

Setting the Record Straight:

3 LIES ABOUT THE FIRST AMENDMENT

And How You Can Debunk Them

A recent report from the Cato Institute revealed that a whopping **62% of Americans have opinions they're scared to share with others.**

For conservatives, that number jumps to 77%.

Pushed into silence by a culture of cancellation, many Americans have bought into common myths they hear in the media and from politicians about the First Amendment.

But you don't have to self-censor. **You can stand by the truth.**

LIE #1: Religious freedom is just an excuse for discrimination.

The Facts: This is a destructive lie about religious freedom.

- This lie is used to shame and marginalize Americans who simply want to live and work according to their faith.
- Activists often use it to describe the cases and motivations of people like Colorado cake artist [Jack Phillips](#), who simply wants to say what he believes without fear of being punished for his faith.
- Religious freedom protects *all* Americans. With true religious freedom, we tolerate a diversity of beliefs and don't use the power of the government to punish those who hold different views.

The Bottom Line:

Religious freedom allows everyone to peaceably live out their faith without fear of government punishment.



LIE #2: The government can censor viewpoints it deems “offensive.”

The Facts: Have you heard those in politics or the media defend the government’s power to censor speech it deems “offensive”?

- Often, labeling speech “offensive” is merely code for “speech I don’t like.”
- Calls to ban or regulate speech empower the government to define what is acceptable speech and what isn’t. That’s dangerous — and contrary to the letter and spirit of the First Amendment.
- If the government were allowed to silence opposing viewpoints, would we have ever heard from abolitionists or civil rights activists? Or those campaigning for women’s right to vote?

The Bottom Line:

The First Amendment is designed to protect diverse speech, including speech that the government disagrees with.

LIE #3: Cancel culture has nothing to do with the First Amendment.

The Facts: Cancel culture’s advocates often claim that free speech doesn’t mean freedom from consequences for your speech.

- Of course, this is true. For instance, if a person engages in fraud, or defames someone on social media, they could face punishment or damages.
- However, there is a world of difference between this and cancel culture, which promotes censorship and shuts down debate.
- Protecting the right to express one’s own beliefs without fear of government punishment is crucial to building a culture that respects speech.

The Bottom Line:

The right to speak freely allows Americans to live peaceably with their neighbors — even when they disagree on important issues.

When You Need to Set the Record Straight, Use This Guide.

If freedom is to endure in our nation, we must embrace conversation and debate, not coercion and cancellation.

So if you find yourself in a conversation in which you encounter common lies about free speech and religious freedom, we hope this guide will help you speak the truth in love.

Please take this moment today to stand strong for the right of every American to live and speak the truth!



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