

It is up to each individual to be tolerant of all other individuals in a free society. Such tolerance does not mean that we can't be critical of the rules and rituals of others, but it does mean that these are matters for open debate not legal restriction. Tolerance is one of the foundations of liberty and democracy. That should mean an end to the statutory imposition of bans and restrictions in a wide variety of circumstances, but particularly so when such laws strike directly at someone's most deeply held beliefs. Those who profess to believe in freedom while promoting a ban-happy, intolerant culture are simply cutting the throat of our free society. It is simply not possible to impose good behaviour by legal fiat.

Parliament should not be trying to prescribe what behaviour is acceptable - that is the job for moral arbiters such as religious leaders. Any law in this area should not establish a secular humanist view of the world, nor favour any religion, nor prohibit the free exercise of moral or religious principles. Any proposed changes to the law in this area should specifically confirm that it does not have the effect of abridging freedom of speech, or freedom of the press.