapler

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Muad Dib15](#) on Thu, 16 Oct 2008 03:30:57 GMT

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Female circumsision sounds awful.

Aside from that this is what Spoony believes in...THOUGHT POLICE. Read 1984.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Spoon](#) on Thu, 16 Oct 2008 12:19:06 GMT

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R315r4z0r wrote on Thu, 16 October 2008 02:12Go over my thread again and tell me once were I said "female" circumcison.

I'm not talking about female circumcison

We were, because you said that we weren't allowing people to commit atrocious acts under the pretext of religion. Female genital mutilation is about as shocking an example to the contrary as I can think of.

R315r4z0r wrote on Thu, 16 October 2008 02:12I'm talking about male circumcison, hence me replying to pawky who was talking about male circumcison. Not to mention the fact that I'm not a female and I said I was circumcised.

Yet my point still stands. You were circumcised and you don't mind it; fine. When you go on to say there's nothing wrong with the practice because of that, that's where you're an idiot.

R315r4z0r wrote on Thu, 16 October 2008 02:12However, I do not see how changing it to "freedom of belief" will change anything. You are free to follow a religion that asks you to mutilate someone. But you can also simply just believe in mutilating someone for some cause. Either way, it's the same situation and result. Which brings me back to my ignorant first post; why even bother?

sigh

one last time

because (typically) religions are not just beliefs, they're also actions.

Muad-Dib wroteAside from that this is what Spoony believes in...THOUGHT POLICE. Read 1984.
!facepalm

read this extract from the very first post in the thread:

let's start from the assumption that in any society that wants to call itself modern and free, you can't have thoughtcrime. orwell put the name to what must be the most extreme form of totalitarianism and dictatorship; the idea that you can be convicted because of what you think, what you privately want.

you say you've read 1984, so surely it's evident to you that I am specifically talking about thoughtcrime and saying it cannot be enforced in any free society.

I go on to make another point on the same topic...

i could digress and say that several religions do teach that thoughtcrime is indeed a crime, Islam and Christianity being the most obvious examples... once again one side of the chess game says you aren't allowed to move on his side of the board... but that's besides the point.

need this point reinforced? in Islam, there is no freedom to change religion. apostasy (i.e. renouncing your religion) is punishable by DEATH. the same treatment can be dished out to a Jew. firstly what is this if not thoughtcrime? secondly it warrants the second worst penalty possible, namely death. (what's the 1st worst penalty, you may ask...? I'm about to get to that)

moving on to Christianity. read the ten commandments, the ones that millions of plankton-brained shitkickers in your lovely advanced country are demanding be shown prominently in your courthouses. the thou shalt not kills and steals and so on are OK... but read number ten. thou shalt not be envious of your neighbour's property.

envy is an emotion, therefore it's thoughtcrime. clearly when God supposedly dictated the ten commandments he saw this as absolutely paramount (as he did the worship of other gods, considering the number of innocent people he massacred in enforcing that one). odd, since rape, genocide, cruelty to children, and slavery did not make the final cut of 10.

leaving the worst till last, the most sick and twisted idea mankind ever came up with: hell. Christianity teaches that the only way to avoid an eternity of horrific torture is to follow this religion (and this is fed to children, disgustingly enough). that's thoughtcrime too.

actually, I can go one further than thoughtcrime. you said you're a catholic, I believe? so presumably you believe in the concept of original sin, whereby we all inherit the sin of a remote ancestor (Adam)? it goes without saying that it is immoral to hold someone responsible for the crime of someone else, even their parents (there are plenty of other examples where God shows his immorality in this area too, e.g. holding modern-day Jews responsible for the crucifixion, or the stern warning that the punishments for breaking the Commandments will go down for several generations). this is even more than thoughtcrime. thoughtcrime is the idea that you can be convicted of something you privately think. until I started writing this post, that was in my view the most extreme form of totalitarianism. but we can go one further; holding someone responsible for someone else's crime. religion is multiply guilty of this; shall I give any more examples? in Pakistan, a woman can be sentenced (yes, sentenced) to be gang-raped in order that she feels the shame of a crime committed by a male relative. you probably reel in disbelief at this, but have you read the bible...?

so in a nutshell, no... I don't believe in thought police and thoughtcrime. I will argue against them at every turn. bearing everything I just said in mind about religious thoughtcrime, do YOU believe in thoughtcrime, muad_dib? Or instead do you pick and choose which of your religion's teachings you think are valid?

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [R315r4z0r](#) on Thu, 16 Oct 2008 19:23:39 GMT

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Spoony wrote on Thu, 16 October 2008 08:19

Yet my point still stands. You were circumcised and you don't mind it; fine. When you go on to say there's nothing wrong with the practice because of that, that's where you're an idiot.

What are you talking about?! I never even said that! In fact I've said quite the opposite MANY times in this thread!

Spoony wrote on Thu, 16 October 2008 08:19
sigh

one last time

because (typically) religions are not just beliefs, they're also actions.

Who said they weren't? I said a religion can lead you to do something because you believe something will happen.

But you can also just get rid of religion completely and just believe something will happen if you do something.

What's the difference between killing a bunch of people for your religion so you can go to heaven and killing a bunch of people because you think something good will happen to you?

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Quackpunk](#) on Sun, 19 Oct 2008 00:20:40 GMT

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Americans are entitled to life liberty and the pursuit of happiness. These 3 liberties override any rights given to citizens including freedom of religion. This ensures that people can't do any damn thing they desire.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Ryan3k](#) on Sun, 19 Oct 2008 01:25:30 GMT

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Freedom of religion arguably falls under all three categories of life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Quackpunk](#) on Wed, 22 Oct 2008 05:26:06 GMT

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Ryan3k wrote on Sat, 18 October 2008 20:25 Freedom of religion arguably falls under all three categories of life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness.

But life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are the naturally born, unalienable rights given to man which exclude any outside category, such as religion.

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?

Posted by [Spoony](#) on Tue, 11 Nov 2008 17:47:05 GMT

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Spoony wrote on Thu, 16 October 2008 07:19 bearing everything I just said in mind about religious thoughtcrime, do YOU believe in thoughtcrime, muad_dib? Or instead do you pick and choose which of your religion's teachings you think are valid?

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?
Posted by [Hitman](#) on Thu, 11 Dec 2008 15:45:23 GMT
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spoony got abused by a priest when he was a child

Subject: Re: Freedom of Religion?
Posted by [Spoony](#) on Thu, 11 Dec 2008 16:02:31 GMT
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Well, I would probably argue that telling a child that they can suffer an eternity of the most horrific torment imaginable merely for what they think, as though this were a fact and not a guess, is indeed child abuse. But this came from teachers, not priests.
