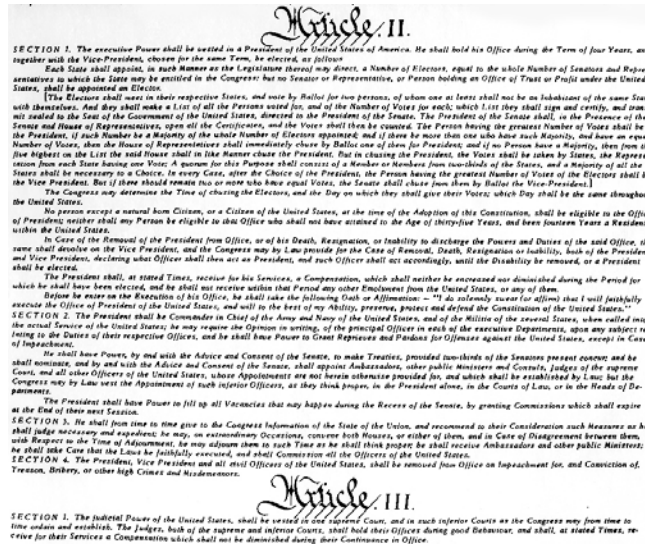

September 17

It's Constitution Day!



So, who cares?

Bill Chapman

from the League of Women Voters

Berkeley, Albany, Emeryville

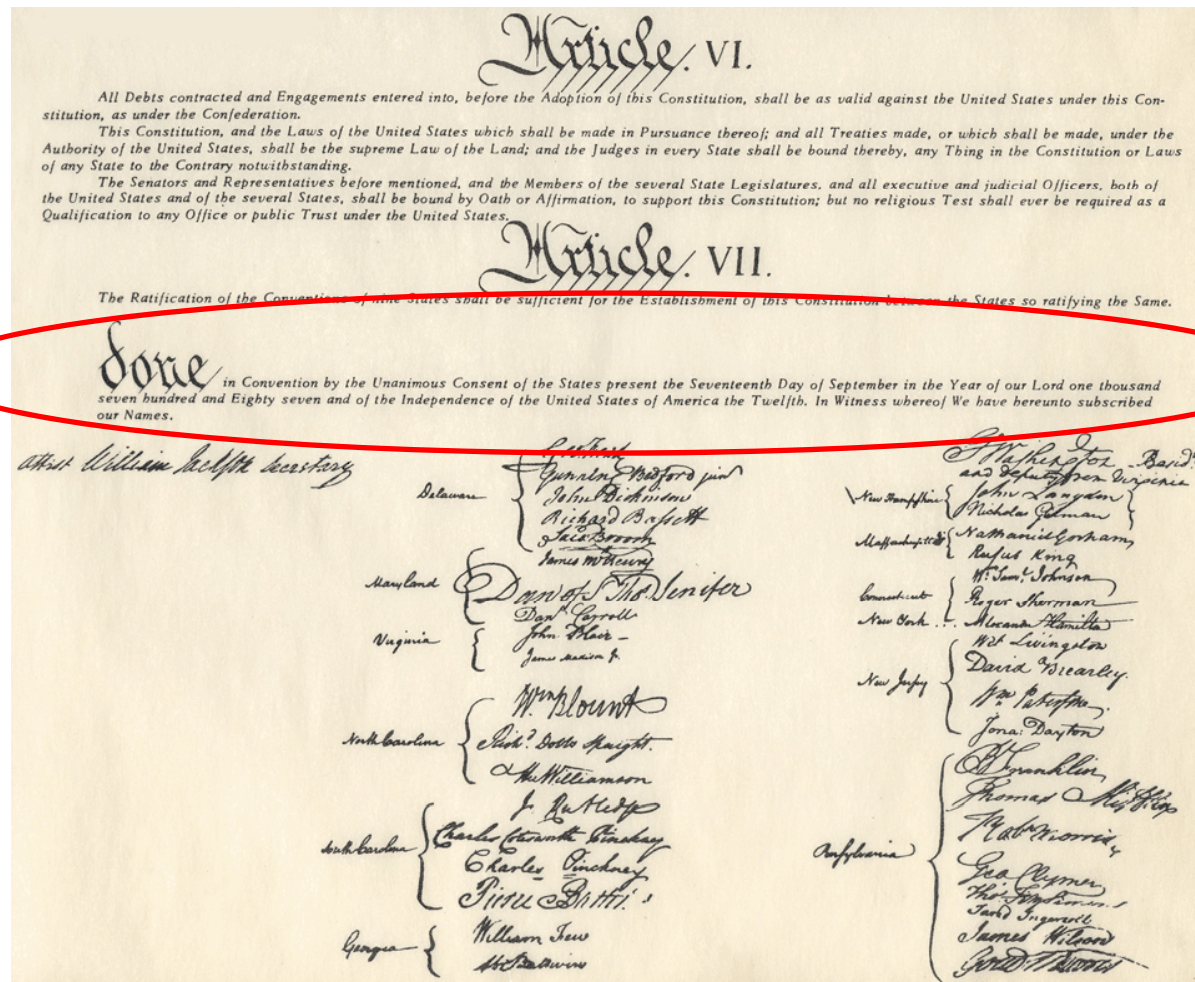
<http://lwvbae.org/civics.htm>

says it should be you

Why September 17?

Why September 17?

The answer lies in the Constitution itself



Why Constitution Day?

Why Constitution Day?

Senator Robert C. Byrd, a West Virginia Democrat and the United States Congress' unofficial Constitutional scholar, believes that American elementary, high school, college and university students lack the Constitutional knowledge they need in order to function successfully as citizens.

In December 2004, Senator Byrd offered an amendment intended to increase Constitutional knowledge. The bill was passed by both the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate, and was signed into law by the President. It went into effect in 2005.

The legislation requires that all educational institutions that receive federal funds teach something relating to the United States Constitution on September 17 of each year. September 17th was selected as the date for celebration because it was on September 17, 1787, that the delegates to the Constitutional Convention met for the last time to sign the United States Constitution and presented it to the American public and to the states for ratification.

Teaching about the United States Constitution provides students with an increased awareness of, and an appreciation for, this most important document of freedom.

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- If citizens do not understand how the government is supposed to work, or do not care enough to stay informed, discuss issues facing the community, vote thoughtfully and keep an eye on what their representatives are doing; then the government designed by the framers will not function in the interests of the citizens.

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- After the Constitution was finished, and as he was leaving Independence Hall, Benjamin Franklin is reported to have been asked, “Well, Doctor, what have we got—a Republic or a Monarchy?” His reply, “A Republic, if you can keep it.”

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- After the Constitution was finished, and as he was leaving Independence Hall, Benjamin Franklin is reported to have been asked, “Well, Doctor, what have we got—a Republic or a Monarchy?” His reply, “A Republic, if you can keep it.”
- 221 years later, we in this room, as well as our fellow citizens across the land still face Benjamin Franklin’s challenge: **Can we keep it?**

So, Can We Keep It?

- Do Americans lack basic knowledge about the Constitution?

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- Do Americans lack basic knowledge about the Constitution?
- Do students at this school?

So, Can We Keep It?

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So, Can We Keep It?

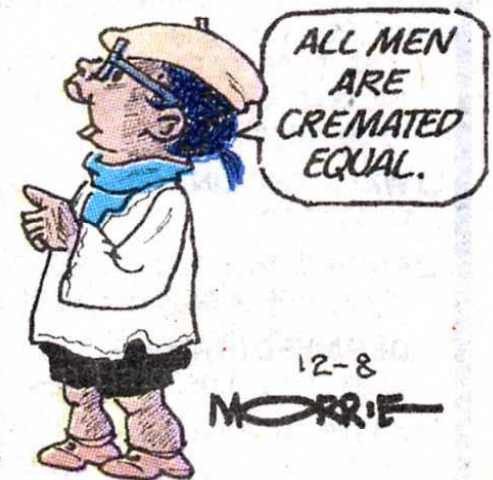
- Do Americans lack basic knowledge about the Constitution?
- Do students at this school?
- Do you?
- If so, who cares?
- We will spend the next few minutes in an attempt to find out.

What is wrong with this?

Wee Pals/Morrie Turner



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What is wrong with this?

Wee Pals/Morrie Turner



1. Thomas Jefferson wrote, "All men are created equal", not "All men are cremated equal."

What is wrong with this?

Wee Pals/Morrie Turner



1. Thomas Jefferson wrote, "All men are created equal", not "All men are cremated equal."
2. Jefferson wrote, "All men are created equal" as part of the Declaration of Independence (1776). That phrase does not appear in the Bill of Rights.

U.S. Constitution vs. Pop Culture

A survey released by the National Constitution Center in 1998 illustrates how little most of us know about the Constitution. It showed that students know much more about pop culture than they do about the United States Constitution. Six-hundred students responded to the survey.

Key findings from the survey include:

- **25.5% of respondents know the name of the city where the Constitution was written compared to 75.2% who know the city associated with the zip code 90210. What is the name of each city?**

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The framers in **Philadelphia**, Sept. 17, 1787



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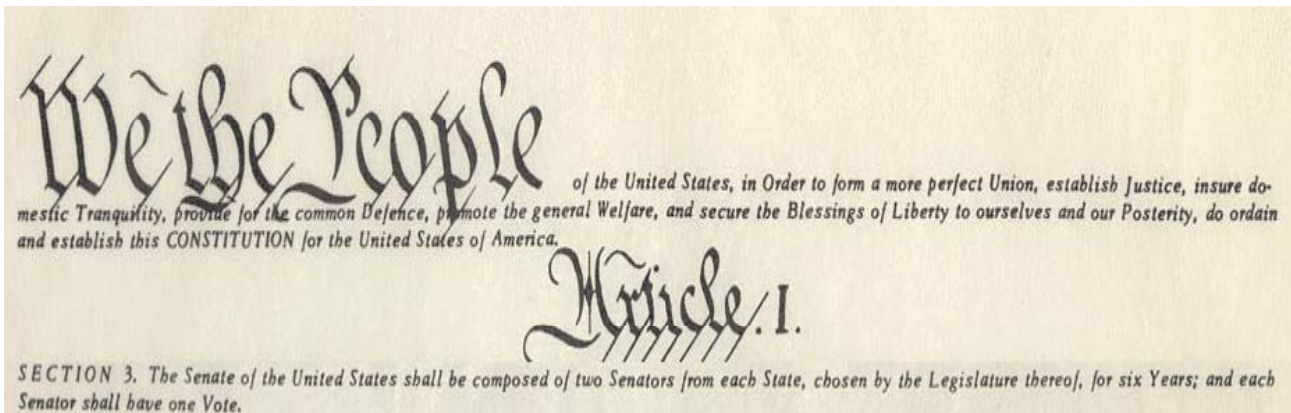
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50 states * 2 senators each = 100 senators



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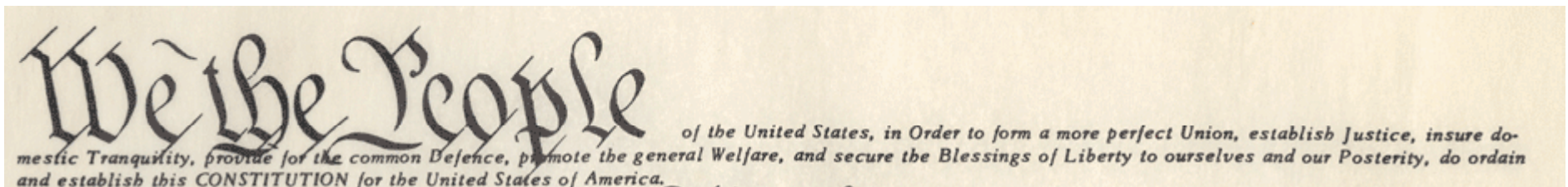
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<http://www.constitutionday.com/>

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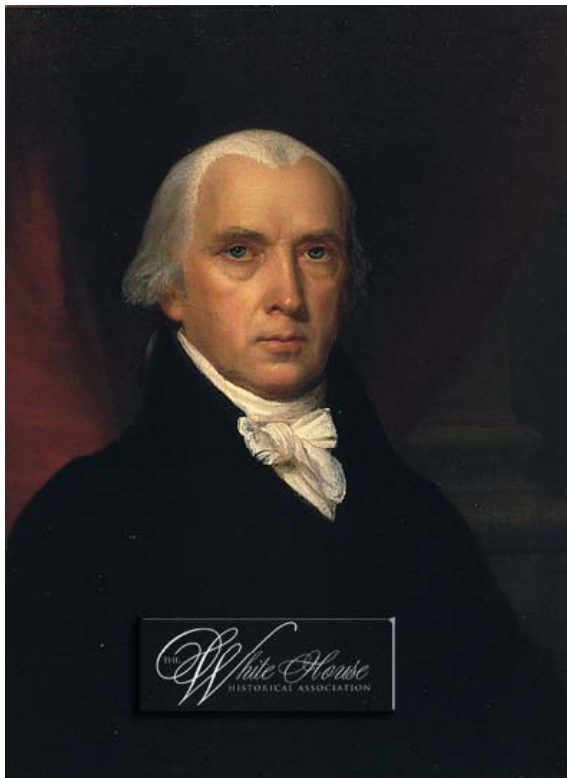
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James Madison



Bill Gates

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- **25% of respondents know which Constitutional Amendment protects against double jeopardy/self incrimination/right to a grand jury/due process/compensation for private property taken for public use compared to 63.7% who know the name of the device that protects against car theft. Which Constitutional Amendment and which device are the correct answers?**

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You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to speak to an attorney, and to have an attorney present during any questioning. If you cannot afford a lawyer, one will be provided for you at government expense.

5th Amendment

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.



the Club

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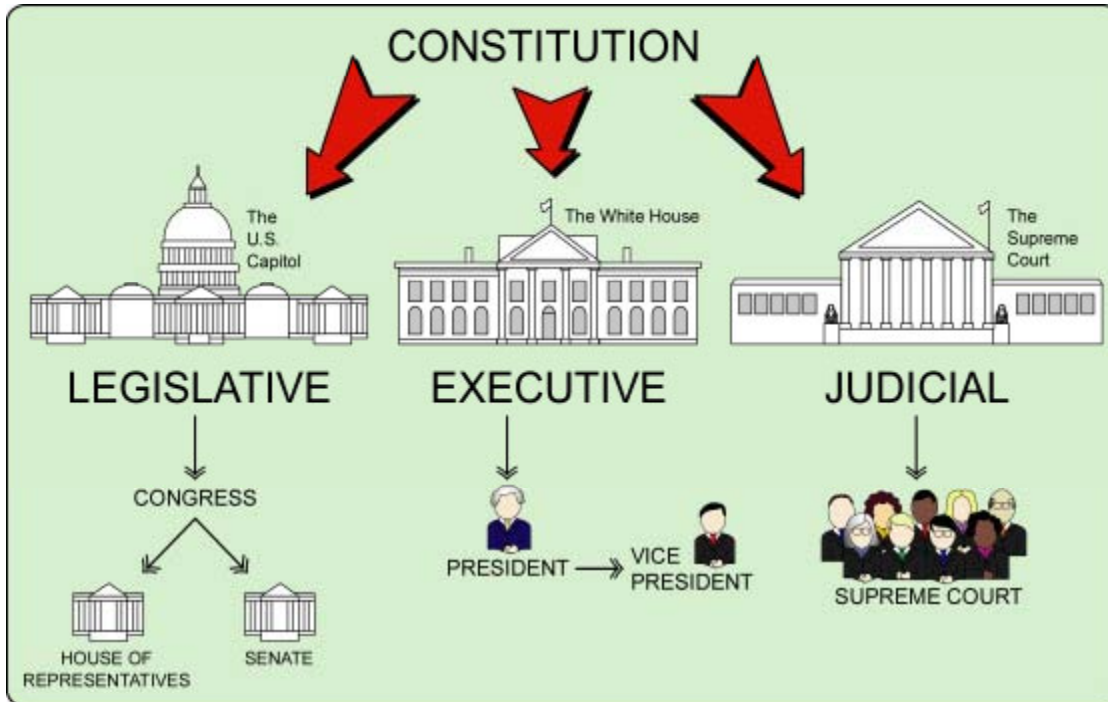
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- 1.8% of respondents know that James Madison is considered the father of the U.S. Constitution compared to 58.3% who know that Bill Gates is the father of Microsoft.
- 25% of respondents know that the Fifth Amendment protects against double jeopardy/self incrimination/right to a grand jury/due process/compensation for private property taken for public use compared to 63.7% who know that “The Club” protects against car theft.
- **41.2% of respondents know the names of the three branches of government compared to 59.2% who know the names of the three stooges. What are the correct names for each?**

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Curly, Larry and Moe

U.S. Constitution vs. Pop Culture

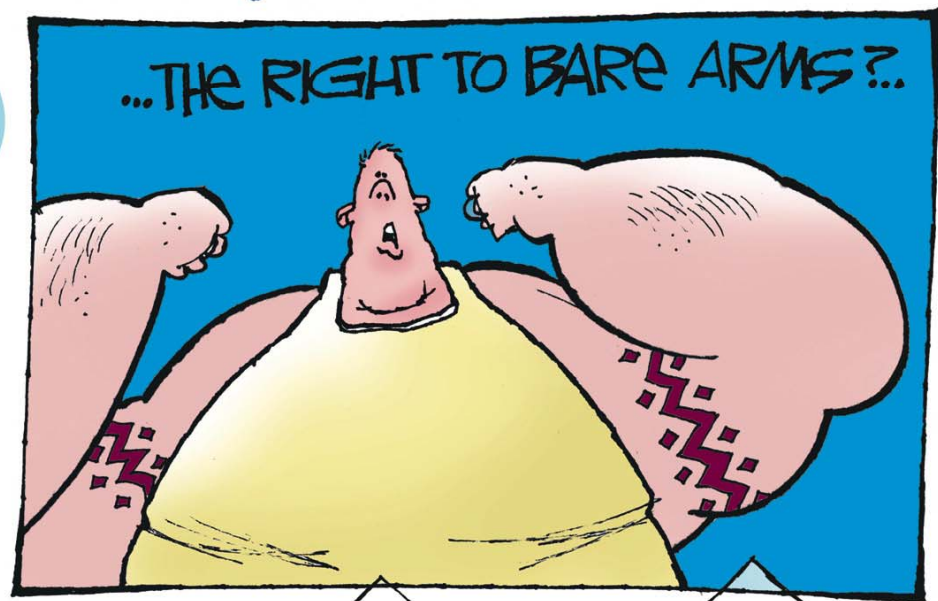
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- 41.2% of respondents know the names of the three branches of government (Congress, the Executive or President and the Judiciary) compared to 59.2% who know the names of the three stooges (Larry, Moe and Curly).

If these statistics concern you, imagine how Senator Byrd must have felt. It is the results of surveys such as this one that drive the desire to teach American history, civics and information about our founding documents.

HEY, KIDS...WHAT'S THE FIRST AMENDMENT?..



EDITORS NOTE:

We tried to stop this cartoonist from making you look uninformed... But that's his **First Amendment** right.

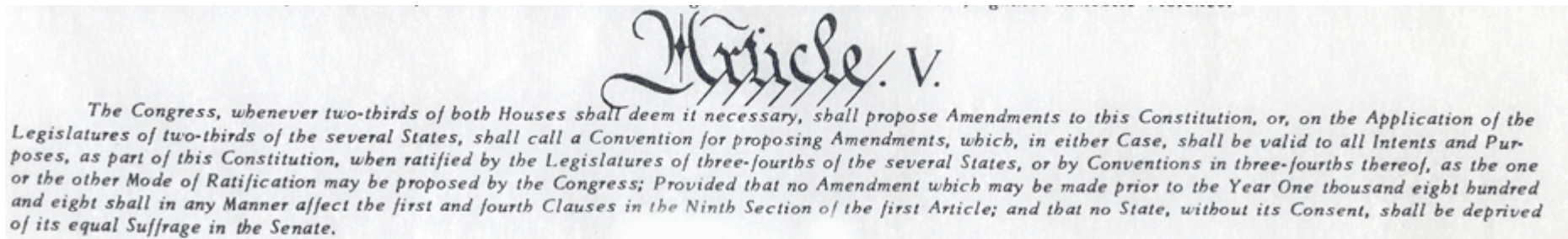
WALT HANDLISMAN ©2004

Let's start with

Hey kids ... what's an amendment?

Let's start with **Hey kids ... what's an amendment?**

In Article V, the framers provided for two ways to change (amend) the Constitution



They had the foresight to know that for the system of government they were creating to survive, it had to be able to adapt as the nation grew and changed. But they didn't make it easy for that to happen.

The Constitution has been amended 27 times during the 219 years since it went into effect.

2 concerned the production and sale of alcoholic beverages:

- The 18th amendment (1919) prohibited the production and sale of most alcoholic beverages in the U.S.
- The 21st amendment (1933) repealed the 18th amendment.

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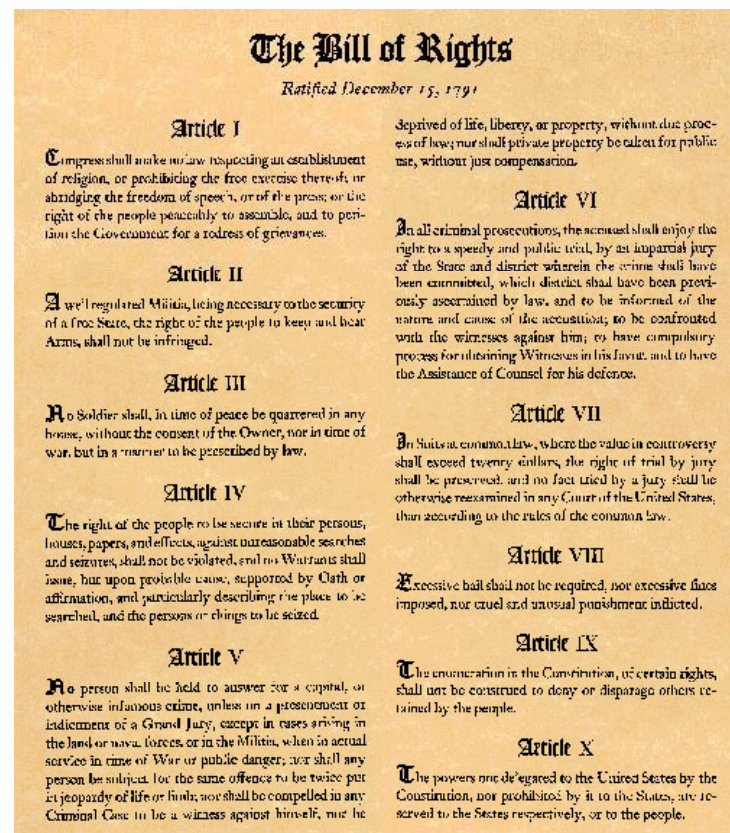
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8 made changes to the mechanics of government and Constitutional procedures.

The Constitution has been amended 27 times during the 219 years since it went into effect.

That leaves 10. They are the most famous. Amendments 1-10 (**The Bill of Rights**) were submitted to the states by the first Congress, ratified quickly, and became effective in 1791.



The 1st Amendment, considered by many to be the most important of all, has been the source of endless controversy; the basis of lawsuit after lawsuit after lawsuit. In many ways, it touches each of our lives everyday. So, ...



HEY, KIDS...WHAT'S The FIRST AMENDMENT?

- It protects several fundamental rights.
- How many of them can you name?

HEY, KIDS...WHAT'S The FIRST AMENDMENT?

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How many of them can you name?

1. Freedom of Speech



HEY, KIDS...WHAT'S The FIRST AMENDMENT??

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1. Freedom of Speech
2. Freedom of Religious Expression



HEY, KIDS...WHAT'S The FIRST AMENDMENT?

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1. Freedom of Speech
2. Freedom of Religious Expression
3. Freedom to Assemble Peacefully



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3. Freedom to Assemble Peacefully
4. Freedom to Petition for Redress of Grievances

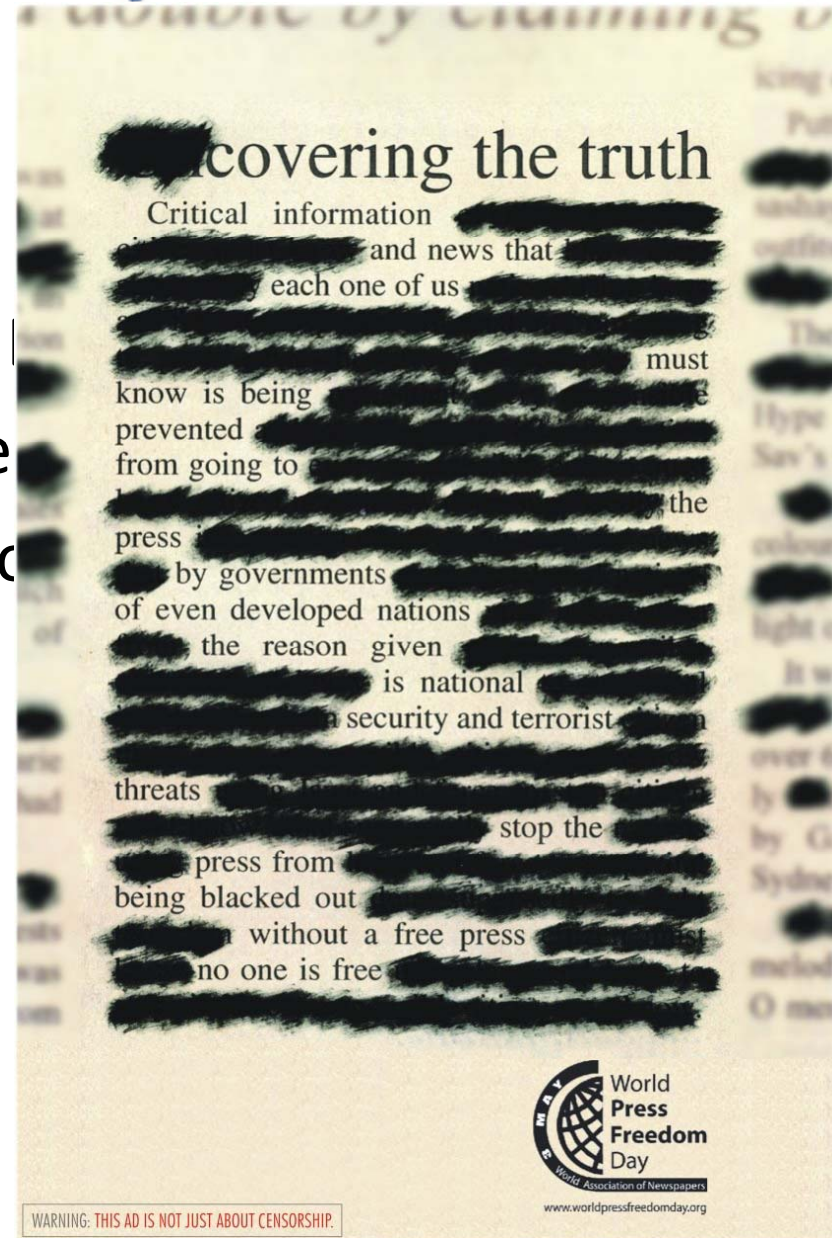


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2. Freedom of Religious
3. Freedom to Assemble
4. Freedom to Petition for
5. Freedom of the Press



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2. Freedom of Religious Expression
3. Freedom to Assemble Peacefully
4. Freedom to Petition for Redress of Grievances
5. Freedom of the Press

Amendment I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Each year the 1st Amendment Center polls to find out what Americans think about issues relating to the 1st Amendment. Let's see how your answers compare to some results from the 2007 poll.

- Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

Musicians should be allowed to sing songs with lyrics that some people might find offensive.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ Don't Know _____

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Agree 47% Disagree 51% Don't Know 3%

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- Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

The nation's Founders intended the United States to be a Christian nation.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ Don't Know _____

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Agree 65% Disagree 31% Don't Know 4%

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- Do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

School officials should be allowed to discipline students who, while off-campus, post entries on social networking sites like "MySpace.com" that may be disruptive to school classes.

Agree _____ Disagree _____ Don't Know _____

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Agree 50% Disagree 46% Don't Know 5%

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- If an amendment prohibiting burning or desecrating the American flag were approved, it would be the first time any of the freedoms in the First Amendment have been amended in over 200 years. Knowing this, would you still support an amendment to prohibit burning or desecrating the flag?

Yes _____ No _____ Don't Know _____

Each year the 1st Amendment Center polls to find out what Americans think about issues relating to the 1st Amendment. Let's see how your answers compare to some results from the 2007 poll.

- If an amendment prohibiting burning or desecrating the American flag were approved, it would be the first time any of the freedoms in the First Amendment have been amended in over 200 years. Knowing this, would you still support an amendment to prohibit burning or desecrating the flag?

Yes 83% No 15% Don't Know 2%

Finally, News Headlines Show Teen Lives Touched by Constitutional Government

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- US MILITARY DEATHS IN IRAQ WAR AT 4,159

Happy Constitution Day!

Why not celebrate everyday?

