

Federal Appeals Excerpts

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[1] In determining whether the Church of Wicca is a religion protected by the free exercise clause of the first amendment, the district court considered whether the Church occupies a place in the lives of it's members "parallel to that filled by the orthodox belief in God" in religions more widely accepted in the United States. (United States v Seeger, 380 U.S. 163,166,85 S.Ct. 850,854,13 L.Ed.2d 733(1964)) The district court found that members of the Church of Wicca "adhere to a fairly complex set of doctrines relating to the spiritual aspects of their lives". These doctrines concern ultimate questions of human life, as do the doctrines of recognized religions.{ See Africa v Pennsylvania, 662 F 2d 1025,1032(3d Cir.1982); International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Inc. v Barber,650 F. 2d 430,440(2d Cir. 1981); Malnak v Yogi, 592 F.2d 197,208,(3d Cir. 1979) (Adams, J., Concurring)}

(Text not included here)

We agree with the district court, 617 F.Supp 592 (1985) that the Church of Wicca occupies a place in the lives of it's members parallel to that of more conventional religions. Consequently, it's doctrine must be considered a religion.{ See Seeger.380 U.S. at 166,85 S.Ct. at 207-10 (Adams,J., Concurring)}