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University of Phoenix

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The First Amendment, at initial glance, seems to include four separate stipulations combined together somewhat randomly *do you mean the variation and rights?*. However, as I consider each, the others seem to come into play as close companions mutually supporting the right of self-expression *good idea, statement*. For freedom of religious expression, it also may be necessary to have freedom of speech if one's religion requires sharing the "good news" with others. If the religious expression requires a temple, church, lodge, or other meeting place, the worshippers can be protected under their right to assemble peaceably *You got it*. In this paper, I will be concentrating on the part of the First Amendment, which speaks to the free exercise and establishment of religion and how this concept has been of service to the freedom of U.S. citizens, with examples of how it has been defined and challenged. The Framers of the Constitution phrased it this way, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." (*The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution*)

I will also explore why I consider this part of the First Amendment to be paramount to holding and keeping the freedoms we enjoy. *Let's work on the thesis statement, it should reflect the question A or B.*

B. Describe one current First Amendment issue, connect the issue to at least three cases the significance of the issue and evaluation of the impact on society of the decision.

Throughout history, government-mandated religion has played a strong role in control of the populace. Cultures where the monarch was believed to be one and the same as God, created a setting where the monarch was not only above the law, but the monarch's word became law.

This obviously would eliminate any hope for individual freedoms in this type of government. It would set up a paradigm where the monarch could mandate any structure, no matter how cruel or inputs, and the people would be compelled to comply. *And that was the abuse that led to the demand for freedom of expression*

Similarly in cultures where the church itself has wielded strong power and has had a captive populace for worshippers, there is a history of abuse of that absolute power. One of the most extreme examples of the problems of this kind of power, took the form of the Spanish Inquisition, which used its power to crush the populace into submission and exert death over unbelievers and suspected unbelievers. "... the Spanish Inquisition was mainly about social control: forcing people to acknowledge and avoid the "heretical" behavior that the monarchs and church thought was reprehensible." (Whealey, 2005) There was no real due process for those tortured and/or put to death and the Inquisition had no one to answer to, but themselves. The people had no justice and lived in fear and forced complicity. *Connect all this to the thesis, to the First Amendment*

Religious fanatic, Mary Tudor **instated** a bloodbath during her reign, massacring Protestants in order to bring England back under Catholic rule. Her sister, Elizabeth, did the opposite when she took charge, not because she was religious, but because she realized that she could control the populace under one national religion. The people suffered her bloodbath just a few years after her sister's:

"But Mary and her advisers sought to promote the return to the old faith by burning heretics, and 237 men and fifty-two women were consigned to the flames between February 1555 and the Queen's death in November 1558. A few of these were highly placed clerics, but most of them were relatively lowly men and women, farmers,

craftsmen and the like:” (Sharpe, 2005, p. 20 chap. 9) *how does that answer the EQ for the paper?*

In the U.S. the First Amendment would never allow these types of atrocities to occur. No matter the religiously extreme views of those in charge, our rights to practice our religious expression is firmly protected. This is not to say that this is not attempted by those in charge, just that there is a solution for those whose rights may be curtailed because of them.

The right for citizens to practice and/or establish their chosen religions, or not to practice at all, is an important safeguard to the constitution. It doesn't allow the abstract powers of religion to define and order the rules of our society, but it does allow for individuals to openly practice his or her religion of choice without interference from the state.

I sometimes wonder where the line is drawn between individual religious expression and the state. I often don't have an answer. As when, “Members of Congress gather on the steps outside. After comments by Dennis Hastert and Tom Daschle, they spontaneously begin singing ‘God Bless America.’ (The Authentic History Center, 2001) This was done in public right after the attack on the World Trade Center in 2001. While I found it touching, I was surprised because it seemed like a particularly religious musical choice for a group of government officials to gather together to sing. Would I have felt differently if one of them had sung the song as an individual? Definitely. I had a similar dilemma when a friend, who is an office manager in a public school, was told by administrators to remove a framed copy of the Lord's Prayer from her personal desk. Did this infringe on her personal expression of her religion? Her freedom of speech? In my opinion, it did. Had she forced the public school children to read it or pray it, my feelings would have been completely opposite. *Excellent personal application*

This has been an issue in schools, which traditionally have been run religious institutions and/or leaders for centuries. The subject of creationism over evolution has reared its head again in the form of “intelligent design”. Faculty are testing the waters for teaching this concept as they did in 1970s as exhibited in the case of U.S. Supreme Court LEMON v. KURTZMAN, 403 U.S. 602 (1971) *background etc on the case*

“The Act alleged that the church-affiliated schools are controlled by religious organizations, have the purpose of propagating and promoting a particular religious faith, and conduct their operations to fulfill that purpose. A three-judge court granted the State's motion to dismiss the complaint for failure to state a claim for relief, finding no violation of the Establishment or Free Exercise Clause. Held: Both statutes are unconstitutional under the Religion Clauses of the First Amendment, as the cumulative impact of the entire relationship arising under the statutes involves excessive entanglement between government and religion. p. 611-625. (U.S. Supreme Court, 1971) *Interpret Lemon and connect to thesis*

The question of schools and religion often arises in the U.S. when funding is called into question as with the idea of a voucher system. In this system, parents can choose to spend the state dollars allotted to their children on religious or private institutions, rather than the local public schools, if they wish, as in Wisconsin, “Milwaukee's voucher program is the oldest in the country. It began in 1990-91, and expanded in 1998-99 to include religious schools. A similar program exists in Cleveland and a small statewide program exists in Florida.” (Rethinking Schools Online, 2002). One of the complaints about this system is that it uses tax dollars to support religious institutions. *How would Lemon answer this question?*

Remember the significance and evaluation of the case's impact

It is my belief that this particular component of the First Amendment regarding freedom of religious expression and establishment is key to keeping the freedoms of U.S. citizens invariable. That all are free to worship as they choose, or not to worship at all, keeps the government on the task of ruling in the real world without religious bias. Because as humans, we have those biases built-in, whether religious or atheistic in nature. The possibility for corruption with a state engaged in the divine is too great. The framers of the Constitution rightly realized that religion could be used to restrict the rights of the people and control them through the ethereal concepts of religious dogma. We should protect this aspect of the First Amendment as fiercely as the other three.

Excellent personal and historical examples, but please see the assignment, one issue, THREE cases, EVALUATE the impact and significance

Grading: the paper will be graded in the following areas applying the definitions listed

Ideas (10 poss.)	Organization (7)	Fluency (4)	Conventions (3)	Total
7	4	3	2.5	16.5

Ideas =

Connections, assessments, evaluations and your own descriptions. <i>Improve</i>
The content is comprehensive, accurate, and /or persuasive. <i>Be more persuasive</i>
Numerous examples from the news and one's own life are related to the topic <i>good</i>
A clear thesis statement is made. <i>NO, fix that, remember A or B</i>
A position is taken and its arguments are refuted. <i>Be more clear in a position</i>
The paper links theory to relevant examples. <i>Yes</i>
Major points are stated clearly and are supported by specific details, examples, or analysis. <i>Improve court case points</i>

Fluency =

Ease to read
Citations are integrated to the paragraph structure.
Paper is interesting to read.
The thesis is clear throughout the paper. <i>No</i>

Organization =

The paper develops a central theme or idea, directed toward the appropriate audience. <i>No</i>
The introduction provides sufficient background on the topic and previews major points. <i>Improve</i>
The conclusion is logical, flows from the body of the paper, and reviews the major points. <i>Improve</i>
Transitions between sentences, paragraphs, and sections aid in maintaining the flow of thought.
The tone is appropriate to the content and assignment.

Conventions/Mechanics =

Citations of original works within the body of the paper follow APA guidelines where appropriate.
The paper is laid out with effective use of headings, font styles, and white space. <i>Use headings</i>
Rules of grammar, usage, and punctuation are followed.
Sentences are complete, clear, concise, and varied.
Spelling is correct.

Call if you need ideas for the rewrite

George

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