

In Defence Of Milo's Right To Speak Freely

One of the accusations levelled against Milo Yiannopoulos by his Australian leftist detractors is that he abuses free speech. The idea that there is such a thing as the "abuse of free speech" is part of the leftist metanarrative.

Obviously there is no such thing. The phrase is a nonsense. It's simply words joined together in an arbitrary fashion as if they had some bearing on each other but, in reality, the result is without meaning simply because it's as nonsensical as saying something like "startle of polka-dot ice" or "tyranny of rabbit eggs". It's just a meaningless aggregation of words, a desperate attempt at eristic apposition meant to persuade you of something ridiculously impossible.

One can no more abuse the right to freedom of expression (free speech) than one can sprout wings and fly to the moon – it's simply not possible because free speech is an all-encompassing absolute by definition, and, by definition, it must hold in its grasp every expression of human thought or will – written, drawn or uttered – including the infantile humour (in my opinion) that is the deliberate taunting of stuffed shirts of all religious persuasions that Charlie Hebdo, and other such publications, indulge in.

One is allowed, and one should be encouraged in any free society, to poke the dragon in any way that one sees fit. Charlie Hebdo did it through humour (if the often childish essays into the comic in that magazine can be dignified with the term humour). No matter how puerile, offensive, nasty or silly that you or I may find something to be, it is still encompassed by the term free speech.

I remember some time ago being very annoyed when Al-Jazeera English editor and executive producer Salah-Aldeen Khadr said when writing about the attack on the innocents of Charlie Hebdo by Mohammedan believers

(see:

http://www.newenglishreview.org/blog_direct_link.cfm/blog_id/58580/Fracas-over-Leaked-Emails-at-Al-Jazeera-I-AM-NOT-CHARLIE)

that:

“Defending freedom of expression in the face of oppression is one thing; insisting on the right to be obnoxious and offensive just because you can is infantile,” Khadr wrote. “Baiting extremists isn’t bravely defiant when your manner of doing so is more significant in offending millions of moderate people as well. And within a climate where violent response—however illegitimate [*sic*—is a real risk, taking a goading stand on a principle virtually no one contests is worse than pointless: it’s pointlessly all about you.”

He was just plain wrong on every level. So wrong was he that I found it incredible that he could call himself a journalist. He had completely and utterly missed the point and even failed to realise that there was a point that could be missed.

So, let me state quite clearly what I mean: infantile goading is free speech and being “obnoxious and offensive just because you can” is at the very heart of the matter. It is the very definition of freedom and free speech. Offending “millions of moderate people” also lies at the very heart of the concept of freedom and free speech. Go to it, offend everyone that you can if you feel the need to – that is freedom, and the manner in which you do it is free speech, is free expression.

Oh, and someone should remind Khadr and others like him that the principle of free speech is not “a principle virtually no-one contests”. On the contrary, it is principle that is non-

existent in most countries on earth, and certainly non-existent in all Mohammedan countries on the planet, and one that he obviously contests. Not only does it certainly not exist in Mohammedan societies and in Mohammedan countries but it does not exist, and never has existed, at Al-Jazeera in my opinion.

Free speech cannot be abused. There is no aspect of free speech and no use of free speech that is not in and of itself free speech. The absurd phrase “abuse of free speech” is just meaningless rubbish. Even criticism, mockery and abuse of religions or any other types of belief systems falls within the ambit of free speech. As Robert Spencer ably put it at JihadWatch

(<https://www.jihadwatch.org/2015/01/robert-spencer-bill-donohue-those-cartoonists-had-it-coming>) “The Sharia death penalty for blasphemy is the heckler’s veto enforced with a Kalashnikov.”

Let me repeat – there is no such thing as “abuse of free speech.” It is just a Lewis-Carroll-like piece of nonsensical verbiage. It is, however, a phrase that leftists, quislings who do not wish to fight the counter-jihad and western politicians in search of a quiet life routinely employ every time a Mohammedan, or for that matter almost any SJW snowflake, announces that he or she is offended by something.

It is a statement intended to put the speaker or writer of it on the side of the angels and to convey to an audience that the speaker of this noxious piece of rubbish is one of the anointed (in Dr Sowell’s sense – see ‘Intellectuals and Society’ by Dr. Thomas Sowell), one of those who really know what’s going on, one who is better and wiser than we members of the common herd whom he or she is addressing. In other words: one of the ‘elite.’

The phrase itself is a badge, a verbal shorthand symbol, used by such people as a sign of their belonging to the group of

'correct' thinkers – almost invariably a group inclined to view the world from a leftist perspective, incidentally. It is used as a *captatio benevolentiae* to inform readers and listeners that the user is that ultimate nonsense and stupidity – 'woke.'

If you say to yourself, or to others, "I believe in free speech" then append the word "but" and go on to make exceptions, then simply put you don't believe in free speech. Free speech has absolutely no limits, absolutely no qualifiers and absolutely no exceptions. You may shout "fire!" in a crowded theatre when there is no conflagration if you want to and you will not be penalised for so doing, but it is more than likely that you will be heavily penalised if the result of your free speech shout damages other people or if it is proved that you deliberately shouted in order to cause harm. That, however, is where we enter the realm of personal responsibility, of taking responsibility for the consequences of your own actions, and I do not propose to go any further into that at the moment in this brief post.

The era of the internet has changed nothing in the struggle for free speech. The left's optimism about the liberating power of the internet was shared by many so-called progressive people until online content showed them that their own politically correct SJW and snowflake opinions were nowhere near as widely shared as they had fancifully imagined. That's why they are now so keen on internet censorship, so keen on limiting free speech and so keen on promoting the ridiculous and risible idea of the "abuse of free speech." The leftist's invention of the silly idea of the "abuse of free speech" is just one more example of the fact that when the left looks in a mirror they blame the right for what they see.

It was Noam Chomsky who said: "Goebbels was in favour of free speech for views he liked. So was Stalin. If you're really in favour of free speech, then you're in favour of freedom of speech for precisely the views you despise. Otherwise, you're

not in favour of free speech.”

So to end with, let me make one thing plain: Milo Yiannopoulos hasn't abused free speech because no one can. It's impossible to perform an action that doesn't exist. It is an accusation without any meaning that reveals everything about the user and says nothing about the accused. Go Milo, go! Long may you poke the dragon!