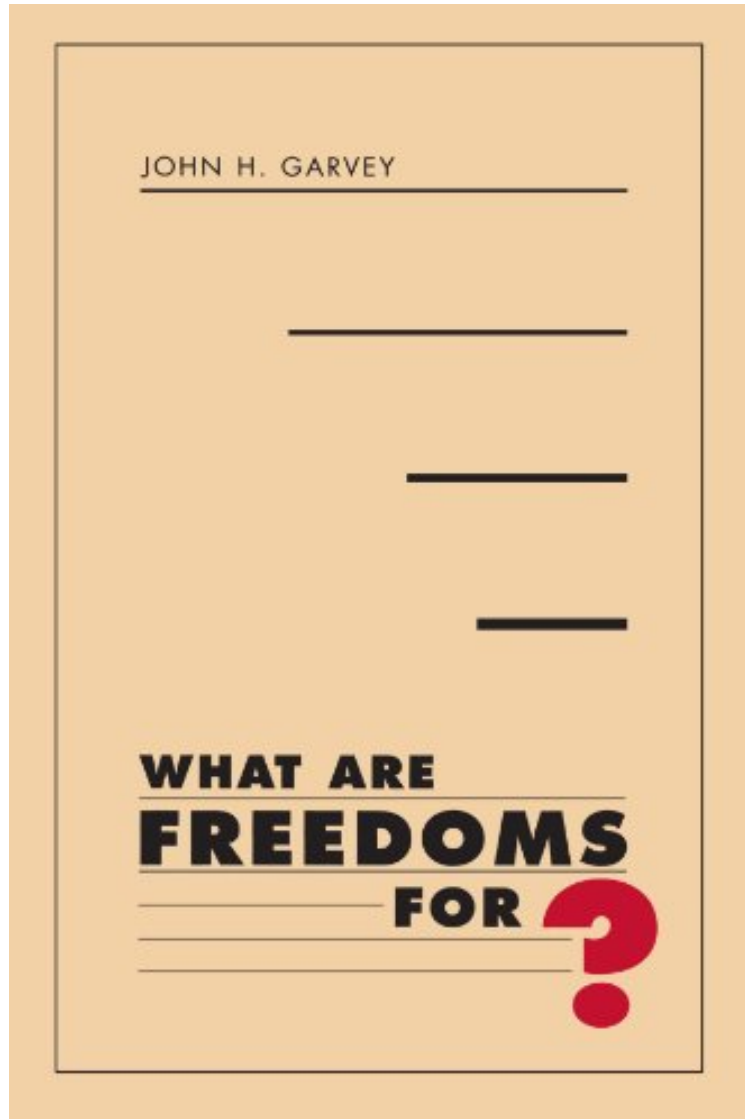


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## What Are Freedoms For?

*John H. Garvey*

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#4912943 in Books Harvard University Press 2000-10-16 2000-08-18Original language:EnglishPDF # 1  
9.00 x .80 x 6.00l, .85 #File Name: 0674004116320 pages | File size: 54.Mb

**John H. Garvey : What Are Freedoms For?** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised What Are Freedoms For?:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A much-needed correctiveBy J. MorrisGarvey tackles a difficult task with this book: He aims to correct our immature conception of freedom.Liberty abused becomes liberty lost - and lost willingly, out of desperation for peace and order. Like immature children who run wild when their parents aren't around, Americans have misused our freedom to pursue evils and wanton depravities of every sort.The aim of freedom

is to allow us to pursue the good - a pursuit both subjective and objective, to be sure. Unless we return to a less childish and more mature understanding of the purpose of freedom, we will, in our desperation, willingly relinquish more and more of our freedoms to any tyrant who promises to save us from ourselves. 1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Too expensive for the masses! By A Customer I had the chance to spot review this book at a local book store and found Garvey's "Americanism" to be very refreshing and woefully needed. He makes clear and concise statements in his narratives. This is a book that should be considered for mandatory reading in every Junior and Senior High School in America today. The only holdout to this book is the high cost per issue, which tends to make potential readers want to look elsewhere. Drop the price \$10-\$12 and you won't be able to keep them in stock. This is a book to read and quote, not a "coffee table or looks good in a library " book!

We generally suppose that it is our right to freedom which allows us to make the choices that shape our lives. The right to have an abortion is called "freedom of choice" because, it is said, a woman should be free to choose between giving birth and not doing so. Freedom of speech protects us whether we want to salute the flag or burn it. There is a correlative principle: one choice is as good as another. Freedom is not a right that makes moral judgments. It lets us do what we want. John Garvey disputes both propositions. We should understand freedom, he maintains, as a right to act, not a right to choose; and furthermore, we should view freedom as a right to engage in actions that are good and valuable. This may seem obvious, but it inverts a central principle of liberalism--the idea that the right is prior to the good. Thus friendship is a good thing; and one reason the Constitution protects freedom of association is that it gives us the space to form friendships. This book casts doubt on the idea that freedoms are bilateral rights that allow us to make contradictory choices: to speak or remain silent, to believe in God or to disbelieve, to abort or to give birth to a child. Garvey argues that the goodness of childbearing does not entail the goodness of abortion; and if freedom follows from the good, then freedom to do the first does not entail the freedom to do the second. Each action must have its own justification. Garvey holds that if the law is to protect freedoms, it is permissible--indeed it is necessary--to make judgments about the goodness and badness of actions. The author's keen insights into important rights issues, communicated with verve and a variety of both real and hypothetical cases, will be of interest to all who care about the meaning of freedoms.