

Freedom of Association



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If you are not free from violent retribution to associate with whomever you want, in whatever way you want, so long as its mutually agreeable, then your body, your life, is not really yours. Freedom of association, as it is popularly called, if not absolute, amounts to the enslavement of mankind.

Unpopular Associations

Once upon a time, a white man freely associating with a black woman was quite unpopular. That different races mingle at present with wide acceptance is a testament to the social progress of quite a bit of mankind. There are still many types of associations that are scorned and persecuted. It's unfortunate that anyone would consider the peaceful association by others as any of their concern. For example, if two men want to show each other affection in public and intimacy in private, what business is that of mine? Their lives are theirs to do with whatever they damn well please. So long as they aren't hurting anyone else, and their association is mutually agreeable, nobody else has the right to violently interfere with it. If they did, if they used force or the threat of force to separate the men and to keep them apart, they would be claiming both men as under their control, or in other words, as their property, to do with as they please; to keep them apart, or to allow them to associate. The wishes of the two men are now secondary to the wishes of their masters, those who would use or threaten force to keep them apart.

Likewise, then, if one person wants another to sell them a good or service, they have every right to refuse. If the buyer uses or threatens force, then he is claiming the seller to be his property, to be his slave. If Christian bakers must sell cakes to homosexual couples, or Muslim sign-makers must sell signs to anti-Islam protesters, or Jewish chefs must serve food to Nazi diners, then nobody has a right to their own life and everyone's a slave to someone else.

Childhood Associations

We must also remember that children have as much a right to their own lives as anyone else. Children are frequently forced to associate with those they would rather not. Are children the property of their parents? I don't think so. At most, parents are their children's guardians, and a guardian is one who protects a child from harm. Forced association is harmful. It destroys the child's understanding of what his life means. It teaches the child that his life is not his own, that his life belongs to others more powerful than he. If that's not the kind of harm that a parent should protect against as the guardian of his child, then what is the purpose of the parent?

Final Thoughts

Freedom of association is another way to say that everybody owns their bodies and their lives. To be forced to associate or to disassociate according to one's will is to be made a slave. It is not "anti-gay" or "pro-Nazi" to leave people and the associations they choose for themselves alone, so long as they are mutually agreeable. I will associate or disassociate with whomever I choose. It's my choice, not yours.

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