

# Socrates Café

Wednesday, December 13, 2017

*All political, economic and social points of view are welcomed and encouraged.  
The only ground rule is that we will be polite to those opinions that differ from our own.*

## **Where Do Your Rights Stop and Those of Others Begin?**

Our Socrates Café is a place and time for us to get together to exchange thoughtful ideas and experiences in order to learn by pondering the questions and opinions of others. Today, let's consider an issue that has resonated and been continually addressed throughout the history of our country.

Zechariah Chafee, an American judicial philosopher and Harvard Law professor said in the 1919 Harvard Law Review, "Your right to swing your arms ends just where the other man's nose begins."

In a civilized society it is necessary to place some restrictions on individual freedom of action. We are all well aware of countries where individual freedom is proscribed. But we also know that without rules, there is no society. Just what is the balance? What is the proper resolution of conflicting rights' issues such as these?

- Bakery shop owner unwilling to bake a special wedding cake for a gay couple
- Wedding photographer who turns down a job photographing a same-sex wedding
- Public employees who do not want to join or pay dues to the union
- A state passing a Right To Work law (outlawing closed union shops)
- Compulsory immunizations for school-age children
- Requirements that parents provide certified education for their children
- Government mandated health insurance to avoid a monetary penalty
- Mandatory Medicare and Social Security
- An individual wanting to sell his or her own kidney

*Robert M. Rubin*