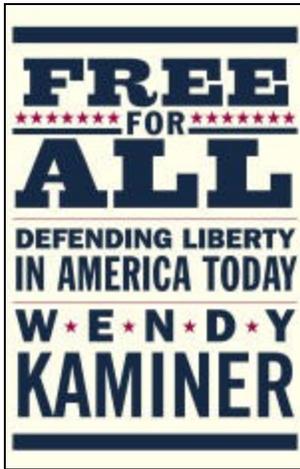


**Beacon Press Discussion Guides
for Unitarian Universalist Communities**



**Free For All
Defending Liberty in America Today
Wendy Kaminer
A LEADER'S GUIDE**

by Lindsay Nelson



BEACON PRESS

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Free For All: Defending Liberty in America Today

by Wendy Kaminer

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Leader's Guide

by Lindsay Nelson

Introduction

“Unitarian Universalists have a longstanding reputation as champions of the civil liberties guaranteed by the Bill of Rights in the United States Constitution... In the wake of the 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States, civil liberties have again been seriously endangered...The sanctity of the social contract has been violated, and it is time for Unitarian Universalists in the United States to stand up and reclaim the civil liberties guaranteed by the Bill of Rights.”

-- the UUA Commission on Social Witness' 2002-4 Study/Action Issue guide on civil liberties

What are the most important elements of liberty in America today? What *is* liberty in America today? As a nation, we preach “liberty and justice for all”, and prize freedom – but what exactly is that freedom, and at what cost is it bestowed? In Wendy Kaminer’s *Free for All: Defending Liberty in America Today*, Kaminer, a regular columnist for “The American Prospect”, asks these questions, providing her own strong answers and challenging readers to redefine their own opinions.

After September 11, action taken by the United States Government, including but not limited to the U.S. Patriot Act (Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism), has changed the face of liberty. In what ways can we no longer take liberty for granted? Should we be asking more questions of our leaders, instead of accepting things as they come? Some other crucial issues raised in this program are those of free speech, protection of children, Internet guidelines, women’s rights and religious rights.

This guide is designed for leaders of groups in Unitarian Universalist congregations working with the text of *Free for All*. The questions raised in the program will be, and should be, difficult to answer. We hope that these discussions will urge participants to reach deep within themselves, to turn over and examine existing stereotypes and ideas, and to participate in respectful, animated dialogue.

Though the program is far too short to discuss all of Kaminer’s ideas, we hope you will use this forum to bring your thoughts, feelings and questions about civil liberties further into the congregation and the community. It is our hope that this dialogue will foster greater reflection and commitment within the community, creating space for exploration and dedicated work for civil liberties.

Getting Started

Promote the Program

Many congregations have a number of resources for publicizing new programs in the community. It is always a good idea to create flyers and post notices on bulletin boards and in newsletters. Announcements during meetings and services help spread the word. Some congregations promote new programs by organizing “Kick-off Sundays,” which include a sermon by a minister or lay leader about a related topic.

Because Civil Liberties is the 2002-2004 Study/Action Issue (SAI) of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, there is already considerable support within the UU community for this topic. Your congregation’s social justice committee might use the program to engage members in dialogue about how to promote action within the congregation and the larger community.

The program might also be an opportunity to expand your relationship with outside groups or encourage other people to investigate your congregation. People in the community concerned with civil liberties might be interested in the program, even if they aren’t members of the congregation.

Adjust the Format as Needed

This program includes reading, reflection, and participation in three sessions, each of which should last about two hours, but can be adapted to shorter or longer sessions, or even to one session. We recommend a group size of no more than 10-12 people. The discussion guide is organized to include two selected chapters of *Free For All* per session. Specific chapters may be added, condensed or left out to fit your group’s needs, interests and time constraints. You might also adjust discussion to complement other action (sermons, RE programs, etc.) your congregation is taking to engage Civil Liberties as the Unitarian Universalist Study/Action Issue.

For some discussions, you might choose to separate into pairs or groups of 3-4 so that everyone has a chance to answer questions in depth. Still, it is important for the group to engage as a whole, even if only for an opening or closing discussion.

Prepare Materials for Each Session

Before each session, make enough photocopies of the handouts for all of the participants. Be sure to give HANDOUT 1 to each participant *before the first session*. Also, gather materials needed for the exercises. Generally, the sessions call for newsprint (large flipchart pad), paper, pens, markers and masking tape. You may choose to bring a chalice to light at the beginning of each session.

Always bring a copy of the book to use as a reference during your discussions. Also, you might ask volunteers to provide snacks or beverages for session breaks.

Provide a Comfortable, Safe Space

The physical space where you meet can affect the quality of dialogue in profound ways. Insofar as possible, create a space that welcomes relaxed, thoughtful conversation – one that reflects the qualities of a warm home rather than a classroom. Sitting in a circle on

comfortable chairs rather than in rows facing a leader is a good way to start. Some discussions will be carried out in small groups (3-4 people), so it is important to find a space that will enable uninterrupted discussion for small groups as well as for the larger group. Indirect, incandescent lighting rather than harsh or florescent lights can set a warmer tone.

Act as a Facilitator

As the group leader, your task is not so much to “teach” as to foster and create a space for good conversation that will offer participants concrete ideas for next steps and new connections with other who share their commitments. Many people will approach some of the issues in this book as something that “could never happen to me”. We hope that you as a facilitator will help shift this into a different light; to approach civil liberties as crucial to all of us, not just to a general “them”.

Create a Supportive Emotional Tone

People need to feel safe to express their deeper, tentative and sometimes more tender feelings as they share experiences and opinions. This is an important time to encourage participants to practice listening more closely, responding thoughtfully, and exercising mutual regard for one another. Particularly controversial and sensitive issues will be discussed in this forum, so it is essential that there is an atmosphere of respect among all members of the group. Your role as leader is to ensure that it is safe for participants to share freely by modeling this way of being and encouraging participants to do the same. It is also important to remember that not everyone is obligated to speak or to answer a question.

Establish Ground Rules

We suggest that the group draft a set of ground rules at the beginning of the first meeting, post them on newsprint, and review them at the beginning of each session. If all participants give input, everyone will be accountable to the group’s needs. You might initiate the process by suggesting such guidelines as:

- maintain confidentiality—don’t repeat personal stories outside of the group;
- make personal (“I”) statements—don’t speak for others;
- give full attention to the person who is speaking; and
- turn off pagers and cell phones during the program.

Balance Direction with Responsiveness

As a discussion leader, it is important to establish a balance between too much control on the one hand and too little direction on the other. For the most part, you will be working with concerns, questions, and opinions that people bring to the group that can cause the discussion to veer constantly. For this reason, it will be important to be responsive in your leadership and to draw people out, yet keep the conversation on track. Again, since strong opinions may set the tone of some discussions, a respectful environment is crucial.

Enable Shared Participation

Invariably, some people in the group will be more vocal than others. If a few people end up dominating the conversation, you might discuss it in a general way with the group or

pull the more voluble members to the side to speak to them directly. It can also be of value to remind the group that it is all right to be silent together, or simply to open a space for those who have not spoken to do so if they wish.

Encourage Preparation for Each Session

Ask participants to read the Introduction and first chapter (“Homeland Offense, Post 9/11”) of *Free for All* before the first session. Similarly, participants should read chapters pertaining to discussion before each session: Session 2 will cover Chapter 6, “Women’s Rights”, and Session 3 will cover Chapters 3 and 4, “Can We Talk?” and “Whose God is it Anyway”. If you plan to shift the order or pace of discussion (and thus, chapters) make sure everyone in the group is aware of which chapters are planned for each session.

Encourage them to keep a journal of their thoughts and reactions while reading the book, or to spend some time in reflection based on passages they found memorable or particularly striking. Let them know that throughout the program, they will be encouraged to bring in their own life experiences—and that this is a safe space to explore difficult and conflicting opinions.

Evaluate the Program

Two evaluation forms are provided in the last pages of this guide. Participant Evaluation Forms should be distributed at the end of the final session so participants can give feedback to group leaders. (Note that questions 7 and 8 on the form give leaders a chance to pose their own questions to participants.) Also, be sure to send Beacon Press your completed Leader Evaluation Form. We are striving to meet the program needs of UU congregations, and your continued feedback and suggestions will bring us a long way toward reaching our goal. We really want to hear from you!

Unitarian Universalist Principles and Purposes

The *Free for All* discussion program upholds the Principles and Purposes of the UUA in that:

- by valuing the experiences and opinions of all people, the program affirms and promotes the worth and dignity of every person;
- through dialogue about awareness of social justice, the program affirms and promotes justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- by exploring ways for individuals and congregations to continue exploration, the program affirms and promotes acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- by encouraging open and honest dialogue, the program affirms and promotes a free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- by challenging existing norms and practices, the program affirms and promotes the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- by challenging us to rekindle our commitments to and reflection about the wider world, the program affirms and promotes the goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all;
- and finally, by reminding us of the significance of inter-being and community connectedness, the program affirms and promotes respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Session One

Materials: Newsprint, markers, masking tape, paper, pens

Welcome and Opening Check-In (15 min.)

Welcome participants and make sure that everyone knows where to find restrooms, water, a telephone, etc. Introduce the program, and offer time for questions. Circulate a sheet of paper so that people can write down contact information for your records.

Each session will begin with a general check-in. In this first session, participants should introduce themselves and briefly state their expectations for the program.

Ask a volunteer to record on newsprint as participants determine ground rules for participation in this group (see “Getting Started”). Post the rules and review them at the beginning of the next session.

Introduction:

In this session, which covers Kaminer’s introduction to the book and the first chapter (“Homeland Offense, Post 9/11”), we will explore basic ideas and opinions about liberty and some effects on civil liberties after 9/11. It is a good idea to stress to the group that agreeing with the author is in no way necessary or even important for this discussion; diversity in opinion should actually enhance the conversation. Also, since a wide variety of subjects will be discussed, it is important to try to stay on track. If it seems that the conversation is shifting and you want to let it do so, verify it with the group. Because so many issues are discussed in *Free for All*, only a few are selected for these discussions. If you want to focus on issues not covered in the guide, simply make it clear to the group what the discussion should be about.

Large Group Discussion: General Impressions and Goals (15 min.)

- Did Kaminer’s writing resonate with you in any particular way? Were you turned on/off by her strong opinions about liberty and speech? Did it raise concerns? Are you eager to read more?
- (*answer individually*) Do you expect your views to change?
- Are there any amendments to the Ground Rules or things to keep in mind for this discussion?
- (*Record on newsprint*) What are your (and the group’s) goals for this discussion (i.e. increase sensitivity to/awareness of our environment, be more open to ideas/ more grounded in opinions, devise a plan of action for awareness of civil liberties, etc.)?

Small Group Sharing: The Pledge of Allegiance (15 min.)

Break off into smaller groups of 2-3.

- Do you remember the pledge of allegiance? Try saying it aloud. How does it feel?

- What does the pledge of allegiance mean to you? Does it mean something different to you now than it did when you were in school (if you did say it in school)? If you have children, what does it mean to them?
- Share the story of your relationship with the pledge of allegiance.
- What is “allegiance” to the flag? Allegiance to the republic? What does “with liberty and justice for all” mean? What kind of gap is there between this ideal and reality? Do you feel proud of this ideal?

Large Group Exercise: Love of Liberty (30 min)

“Love of liberty is supposed to come naturally to Americans.” (page xi).

- What is “liberty”? What is “freedom”? Come up with a definition of each as a group.
- What are the constitutional rights in this country? Make a list.
- Brainstorm a list of rights you feel entitled to (i.e. freely express your opinion, love, marry, do business, spend money, travel, etc.).
- Now make a list of *exceptions* to these rights. Are there ways in which people are (or should be) restricted from these rights? Think about those restrictions you agree with as well as those you don’t. Consider: pornography, violence, abortion, homosexuality, religion, hiring/firing, terrorism (or suspected terrorism), accused criminals, gun control, protection of children, etc.

Break (10 min.)

Small Group Exercise: Self-definition (5 min.)

“What distinguishes a civil libertarian is a focus on preserving fair processes rather than obtaining particular results. A commitment to civil liberty simply requires fealty to the golden rule: extend the same rights to both your friends and foes—the rights you hope to enjoy yourself.” (pg. xii)

“Because liberals often depend upon government to fulfill their vision of social justice through welfare programs and antidiscrimination laws, they risk losing the mistrust of government that is essential to maintaining liberty.” (pg. xv)

- Where do you stand (regardless of whether or not you agree with these definitions)? Do you consider yourself a civil libertarian? A liberal? Neither?

Small Group Discussion: Security (20 min.)

“I suspect that a compliant public poses greater dangers than public engagement and dissent. Patriotism requires speech, not silence (or mere applause.)” (pg. xviii)

- Think about your commitment to, and trust of, “national security” before and after 9/11. Did you trust the president/government to handle the “war on terrorism”?
- How does your trust of, or faith in, government security correspond to fear of terrorism?
- “The more we fear overwhelming external threats, the more likely we will blindly trust the government.” (pg. xvii) Do you agree?

- What kind of trust should this nation have or not have in its president? Do people have a “duty” to trust the president? How did that change in September?

Writing Exercise: Racial Profiling (15 min.)

Many people agree with increased national security measures after 9/11, including racial profiling. Not all, however, would necessarily agree to be subject to the same measures they support.

Ask the group to spend about 10 minutes journaling. Tell people that they will be invited to share their entries with the group, but that they won't be required to do so.

Have you been subject to an instance of racial profiling? Do you have friends or family who have?

Imagine a situation in which you are singled out as a suspect purely on the basis of your outward appearance. Write a fictional account of this encounter, imagining the feelings and conflicts of interest you would face. Would you feel as if you were doing your country a service? Indignant? Angry?

After the writing, invite people to read a part of their writing aloud, if they wish. Remind the group that perfection isn't necessary.

Closing

Ask people to continue to develop these thoughts and definitions throughout the next week. The next session will focus on Chapter 6: “Women’s Rights”.

Session Two

Materials: Newsprint, markers, masking tape, paper, pens

Opening Check-In (10 min.)

Have people check-in briefly and if they wish, invite them to share an instance in which they were alerted to the presence or absence of liberty or freedom since the last session, or any experiences that may have been influenced by the previous conversation.

Small Group Discussion: Women's Rights (20 min.)

Today, women's rights are often taken for granted. A lot of progress has been made for women's rights in the United States, and there is arguably a lot more access today to historically male-dominated careers by women than ever before. However, Kaminer points out that, ironically, the Equal Rights Amendment has yet to be passed.

Take a few minutes to discuss the value of women's rights in a modern context.

- What is feminism? Would you call yourself a feminist?
- Reflect on the word "feminist". Does it carry a negative connotation? Would you hesitate to call yourself a feminist, even if you believe in feminist ideals? Why?
- What are "feminist ideals"? List them.
- "According to a 2001 survey commissioned by *American Demographics*, only 34 percent of adolescent girls call themselves feminists but 97 percent believe that men and women should be paid equally; 92 percent believe that a woman's "lifestyle choices" should not be limited by her sex; and 89 percent agree that a woman does not need a man or children to be successful." (page 131) Do you see this statistic reflected in your community? Among your children? In your congregation?
- Do you think that growing acceptance of sexual equality makes up for active support of the ERA?

Large Group Discussion: Women's Rights vs. Embryonic Rights (15 min.)

"Embryos would have a right to health care, under a Health and Human Services proposal announced in January 2002. HHS secretary Thompson wants to expand the definition of a child under a federal children's health insurance program to include everyone (or everything) from conception to age nineteen. This proposal has been offered in the spirit of compassionate conservatism; its purpose is to provide prenatal care for poor women, proponents claim. But as critics counter, prenatal care can be provided directly to the poor simply by extending federal health insurance to pregnant women, not their fetuses, which a Senate bill proposes to do." (page 135)

By proposing to grant rights to fetuses, Kaminer writes that some conservatives, while claiming to support prenatal care for poor women, are actually pushing pro-life politics.

- Do you agree with this claim? Where else do some groups propose to be protecting or helping a particular group, when they are in fact pushing their own agenda?
- What about providing rights to fetuses? Should there be a line drawn between the pro-choice rights of women and the health care rights of fetuses? Is this purely a pro-life/pro-choice argument?

Small Group Discussion: Abortion Rights (20 min)

Wendy Kaminer argues the need for protection of free speech on both sides of an argument. She proposes, for instance, that a woman's right to abortion should be as adamantly protected as should the free speech rights of abortion protesters. The limits, she claims, should be on violence, not on speech.

- If Kaminer's estimation is correct, most of us are more concerned with protecting our own rights than those of people we disagree with. If you are pro-choice, for instance, you may not have deeply considered the free speech rights of protesters outside an abortion clinic. Take a few minutes to consider the similarities and differences between the rights of women/girls to obtain abortions and the rights of others to protest them. Can these rights co-exist?
- What are the differences between limitations on verbal and physical protests? Should, for instance, a person have the right to protest outside a clinic, but not to touch those entering? What are the limits of verbal protests? Should a person have the right to yell but not threaten? What constitutes a threat?
- "Every pro-choice activist who supports restrictions on abortion protests in order to protect women from the "trauma" of unwilling exposure to offensive speech reinforces traditional notions of feminine fragility." (page 141)
Kaminer questions whether exposure to abortion protests is necessarily traumatic for women seeking abortions, and she argues that toleration of offensive, upsetting or even traumatic speech is required of us all. Do you agree?

Break (10-15 min)

Journaling: Opposition to Abortion (10 min.)

There are, of course, many varied reasons why women and girls seek abortions. Take some time to reflect on your own feelings about abortion. In what circumstances do you think it is justified? In what circumstances is it not? Your response will not be shared, unless you choose to read it aloud.

Small Group Discussion (15 min.)

After journaling, separate into small groups to share and discuss your reflections.

Invite people to read from their writing in small groups or share their thoughts, as you discuss the following:

- What are women's reasons for abortion, which are either opposed or condoned? (pursuing a career/school, rape, financial reasons, potential disability of the baby or the mother, etc.)

- Does the public have a right to judge the “right” and “wrong” reasons for women obtaining abortions?

Small Group and Large Group Exercise: Taking Action (10 min.)

What do you think are the most important issues in women’s rights today? In small groups, make a list. Then reconvene into the larger group and brainstorm ways in which you (and your congregation) could take action or promote discussion on these issues.

Preparing for the Next Session:

Next week’s discussion will be based on Chapters 3 and 4, “Can We Talk?” and Whose God is it Anyway.” Because much of this conversation will relate to free speech and censorship, encourage the group to take time this week thinking about their own values for free speech and its limitations. Over the week, participants should make a list of their own personal limitations, or where they think “the line” should be drawn. Possible examples include violent video games and movies, pornography, propaganda, examples of sexuality, etc. Any tangible examples can also be brought to the next session (i.e. video games, magazine ads...)

Session Three

Materials: Newsprint, markers, masking tape, paper, pens, photocopies of the Participant Evaluation Form

Opening Check-In (5 min.)

- Share ways in which last week's discussion (or the first session's discussion) may have prompted ways of viewing a situation experienced over the past week.
- Share with the group any examples brought in of ways in which speech goes (in your mind) too far.
- Create a list, combining personal lists created over the week, of ways in which "the line" is crossed and places where limits should be set. Remember that this is a subjective brainstorming exercise and that disagreement is okay.

Chapter 3: Can We Talk?

Small Group Discussion: Protecting Our Kids (25 min)

Protection of children is a major point of argument in restrictions on free speech.

- To what extent should children be protected, and from what? (i.e. media violence, access to weapons, pornography, evangelism...) Make a list.
- Which of these restrictions interfere with free speech?

"Al Gore has remarked that minors should be protected from "dangerous places" on the Internet –in other words, "dangerous" speech. Some web sites should effectively be locked up, just as medicine cabinets are locked up, to protect children from poisons, the then vice president asserted at a 1997 Internet summit." (pg. 38)

"Living in a free society entails a commitment not to prohibit speech unless it clearly, directly, and intentionally causes violence." (pg. 39)

Wendy Kaminer asserts that protection of free speech should be extended to even pornography and depictions of violence, and that restrictions on these pose dangers to free speech overall.

- What are the dangers to kids posed by exposure to pornography and media violence?
- What are the dangers to society posed by restriction on free speech?
- Why protect unpopular speech?
- Who decides what "we as a society think is appropriate for young people to see and listen to"? (Massing, pg. 42)

Journaling Exercise (15 min.)

"People often assume that whatever speech they deem offensive actually causes serious harm". (pg. 50)

Think about a time when you were very offended by some variation of speech. Were you afraid that what someone said was going to cause serious harm? Did it? How? Share responses within small groups. Participants may read passages, share in their own words, or choose not to share.

Large Group Conversation (20 min.)

“ ‘People are unlikely to become well-functioning, independent-minded adults and responsible citizens if they are raised in an intellectual bubble. No doubt the city would concede this point if the question were whether to forbid children to read without the presence of an adult the *Odyssey*, with its graphic descriptions of Odysseus grinding out the eye of Polyhemus with a heated sharpened stake, killing the suitors, or hanging the treacherous maidservants...’ ” (Judge Richard Posner, pg. 51)

- Is there a line at which society should prohibit offensive speech and its exposure to children, or is this the job of the parents?

“The case against NAMBLA is much more tenuous and mostly reflects abhorrence of its ideology. Unpopular speech, especially unpopular speech about sex, is regularly blamed for sexual violence and “deviance.” Pornography causes rape, according to antiporn feminists. Sex education causes teen pregnancy, according to their counterparts on the right. NAMBLA’s celebration of “man/boy love” causes homosexuality and violent predatory behavior, according to the Curley’s lawsuit.” (pg. 76)

Kaminer writes that “virtually no group of people is more unpopular” than NAMBLA. Yet, she finds no incitement to violence by the NAMBLA website, as was claimed by those who filed the lawsuit discussed in this chapter. For this reason, she proposes protecting the website as free speech.

- What are your general feelings on protecting even the speech you strongly disagree with, in the name of freedom/free speech?

Break (10 min.)

Chapter 4: Whose God is it Anyway?

Small Group Conversations: \$\$\$ and Evangelism (20 min.)

- Do you see Unitarian Universalism fitting into financial partnerships between church and state? Why or why not? How? Does this influence your opinion on whether or not religious institutions should be federally funded? (Do you consider Unitarian Universalism a “popular” religion?)
- Discuss ways in which religious evangelism may have affected you, your children, or people you know. Should children have a right to be protected from evangelism (in schools or otherwise)?

Large Group Exercise: Real-World Tolerance (15 min.)

UUs are famous (or notorious) for tolerance. Discuss the level of tolerance in your congregation. Are views among the congregation really as open as they claim to be? Consider “unpopular” views among community members, whether they are Christian or atheist, liberal or conservative.

Closing Circle: Reflection and Action (10-15 min.)

- How have your views changed (or strengthened) as a result of this program? (write individually, then read to the large group, individually)
- Are there issues that you will pay more attention to in the future?
- How can this discussion affect your congregation’s participation in the UUA Study/Action Issue 2002-2004 of Civil Liberties?
- What can you bring to the congregation from this discussion? To your community?

Evaluations (10 min.)

Distribute the Participant Evaluation Forms. Ask participants to complete them and return them to you.

For further reading we recommend the following books, suggested by the UUA Commission on Social Witness:

De Greiff, Paulo. Drugs and the Limits of Liberalism. Cornell University Press, 1999

Dempsey, James X. and Cole, David. Terrorism and the Constitution: Sacrificing Civil Liberties in the Name of National Security. First Amendment Foundation, 2002

Silencing Political Dissent: How Post September 11 Anti-Terrorism Measures Threaten Our Civil Liberties. Seven Stories Press, 2002, <http://www.sevenstories.com/ebooks/>

Derschowitz, Alan. Shouting Fire: Civil Liberties in a Turbulent Age. Little Brown & Co., 2002

Rehnquist, William. All the Laws but One: Civil Liberties in Wartime. Vintage Books, 2000

Theoharis, Athan and Jeanne. These Yet to Be United States: Civil Rights and Civil Liberties in America Since 1945. Wadsworth Publishing Company, 2002

Abraham, Henry J. and Perry, Barbara A. Freedom and the Court: Civil Rights and Liberties in the United States. Oxford University Press, 1998

The Washington Office for Advocacy will be sending out a 2002-2002 SAI: Civil Liberties guide to all congregations in the Fall of 2002. This guide will include suggestions for further readings (books and articles) as well as organizations to contact and contact information. For Internet access to this guide visit <http://www.uua.org/csw/2002guide.htm>

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HANDOUT I

Pre-discussion Questions

Session One

In this session, which covers Kaminer's introduction to the book and the first chapter ("Homeland Offense, Post 9/11"), we will explore basic ideas and opinions about liberty and some effects on civil liberties after 9/11.

1. What issues does Kaminer raise that strike you in any particular way? What would you like to discuss more?
2. What is "liberty?"
3. What is "freedom?"
4. Think about your commitment to, and trust of, national security before and after 9/11. How was your trust of the government affected by your reaction to 9/11?

Session Two

In this session, which covers Chapter 6 ("Women's Rights"), we will explore different issues and opinions on women's rights and liberties.

1. What issues does Kaminer raise that you would like to explore further?
2. Do you think it is necessary that the Equal Rights Amendment be passed?
3. Are you a feminist?
4. What do the terms "pro-choice" and "pro-life" mean to you, beyond their literal definitions?

Session Three

Session Three covers Chapters 3 and 4 ("Can We Talk?" and "Whose God is it Anyway.") In this session we will explore opinions on free speech and a couple of issues regarding religion.

1. What issues in this chapter stand out to you?
2. List examples of ways in which speech, for you, crosses "the line." What, in your mind should be restricted? Bring in material examples to this session, if you wish.

**BEACON PRESS DISCUSSION GUIDES
PARTICIPANT EVALUATION FORM**

Name (optional): _____ Date: _____

Group Leader: _____

Book Title: _____

Please indicate your evaluation of the following:

meeting space	poor	fair	okay	good	great
pacing	poor	fair	okay	good	great
content	poor	fair	okay	good	great
overall	poor	fair	okay	good	great

1. Do you think the sessions were: (Please check one)

____ too long ____ about right ____ too short

How long would you like the sessions to be? _____

2. Do you think there were: (Please check one)

____ too many sessions ____ the right number of sessions ____ too few sessions

If you thought there were too many sessions, which one(s) would you leave out?

3. If your large group broke into smaller groups for discussion, did this process work? Why or why not?

4. Is there anything that you would like to have talked about that was not included in the sessions? If so, what? _____

5. What activity(ies) did you especially like? Why? _____

6. If there was an activity that you feel did not work in this context, can you tell us which activity and why? _____

7. In your opinion, will this discussion lead to greater commitment within the community or action for civil liberties? If not, how could discussion be amended to foster change?

8. Question:

9. Please rate your group leader's skills in leading the session(s): (Circle one)

Excellent Good Average Fair Poor

10. What suggestions would you offer to the group leader to improve the way the group is conducted? _____

Thank you very much for taking the time to give us your feedback! Please return your completed form to: _____

**BEACON PRESS DISCUSSION GUIDES
LEADER EVALUATION FORM**

Name: _____ Date: _____

UU Society: _____ District: _____

Book Title: _____

1. Do you and/or your participants think the sessions were: (Please check one)

____ too long ____ about right ____ too short

How long would you like the sessions to be? _____

2. Do you think that there were: (Please check one)

____ too many sessions ____ the right number of sessions ____ too few sessions

If you thought there were too many sessions, which ones would you leave out?

3. If your large group broke into smaller groups for discussion, did this process work?

Why or why not?

4. Is there anything that you would like to have talked about that was not included in the sessions? If so, what?

5. What activity(ies) did you especially like and why?

6. If there was an activity that you feel did not work in this context, can you tell us which activity and why?

7. Do you think the discussion guides will help to promote a stronger sense of community in your congregation? Why or why not?

8. Can you suggest other books or subjects that might work in this context?

9. If you changed the format, please describe the changes you made and your reason for making them.

Thank you for taking the time to give us your feedback!

Please return this form to:

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