

SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS  
AUSTRALIAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

**Question No. 50**

**Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked the following question at the hearing on 20 October 2008:**

Please explain how the involvement of religion in debates about homosexuality and abortion are relevant to multiculturalism.

**The answer to the honourable senator's question is as follows:**

The Commission's Freedom of Religion and Belief in the 21st Century research project is not about multiculturalism per se. The consultations and research inquire into what the Australian community consider to be critical issues about the importance, and the intersections of belief systems (religious or non-religious, as outlined in article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)) in contemporary society.

A full consideration of the issues that are within the public domain, and which intersect with freedom of religion and belief, include those of homosexuality and abortion, although these are not areas on which the Commission is specifically focusing its consultations and research.