

Who owns you? The answer appears to be obvious, but is it? The clear intent of our founding fathers would be that each person owns themselves completely. Each person may do whatever they wish up to the point their actions interact with another's equivalent liberty. I would imagine that is one of the inalienable rights Jefferson wrote about in The Declaration of Independence. The most important point is that it is a part of being human. No government grants that right to you. However, you must claim that right or others will take it away from you.

If, we continue the investigation of who owns you, some serious limitations to self ownership become very obvious. First, we have the government regulation of food, nutritional supplements, drugs and water. You are not allowed to ingest anything you desire. Many compounds, some completely natural, are forbidden. Some chemicals, like fluoride, are imposed on you by the government in your water. It seems that the government has the final say about what ends up inside of you.

Certainly, you own your mind, right? I mean how could they know your thoughts? Or, punish you for them? Our government, now with The Patriot Act, can secretly access your library, video store and credit card records without informing you that they did it. With the modern hate crime laws, the thoughts in your head are now criminal conduct. Do not get me wrong, hate crimes are awful. However, I feel a person deserves up to life in prison for murder. I do not think why they did it makes any difference at all, unless it was self-defense. How intellectually free can you be when others can judge your synaptic functions and punish you for them?

The issues of sex and marriage combines both mind and body. You let the government judge the context of your sexual relationships. Sex for love is accepted, but sex for money is illegal. If, you truly owned your body and mind, what you do and why with another adult would be nobody's business. Think about it, you need government approval to get married! If, you look at the Gay Marriage Amendment, you can see the public wishing for more governmental intervention. They wish to forbid you from entering any social contract that resembles marriage, even for heterosexuals.

As the owner of yourself, the product of your physical and mental effort are yours. Well, after taxes, that is. You accept that your work is taxable. You accept that once you own a home, you must continue your lease payments to the local government or they will take it away from you. You accept being forced to aid those you would never imagine assisting. You accept paying for the enforcement of laws that you do not believe in. You accept having to pay to murder thousands in the name of the War on Terror. Can you really say you own your work, when government can forcefully take their piece of the action?

You would have a hard time claiming ownership of your children. Recent court cases have made it easier than ever for the government to take custody of children and impose the will of doctors in the treatment of disease. The right to refuse medical treatment is absolutely a derivative of self ownership. That right must extend to the medical decisions that parents make on the behalf of their kids.

Finally, we have the issue of capital punishment. Many feel comfortable allowing the government to take a life. The best way to show we value life is have our government lead by example. There is never a justification to take a life, aside from self-defense.

Ultimately, this comes down to real liberty. When you accept that you own yourself, you must demand to be in control of your own existence. You must demand that what you read, view, hear or think are yours. You must take responsibility for your actions. You must seek solutions to your problems without using the government to force others to assist you. Asking for help is fine, but people must be allowed

to decline. You will receive as much freedom as you grant others.