

that the Danish imams were willing to accept because they understood the potential for the matter to get out of hand. The European editors really didn't care if it got out of hand, and like Rose, were in fact excited by the prospect of being able to further stoke the fires of anti-muslimism in Europe. They pretended to support press freedom when in fact they only wanted to be provocative and pour oil on the fire.

Those same papers would never publish anti-Semitic cartoons and in fact would be subject to prosecution if they did. Day before yesterday, in Bethlehem, a large demonstration was held by Muslims and Christians, who joined hands (literally) and marched in protest against the cartoons from the Church of the Nativity to the Mosque of Omar. They had a banner that said "Holocaust denial = unpardonable sin! Defamation of prophets and religions = free speech!"

To understand the anger of Muslims, you have to transpose the situation to something Westerners (especially Christians) can appreciate. After all, hundreds of caricatures of individual Muslims, of Ben Laden and of stereotypical Muslims have been published without incident. Why is this incident different?

As an analogy, take the case of a pedophile priest. There wouldn't be much controversy among Christians if an editorial cartoonist used that case or the spate of recent similar cases to draw a cogent, biting cartoon illustrating some aspect of the problem. Suppose, however, that the cartoonist went further. Suppose that, instead of drawing a stereotypical pedophile priest representing those actually involved in child sexual abuse, the cartoonist drew a picture of Jesus with his pants around his ankles in the act of raping a young boy and the legend read "Let the little children come unto me and forbid them not" —Mark 10:4".

Do you think that cartoon would be considered part of the overall corpus of run-of-the-mill editorial cartoons and that no widespread controversy would follow? Well that cartoon is analogous to the Danish cartoons, which depict another Prophet of God as (1) a terrorist whose turban is a fizzling bomb, (2) a pimp at Heaven's Gates turning away suicide bombers because there are no more virgins and (3) as a demon with horns.

In Germany, to which Canada recently extradited Ernst Zundel for trial for the crime of Holocaust denial

in his writings and on his Web site, the paper that republished the cartoons argued that press freedom is absolute and that newspapers can say anything even if it offends people or is defamatory in nature. Yet that same newspaper cannot call any historical facts of the Holocaust into question and certainly would never dare to publish caricatures depicting Jews—not Jewish prophets, just ordinary Jews—in situations similar to those in the Muhammad series.

Fortunately, editors of North American papers (with the exception of the Philadelphia Inquirer) have understood that they can be responsible journalists and comment fully on the controversy without actually reprinting the cartoons. After all, when someone is arrested for selling child pornography, they do not fell compelled to publish examples of the seized material in order to "fully inform" their readers.

Actions that are legal are not necessarily responsible, prudent or recommendable. Considering the level of angry and emotion, any editor who would reprint the cartoons would be doing the equivalent of crying FIRE in a crowd theatre where there was to fire. And that editor should be held responsible for any ensuing violence.

The U.S. has fewer laws restricting press freedom than most countries. Here in Canada, we have a hate speech law that could conceivably be used to prosecute editors who published the Muhammad cartoons. We also have a criminal statute outlawing "blasphemous libel". It has not been used for about 80 years but tries to balance the right of expression and the obligation of the government to preserve domestic tranquility by providing an exemption from prosecution for the expression of opinion on a religious matter that is "made in good faith and using decent language".

Unfortunately, in most jurisdictions, it is not possible to bring criminal or civil procedures against someone who defames (libels or slanders) a dead person. If the Prophet Muhammad were still alive, it would be relatively easy to win such a case since the burden of proof would be on the publishers to show that the allegations made or implied in the cartoons were true.

You and many commentators in Europe seem to confuse "press freedom" (a precious right) and "press license" (the irresponsible exercise of that right).

Salutations,

K.-Benoit Evans

To Ray Keating and his UPEI *Cadre* "Editorial Board":

I was beyond disappointed that a Canadian university paper would be so irresponsible, reckless, and frankly parochial and unsophisticated enough to reprint the offensive and hugely controversial Mohammed cartoons in the name of freedom of speech. The Renaissance leaders would roll over in their graves. I have been a member of the editorial boards of university student papers at UBC and U of T, and I can't imagine the arrogance and hubris you and your editorial staff must have exhibited when you met to decide to do this, assuming you even attempted to have an intelligent debate about it and weigh the consequences of your actions. The UPEI *Cadre* under your leadership is a real black mark on the vital student newspaper movement across Canada. And this coming from an atheist!

David Khan, B.Sc., J.D.
Calgary, Alberta

I live in Niagara Falls, and I am a Danish Canadian. I knew that these cartoons were an issue in October. I figured that I would be able to find the cartoons on the internet too, just as Beverly Thomson had suggested. But I can't find them.

Just like you I want to see if it is a really big deal. Usually in the past things like this which have been huge issues really don't look like anything drastic. Of course, I'm dying to see for myself.

Congratulations for having the guts to post these drawings in your school paper. Of course, things like this upset people, but at least your school will know what the truth about the current upset in the Middle East.

Thank you,
Diana Madsen

Dear Editors of the UPEI *Cadre*,
I read with interest an article that described your printing of the cartoons depicting the prophet Muhammad in various derogatory ways. I find it interesting that a group such as yours at an institution of learning shows such ignorance.

Granted that the university years of a person's life are often given over to iconoclasm, to expressing "freedom" by breaking the norms and mores of a society, to seeing how far

the bar can be pushed, but at least admit this in your rationale for printing the cartoons.

To claim that you did this so that other people could decide for themselves whether or not the cartoons are offensive is irrelevant. I am not Muslim. Therefore, I am not offended by the cartoons. Unless you are Muslim you cannot hope to understand the depth of this insult. However I am aware that Muslims NEVER depict the prophet Muhammad. Never mind in a derogatory fashion. They do this to prevent idolatry. For the same reason Muslim art is all geometrical, never representative, because to depict images of creation, gives to much honor to the created thing and draws attention away from the Creator. This is not my belief, but I am aware enough to know that my own view of the world does not reflect Muslim reality. Therefore I am unqualified to determine how a Muslim person would feel insulted and enraged by such cavalier disregard for their beliefs. I can sympathize by putting myself in a similar imaginary position as a Christian. If someone printed similar cartoons of Jesus Christ I would be appalled. I would consider it hate-mongering, as it would attack a whole group of people simply on the basis of their beliefs, much the way the Jews have been treated throughout much of History.

Not to mention that you must be completely culturally illiterate to assume that just because we live in a society of apathy and cynicism that the rest of the world, should follow suit and not take any action when the beliefs at the very core of their being are insulted. Most of the world doesn't operate that way.

Freedom does not consist in everybody being able to do what they want. Freedom consists in an established rule of law that prevents the majority from trampling on the minority; that upholds the dignity and worth of the person; that forbids abuses in the name of whatever power you choose to hold dear. Freedom does not give anyone sanction to trample on someone else's soul. That is an abuse of the freedom we have fought for in this country.

Respectfully Yours,
Elizabeth Tan

Well done! It is a good thing that you should print these cartoons. Free Speech must be promoted and preserved. I believe in a Christian god