

FREEDOM OF RELIGION Writing Assignments

John works as a teacher at the local public high school. One day as John was walking to work he noticed a large white cross on the lawn in front of the school. The principal of the school explained that it had been donated to the school by a local religious group in honor of the Easter holiday.

John objected to the display because he felt that it sent a message that the school favored Christianity over other religions.

Has John's Constitutional right been violated?

Consider:

- Does the cross send the message that John claims it does?
- If so, does the sending of the message violate the Constitution in any way?
- Would there be a difference if this were a private high school?

Assignment:

You must argue why the cross does not violate John's Constitutional rights.

John is a member of a very traditional Amish Colony. One of the most fundamental beliefs of his religion is to strictly observe Sunday as a day of rest.

One day John was hired as a police officer by the Salt Lake Police Department. One week after John was hired, he was told that he had to work on a Sunday shift. When John refused, he was fired from his job.

Has John's right to religious freedom been violated by the police department's action?

Consider:

- Should the police department have to arrange its program to accommodate John's religious beliefs?
- Should John simply realize that his beliefs may cause him to make certain sacrifices?
- Does it matter whether or not John really believes in his religion?

Assignment:

You must argue why John's Constitutional right to freely exercise his religious beliefs has been violated by the Salt Lake Police Department.