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### Casual Argument: Clash of Ideologies

This is a world filled with many different beliefs, ideologies and dogmas. By the very nature of being different, these beliefs are inexorably meant to clash, either in a grandiose fashion or a whimper. With the advent of the Internet, these differing ideas have a medium to spread their memes all across the globe in fractions of seconds. In regards to the political cartoons published by the Danish media, two ideologies have clashed: freedom of speech and Islam.

Ideologies, no matter how sacred or revered by the practitioner, do not have to be respected. Problems arise when people do not divorce the ideology from the person – that person who's ideology is being critically analyzed or even caricatured takes it upon themselves to be personally offended. If people were not allowed to attack ideologies, then those ideologies would more than likely become dogmatic truth. At the very heart of this Rhetoric and Composition class is the axiom that ideologies *should* be attacked. If someone argues that the moon is made of green cheese, we are under no obligation to respect this idea.

People, however, should be respected. As a minority, if I am confronted with an act of racism, it's my duty as a critical thinking human being to criticize the *act* of racism and not the racist himself. Racism, sexism and bigotry of these kinds are inherently abhorrent because they're ideologies specifically meant to demean the person. In 2006, we should be pitting ideologies against ideologies - attacking the person might be labeled an ad hominem fallacy.

Islamic tradition says that it is blasphemy to make drawings of the Prophet Muhammad. As a non-Muslim, this Islamic tradition is irrelevant for me, just as praying 5 times a day is irrelevant – just as performing in the Eucharist ceremony is irrelevant for a Muslim. Maybe Islamic tradition says that free speech should be non-existent, I'm not certain about the subject. However, free speech is an ideology that promotes and maybe even encourages the critique of other ideologies. It stands to reason that free speech itself is not immune to critique. When free speech can lead to the harm of a human being, the welfare of the person takes precedent.