

Joke of the day: What do Gordie Howe and Glenn Beck have in common? Answer: they are both right wingers. <p>Go ahead and laugh. I know you want to laugh.</p> <p>But on a more serious note, I am really starting to take issue with the growing fanaticism that is the American socio-political scene. And worse yet, I am really starting to get concerned about how intolerant personal agendas are being promoted as ♦for the good of the country♦ when in fact they throw the meaning and intent of the constitution under the bus because of those same aforementioned agendas.</p> <p>Look no further than the First Amendment. Look no further than Glenn Beck. And look no further than the political rhetoric being espoused in order to accrue some votes (and leverage some fear and hatred) in the upcoming midterm elections.</p> <p>We♦re being told incessantly that our freedoms are being limited by the current presidency. But are the right wingers of the country (and no, I am not talking about Gordie Howe wannabes) creating exactly the scenario in which they profess to be against?</p> <p>How about we start with the roots ♦ the First Amendment itself.</p> <blockquote> <p>♦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♦.</p> </blockquote> <p>First of all, let♦s begin by saying that ♦freedom of religion, press, and expression♦ does not in fact mean that you have good taste in doing so. For example ♦ do you really think that Glenn Beck didn♦t realize that his ♦Restoring Honor♦ rally on August 28 coincided with the day of MLK♦s ♦I Have A Dream♦ speech♦? Glenn, this was perhaps the most influential speech of our era, so either you are telling us a rather tall tale in support of your own agendas, or you really don♦t know much about the history of your own country (and we can already debate your understanding of the rest of the world). Or, perhaps, you simply have lousy taste and zero respect. But I digress.</p> <p>Yes, he has the First Amendment right to do so. Agreed. Wholeheartedly. But sadly, we can♦t enforce having good taste when you utilize those very same rights. Welcome to rights and responsibilities, folks.</p> <p>This is much like the brouhaha over building a mosque at Ground Zero. It can be debated (preferably over a couple of cold drinks) whether or not this is in fact tasteful. Sure, you could debate the rationale behind putting a mosque near the hallowed grounds of one of this nation♦s most challenging days in its history. However ♦ and this is a big however ♦ it♦s not illegal to do so. Imagine this ♦ we have freedom of religion in this country. Somewhere in the mix of the extremists and fanatics making themselves known (and most often for the sake of a few votes and sound bites), we have people forgetting that we have those First Amendment freedoms. Fear and hatred reign. And they win a lot of votes.</p> <p>And while

we're on the topic of freedom of religion, let's take a quick peak at our very own President. Yes, I am talking about the [debate](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100819/ap_on_go_pr_wh/us_poll_obama_s_religion) over whether or not President Obama is a Muslim. [Is he Muslim](http://isbarackobamamuslim.com/) or is he not? Better yet who cares? Isn't this the central point of having religious freedom in this country?

Then we get the insanity that is Laurie Cardozza-Moore, the Tennessee mosque opposition leader.

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I wonder if Ms. Cardozza-Moore would care to reflect on a few history lessons. Start with the Oklahoma City bombing a crime against this nation by none other than American citizen (and Catholic) Timothy McVeigh. And as we move back through history, let's explore the little shindig of 200 years duration (1095 - 1291) called the Crusades religiously sanctioned military campaigns waged primarily by the Roman Catholics against the Muslims. Funny how these little tidbits get lost in a stream of vitriol and anger. Funny how suddenly church and state seem to be a little, shall we say, confused.

The beauty of the country that is the United States of America is in fact the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. And the sooner that people actually read both of them, the better. Then the masses would be able to dispense with the fanatics and

we could get on with living in a society rooted in those same documents.</p> <p>Perhaps hockey can use a few more great right wingers like Gordie Howe. But this country doesn't need any further fanaticism to pull it away from what in fact holds it together ♦ the First Amendment.</p> <p>Photo credit: Wikipedia</p> <div class="zemanta-related"> <h6 class="zemanta-related-title">Related articles by Zemanta</h6> <ul class="zemanta-article-ul"> <li class="zemanta-article-ul-li">Freedom of religion only for some? (rt.com) <li class="zemanta-article-ul-li">Glenn Beck Playing with Fire on Religious Faith (crooksandliars.com) </div> <div class="zemanta-pixie"></div>