A religious photographer who believes that marriage is only between a man and a woman should pay a fine if she refuses to photograph a wedding between two women

Brigham Young University should be labeled a “discriminatory” school and be excluded from the Big 12 because its Honor Code does not allow members of the same sex to give expression to homosexual feelings (no kissing, hand-holding, or sex, etc.)

Paintings showing French fur traders canoeing down a river with Native Americans should be removed from a college display due to their potentially “harmful” effect on students and viewers, as they promote “acts of domination and oppression”

The CEO of a company should be forced to step down from his position because he donated money to opponents of gay marriage

Colleges should stop conservative speakers from visiting their campuses because the opinions these speakers express may be harmful to students

People who deny that climate change is happening should be arrested and prosecuted

A highly offensive play about the Muslim religion should be banned

It should be considered a racist microaggression to say, “America is a land of opportunity”

A town mayor should ban Chick-fil-A, which is owned by a Christian who says he supports the Biblical definition of marriage, from opening new locations in his town

Newspapers should be allowed to print cartoons showing the Prophet Muhammad even though visual depictions of Muhammad are offensive to Muslims and have led to radical Islamic attacks in the past

A student journalist should be prevented from covering a protest taking place on campus because the protesters feel he is not “respecting their space”

College students who post things like “Trump 2016” or “All Lives Matter” should go through “extensive training for racial and cultural competency” and possibly face discipline

Students should face lower grades if they use terms that may be offensive to other students, like “illegal immigrants” or referring to women/men as females or males

Statements like “I believe the most qualified person should get the job” should be considered “hostile” and “derogatory”

When an offensive speaker has been invited to speak, students should protest by drowning out the speaker

It should be a crime for people to lie about receiving military honors or to lie about being in the military

Large companies should be prevented from engaging in political speech (ads, commercials, documentaries, etc.) that might sway voters during an election

Religious individuals who own businesses should be forced to pay for birth control for their employees, as mandated by the Obamacare law, regardless of their own religious feelings toward birth control

A private company should be allowed to post an ad saying, “In any war between the civilized man and the savage, support the civilized man. Support Israel. Defeat jihad.”

The social media app Yik Yak should be banned because “it provides a platform for hate speech inflected with racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and especially recently [I]slamophobia, amongst several other bigotries”

Students should be allowed to wear Halloween costumes that might be offensive, including dressing up like a homeless person or an imprisoned person, or wearing dreadlocks or afros

Yale students should be banned from wearing T-shirts that quote an F. Scott Fitzgerald book which says, “I think of all Harvard men as sissies,” because the shirts might be offensive to some students

A white student listening to music that uses the N-word should be allowed to sing along

Colleges should get rid of courses where students study white male writers like Shakespeare because it creates a culture that is “hostile to students of color”

The use of the phrase “you guys” should be eliminated because it is not inclusive of female students

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<http://heatst.com/culture-wars/wisconsin-college-removes-decades-old-paintings-of-native-americans-after-diversity-group-complains/>

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<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-mozilla-ceo-resignation-idUSBREA321Y320140403>

Students should not be exposed to a diversity of opinion if the opinions being offered are conservative, because “that dominant culture embeds these deep inequalities in our society”

<http://daily.swarthmore.edu/2014/02/13/students-share-mixed-responses-to-georgewest-collection/>

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<http://www.newsweek.com/should-climate-change-deniers-be-prosecuted-378652>

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<http://bookofmormonbroadway.com/tickets>

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<http://abcnews.go.com/Business/chick-fil-blocked-opening-chicago-store/story?id=16853890>

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<http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2015/01/news-outlets-arent-showing-mohammed-cartoons.html>

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<http://college.usatoday.com/2016/04/09/chalking-pro-trump-messages-set-off-storms/>

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<http://www.campusreform.org/?ID=6770>

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<http://www.newseuminstitute.org/about/faq/can-people-who-oppose-a-speakers-message-use-their-freedom-of-speech-to-drown-out-the-offending-words/>

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<http://digg.com/2016/supreme-court-birth-control-zubik-burwell-hobby-lobby>

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<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/09/25/anti-muslim-subway-posters-nypd-increase-security_n_1912239.html>

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<http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/nus-national-conference-yik-yak-to-be-banned-under-safe-social-elections-policy_uk_5716b302e4b0dc55ceeb345a>

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<https://www.thefire.org/college-students-should-be-scared-to-celebrate-halloween/>

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<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2016/06/02/is-yale-s-english-course-really-too-white.html>

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<http://www.spectator.co.uk/2014/04/the-slow-death-of-free-speech-2/>

<http://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21699909-curbs-free-speech-are-growing-tighter-it-time-speak-out-under-attack>

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/shut-up-and-play-nice-how-the-western-world-is-limiting-free-speech/2012/10/12/e0573bd4-116d-11e2-a16b-2c110031514a_story.html?utm_term=.3410aa0cb50f>

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*an entire generation of Americans is being taught that free speech should be curtailed as soon as it makes someone else feel uncomfortable. On the current trajectory, our nation’s dynamic marketplace of ideas will soon be replaced by either disengaged intellectual silos or even a stagnant ideological conformity.*

*William Ruger, “[Free Speech Is Central to Our Dignity as Humans](http://time.com/4355651/free-speech-human-dignity/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_hplink)“*

The strategy is simple yet brilliant: the best way to control a populace is through fear and discord. Confound them, distract them with mindless news chatter and entertainment, pit them against one another by turning minor disagreements into major skirmishes, and tie them up in knots over matters lacking in national significance. Most importantly, keep the people divided so that they see each other as the enemy and screaming at each other so that they drown out all other sounds. In this way, they will never reach consensus about anything or hear the corporate state as it closes in on them.

 - John Whitehead

This is how a freedom-loving people enslave themselves and allow tyrants to prevail.

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<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/john-w-whitehead/ali-is-dead-fear-is-alive_b_10324974.html>

Repressive societies, by squelching speech, impair people’s ability to improve those societies.

This progress—both social and material—occurred in part because free speech allowed people to confront errors and posit new ideas. Free speech provides a discovery process to correct for our individual and societal mistakes. Thus, it allows us to trade error for truth—in what Supreme Court Justice William Douglas (following Milton, Mill and Holmes) called the “[market place of ideas](http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org/holmes%E2%80%99-idea-marketplace-%E2%80%93-its-origins-legacy%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank).”

This marketplace, to be sure, can be an uncomfortable place. Yet even “bad,” “wrong” or “hate” speech has value. As Mill wisely [noted](http://www.bartleby.com/130/2.html%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), limiting speech harms the very people who are doing the stifling, because even if their opponents are wrong, “they lose, what is almost as great a benefit, the clearer perception and livelier impression of truth, produced by its collision with error.” Moreover, free speech unmasks and allows us to beware the truly bigoted in our midst.

*[Whitney v. California](https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/274/357%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)*(1927): “Freedom to think as you will and to speak as you think are means indispensable to the discovery and spread of political truth.” He also wisely cautioned us against restricting speech out of fear: “Fear of serious injury cannot alone justify suppression of free speech and assembly. Men feared witches and burnt women. It is the function of speech to free men from the bondage of irrational fears. . . . Those who won our independence by revolution were not cowards. They did not fear political change. They did not exalt order at the cost of liberty.”

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Third, the idea has spread that people and groups have a right not to be offended. This may sound innocuous. Politeness is a virtue, after all. But if I have a right not to be offended, that means someone must police what you say about me, or about the things I hold dear, such as my ethnic group, religion, or even political beliefs. Since offence is subjective, the power to police it is both vast and arbitrary.

Facebook, Twitter and other digital giants should, as private organisations, be free to decide what they allow to be published on their platforms. By the same logic, a private university should be free, as far as the law is concerned, to enforce a speech code on its students. If you don’t like a Christian college’s rules against swearing, pornography and expressing disbelief in God, you can go somewhere else. However, any public college, and any college that aspires to help students grow intellectually, should aim to expose them to challenging ideas. The world outside campus will often offend them; they must learn to fight back using peaceful protests, rhetoric and reason.

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The very right that laid the foundation for Western civilization is increasingly viewed as a nuisance, if not a threat. Whether speech is deemed imflammatory or hateful or discriminatory or simply false, society is denying speech rights in the name of tolerance, enforcing mutual respect through categorical censorship.

As in a troubled marriage, the West seems to be falling out of love with free speech. Unable to divorce ourselves from this defining right, we take refuge instead in an awkward and forced silence.

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If we assume the best of those who support restrictions on free expression, we can understand their efforts as a means to a desirable end: a more equal society. Promoting equality at the expense of liberty, however, only serves to undermine both. The truth is, you can’t have social justice — however you define it — without free expression.

At any given time, no matter how enlightened society may be, [it is difficult to predict](http://reason.com/archives/2013/11/15/kindly-inquisitors-revisited/1) the causes that in the future will be considered important components of social justice. It’s therefore crucial that as society evolves, our thoughts and arguments are allowed to mirror such evolution. Free expression doesn’t mean there will be agreement, but it does mean there will be a forum for a competition of ideas.

Some might say, “Well, sure, we should protect free expression, but we can also use our collective wisdom to ban hateful speech.” This is wrong. As mentioned previously, what’s considered offensive is subjective. We are unavoidably the products of our time — meaning,we are guided by contemporary considerations of what’s socially acceptable. Without free expression, our thinking would be bound by such convention. Progress towards social justice, however construed, requires the opposite.

Free expression, on the other hand, has enabled us to identify what’s socially just and advocate passionately for it, all the while keeping the door open to the next cause, unknown and unseen by us in the present moment. For the sake of social justice, we must protect free expression.

Chris Marchese

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As in a troubled marriage, the West seems to be falling out of love with free speech. Unable to divorce ourselves from this defining right, we take refuge instead in an awkward and forced silence.

* Jonathan Turley

Some might say, “Well, sure, we should protect free expression, but we can also use our collective wisdom to ban hateful speech.” This is wrong. As mentioned previously, what’s considered offensive is subjective. We are unavoidably the products of our time — meaning, we are guided by contemporary considerations of what’s socially acceptable. Without free expression, our thinking would be bound by such convention. Progress towards social justice, however construed, requires the opposite.

Free expression, on the other hand, has enabled us to identify what’s socially just and advocate passionately for it, all the while keeping the door open to the next cause, unknown and unseen by us in the present moment. For the sake of social justice, we must protect free expression.

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The idea has spread that people and groups have a right not to be offended. This may sound innocuous. Politeness is a virtue, after all. But if I have a right not to be offended, that means someone must police what you say about me, or about the things I hold dear, such as my ethnic group, religion, or even political beliefs. Since offence is subjective, the power to police it is both vast and arbitrary.

Facebook, Twitter and other digital giants should, as private organizations, be free to decide what they allow to be published on their platforms. By the same logic, a private university should be free, as far as the law is concerned, to enforce a speech code on its students. If you don’t like a Christian college’s rules against swearing, pornography and expressing disbelief in God, you can go somewhere else. However, any public college, and any college that aspires to help students grow intellectually, should aim to expose them to challenging ideas. The world outside campus will often offend them; they must learn to fight back using peaceful protests, rhetoric and reason.

These are good rules for everyone. Never try to silence views with which you disagree. Answer objectionable speech with more speech. Win the argument without resorting to force. And grow a tougher hide.

* The Economist

The strategy is simple yet brilliant: the best way to control a populace is through fear and discord. Confound them, distract them with mindless news chatter and entertainment, pit them against one another by turning minor disagreements into major skirmishes, and tie them up in knots over matters lacking in national significance. Most importantly, keep the people divided so that they see each other as the enemy and screaming at each other so that they drown out all other sounds. In this way, they will never reach consensus about anything or hear the corporate state as it closes in on them.

* John Whitehead

An entire generation of Americans is being taught that free speech should be curtailed as soon as it makes someone else feel uncomfortable. On the current trajectory, our nation’s dynamic marketplace of ideas will soon be replaced by either disengaged intellectual silos or even a stagnant ideological conformity.

* William Ruger

Progress—both social and material—occurred in part because free speech allowed people to confront errors and posit new ideas. Free speech provides a discovery process to correct for our individual and societal mistakes. Thus, it allows us to trade error for truth—in what Supreme Court Justice William Douglas (following Milton, Mill and Holmes) called the “[market place of ideas](http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org/holmes%E2%80%99-idea-marketplace-%E2%80%93-its-origins-legacy%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank).”

This marketplace, to be sure, can be an uncomfortable place. Yet even “bad,” “wrong” or “hate” speech has value. As Mill wisely [noted](http://www.bartleby.com/130/2.html%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), limiting speech harms the very people who are doing the stifling, because even if their opponents are wrong, “they lose, what is almost as great a benefit, the clearer perception and livelier impression of truth, produced by its collision with error.” Moreover, free speech unmasks and allows us to beware the truly bigoted in our midst.

* William Ruger

Judge Brandeis wrote, “Freedom to think as you will and to speak as you think are means indispensable to the discovery and spread of political truth.” He also wisely cautioned us against restricting speech out of fear: “Fear of serious injury cannot alone justify suppression of free speech and assembly. Men feared witches and burnt women. It is the function of speech to free men from the bondage of irrational fears. . . . Those who won our independence by revolution were not cowards. They did not fear political change. They did not exalt order at the cost of liberty.”

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If we assume the best of those who support restrictions on free expression, we can understand their efforts as a means to a desirable end: a more equal society. Promoting equality at the expense of liberty, however, only serves to undermine both. The truth is, you can’t have social justice — however you define it — without free expression.

At any given time, no matter how enlightened society may be, [it is difficult to predict](http://reason.com/archives/2013/11/15/kindly-inquisitors-revisited/1) the causes that in the future will be considered important components of social justice. It’s therefore crucial that as society evolves, our thoughts and arguments are allowed to mirror such evolution. Free expression doesn’t mean there will be agreement, but it does mean there will be a forum for a competition of ideas.

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