



# OPINION

The Winners Circle

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## COLIN B. SINNARD



Salutations! My name is Colin B. Sinnard. I am 17 and will be a senior at Trinity High School, in Louisville, Ky.

This week I have experienced some fun, eye opening experiences. My favorite place we visited all week was the NTRA because it helped give me a better knowledge of the Thoroughbred racing industry.

My favorite news reporter of all time is Bob Woodward because he gave news reporters more credibility for their work.

On this trip I learned that if you get along with the people you're working with, the easier it makes your job.

My favorite Kate quote is "Look, the squirrel turned the Razzles to gum." My favorite Rachel quote is "What clutch??"

- Fear: Birds
- Movie: "Angels in the Outfield"
- Accomplishment: perfect attendance all of my life.
- Sport: Cross country
- Currently the editor in chief of Trinity High School newspaper, The Echo

## Is First Amendment losing its luster?

By Colin B. Sinnard

The First Amendment is like a carnival. Everything seems to be free when you walk in and then BOOM, your \$50 are gone and your pockets are filled with nothing but lint and a paper clip. Now the \$50 that you had when you walked in is in the pockets of the clowns who told you it was free.

Our First Amendment is why good news reporters such as Bob Woodward from the Washington Post had groups like police, FBI and the government questioning his integrity for the stories he writes for the public's morning entertainment.

It is why people like Jeffrey Wigand, a former employee of Brown and Williamson Tobacco Co. were threatened by terrorists for telling the truth. Even political figures such as the honorable Chief Justice Roy Moore cannot express his religion freely in the Alabama Courthouse by putting a statue of the Ten Commandments in the building.

If this story was a 10-page research paper on the actions

that have defied the First Amendment, then I could keep the list flowing with different people and different actions that have been taken for many pages. The First Amendment gives us the freedom of religion, speech, press, peaceful assembly and to petition government. I don't remember it saying anywhere in there anything about having consequences for these actions. Although, if the First Amendment were to be re-written today, I am sure that it would be in there somewhere.

There should be action taken to keep the First Amendment's original intent. The public is now taking the amendment for granted. The government needs to take a look at how we are beginning to change the history that our founding fathers have given to us.

"Our liberty depends on the freedom of the press, and that cannot be limited without being lost," said Thomas Jefferson, one of our founding fathers.

The people of America should be able to say what they think without people calling them and

threatening their lives. America is about having freedom, not hiding everything you have to say to keep a certain audience happy. You will always have people who disagree with you in the world. That is a part of free speech.

Having consequences for what you say or believe is wrong. That goes against everything that the United States stands for, and that is having freedom. The United States needs to do something about this problem before it spreads like a cancer throughout the United States.

The next time you go to that money draining democracy we call a carnival, remember the consequences that come along with entering. Bring a few extra bucks with you and see if you walk out with the money. If you have the will power to go to a carnival and walk out without spending a dime, then that should prove that it is possible to get our First Amendment back on track and knock out the consequences. That would be the least we could do to repay our founding fathers.

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allowed our country to progress over time and remove a tremendous divider.

In 1973 Watergate was one of the largest scandals to take place in the history of our United States because it not only involved the executive branch, but it also involved the legislature and the Supreme Court. When our governmental system turns corrupt, who else can the people of the United States trust? The First Amendment gave our country the right to freedom of the press allowing us to pursue the truth and replace the corrupt with honesty.

"Journalists must seek and speak the truth, for we are the voice of the voiceless millions," said Razia Bhatti, a Pakistani journalist.

One example of freedom of assembly being exercised took place on Aug. 15, 1969, at a gathering called Woodstock. Woodstock was a free concert to promote peace and love. Although 500,000 people attended this concert, no fights or acts of violence broke out. Without the First Amendment, this act protesting the Vietnam War would not have been allowed because it would have been seen as treachery toward our country.

"You could shake off the mud, the music would fade, but you could never forget the emotion," said Gary Proud, a New York State assemblyman.

Animal rights activists' key method of obtaining public awareness has been through petitions. Without the First Amendment, cosmetic companies could possibly still be testing their products on innocent animals. Abolishing this method of testing partially through petitions has given our country a more fair title perceived by many around the world.

"If abandoning animal research means that there are some things we cannot learn, then so be it ... We have no basic right ... not to be harmed by those natural diseases we are heir to," said Tom Regan in "The Case for Animal Rights."

Working together, these five rights that were granted by the First Amendment have formed the basis of the United States. Without the amendment, we would be no better than England, the place we escaped from years ago to find peace.

**The equine industry cooperated to help teach students and provide them opportunities to report. Our thanks to the NTRA for lunch, a briefing and souvenirs. KEEP provided a briefing and hats. Wayne Murty at Keeneland volunteered his time and made sure each student got a horseback ride. Dan Rosenberg, Erika Justus and Three Chimneys Farm made possible a behind-the-scenes tour and briefing. We enjoyed an informative tour of Keeneland Library with Phyllis Rogers. Party Kits and Equestrian Gifts provided gifts for students.**

My name is Mari Stansbury. I am 18. I graduated from Sacred Heart Academy and next year I will be attending UK. I live in Louisville, Ky.

My favorite journalist is Diane Sawyer.

The best place we visited this week was the Herald-Leader because I learned a lot about the newspaper industry.

This week I learned the major impact the horse industry has on Kentucky and I met a bunch of awesome people.

Fun Facts: I was born in California and I was the co-editor of my high school yearbook.

## MARI STANSBURY



## With freedom comes responsibility

By Mari Stansbury

You have the right to *not* remain silent when defending the First Amendment.

The First Amendment guarantees us certain rights as Americans, but it also instills us with certain responsibilities. We are given these rights, but we do not have the right to use our freedoms to harm or hinder the freedoms of others.

All five freedoms offered by the First Amendment, religion, speech, the press, assembly and petition, are not entirely free. As you will see, each is accompanied by certain responsibilities.

By having freedom of religion, we are given the right to decide for ourselves whether or not to partake in a system of beliefs. However, everyone is entitled to his or her own opinions and we must respect that. We are all citizens of the United States

and have the right to be treated as equals despite our religious preferences, and we are guaranteed this under the First Amendment.

The First Amendment also grants us the freedom of speech. This means that we are entitled to hold our own opinions and say whatever we want to say. Once again we have a responsibility that comes along with that. We cannot use our free speech for slander or defamation.

Freedom of the press says that the newspapers can print anything that they want to print.

"But, it doesn't mean I can write whatever I want to write," said Dan Liebman, the executive editor of *Blood Horse* magazine. "It does give me the right as a journalist to gather the information I want to pass on to my readers."

It offers great protection for all journalists, but journalists also have the

responsibility to report their stories justly and accurately.

Being given the right to assembly allows people to gather together to stand up for their own beliefs. They do not have to fear being hosed down or shot at by members of the opposition.

However, they are being given the right to *peaceful* assembly and have a certain obligation to uphold the peace. They are no longer protected under the First Amendment if they start riots or instigate violence.

As American citizens we are granted the right to petition our government under the First Amendment. We are allowed to ask the government to change any practices or procedures of the government that we view as unjust. But at the same time, we have the responsibility to abide by and uphold any law that our government

chooses to enforce. We can petition against something we do not like, but we do not have the right to deliberately ignore the regulations that are placed upon us.

On a whole, the First Amendment is a vital component to the way we, as Americans, operate on a day-to-day basis. We do not have to worry about being persecuted for what we believe is right. We cannot use our rights to deny others their rights. There is a line that is drawn and we have the responsibility not to take these rights too far. We must respect everyone and treat everyone as equals. You have the right *not* to remain silent when you are defending the most important 45 words in the English language. As long as we are responsible with our rights no one should interfere with our freedoms.





