

Questions for Rick Warren

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Rick Warren says that the Obama administration violated the First Amendment when it required businesses to provide employees to provide insurance that covers birth control. He said it was akin to [making Jewish delis sell pork](#).

Here are some questions that came up in my mind when I heard his reasoning.

• **Isn't that metaphor inaccurate?** The UN has declared that birth control is a basic human right. Birth control is often needed for women's health. Contraception allows women to get an education, go to work, and get out of poverty. Selling pork does none of these things. To equate the two makes no sense.

• **What happens when we keep expanding corporate personhood?** The Supreme Court cases that are coming up would expand corporate personhood beyond the practice of "free speech" (that "speech" is largely expressed by flooding our political system with cash) to corporate personhood's ability to practice religion. Would that give corporations even more power and rights in our society? (I write more about this [here](#).)

• **What happens if bosses are allowed to dictate other private matters of women based on corporate personhood's right to practice religion?** What happens when my CEO thinks that I should submit to my husband? What happens when my boss thinks that I should stay married to my abusive spouse? Could he or she deny me a promotion if my actions go against their practice of religion?

• **Could a corporate(person)'s right to practice religion erode employment protections and allow for discrimination?** What if the corporate(person) decides that the divorced woman cannot be hired, because the boss doesn't believe in divorce?

• **Who gets to decide what is a legitimate practice of religion?** For-profit corporations fighting against providing insurance coverage that covers certain contraception is such a tiny, particular act. But what happens when corporate

personhood gets to dictate more cases? What happens when my boss wants to discriminate against gays and lesbians because of religious beliefs? What happens when my boss wants to discriminate against a man because he's not married to the woman he's living with?

•What if my boss decides to create a religious practice in order to get out of paying for something he or she doesn't feel like paying for?

•What if my boss simply doesn't like an administration and makes up a religious reason to fight against that administration?

•What happens when the rights of religion, as practiced by the CEO, clash with my beliefs? What if I think taking contraception is a religious practice because it empowers women? What if I'm a manager at Hobby Lobby, and I want to practice my religion by providing insurance coverage to cover contraception? Will the owner's religious practice override my right to practice my religion?

I am a woman of faith who longs for the reduction of poverty, the empowerment of women, and an *individual's* right to practice religion—and I think that an individual right to practice religion ought to be protected from corporate personhood's religious whims.