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Federalist Papers live on in First Amendment

Alexander Hamilton, known as "Publius" in the Federalist Papers, poses the statement, "The liberty of the press shall be inviolably preserved?" What is the liberty of the press? Who can give it any definition which would not leave the utmost latitude for evasion? I hold it to be impracticable; and from this I infer, that its security, whatever fine declarations may be inserted in any constitution respecting it, must altogether depend on public opinion, and on the general spirit of the people and of the government."

James Madison, the fourth President of the United States said in 1799, "To the press alone chequered as it is with abuses, the world is indebted for all the triumphs which have been gained by reason and humanity, over error and oppression."

And "standing up for what is right isn't always popular," said Mary Beth Tinker in 1997 referring back to her 1969 Supreme Court case as a plaintiff. It has not been easy for freedom of expression crusaders and current supporters of the First Amendment. The liberty of the press and the pure freedom of expression has always and will be challenged.

Many like Mark Goodman,

executive director of the Student Press Law Center, helps students maintain their rights to freedom of the press. He said, "For every student journalist who is taught that censorship is not only legally permissible but morally appropriate, we place the future of the First Amendment a little more at risk."

Philip F. Gainous, Maryland high school principal echoed Goodman's point on censorship when he said, "Instead of putting restrictions on [students], we should be sure to help them handle their responsibilities and give them the freedom to fly."

The point cannot be stressed enough that the liberty of the press and especially the freedom for students to express themselves should never be restricted. "First Amendment freedoms must be fought for and won over and over again. The first step in this battle is to understand the threats that we face," said lawyer

and educator Donna Demac. Demac was right in saying that people should never give up on the First Amendment. Silence is the one hindrance to freedom: "To silence criticism is to silence freedom," said

Sidney Hook, philosopher and educator. Once people stop voicing their opinion and stop reporting on the wrongs of society, then we have begun to lose the battle to uphold the first and most important of the United States' Bill of Rights.

The once-exiled and controversial novelist Salman Rushdie knows about not having the freedom of speech. He said, "Free speech is life itself."

Cushrow Irani, an Indian editor said

last year, "If we [the media] do not sound the warning, who will?" Rushdie and Irani have a point; without the media as the watchdogs of society, who will expose corruption and abuse of power?

"The press should be considered not as a fourth branch of government but as an essential counterweight to government, the basic check against abuse of official power," stated former publisher of the Washington Post, Katharine Graham.

"The right to express yourself is not something that's inherently part of being a journalist; it's part of being a human being," said Kanthan Pillay, a South African newspaper editor. As many writers, editors and members of the media have expressed, freedom of speech is not to be taken lightly. It is our birthright. Our founding fathers did not set up a ludicrous system that does not help its people, although it may seem that way sometimes when justice is not served to our liking.

The founding fathers, like Hamilton and Madison, had our best interests at heart while laboring over our wondrous Constitution. The thought of not exercising these inalienable rights is nauseating and disrespectful to democracy.

"Freedom of the press is not just important to democracy, it is democracy," remarked journalist, Walter Cronkite. Let freedom reign, let the people speak freely, and let the people expose corruption.

—Jennifer Schestok

The First Amendment

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.

Student newspapers are crucial to college community says Supreme Court Justices

The Supreme Court noted in the Healy v. James case that "the college classroom and its surrounding environs [like a college newspaper] is peculiarly the 'marketplace of ideas.'" The Court's previous rulings say in regards to censorship that it "leave no room for the view that because, of the acknowledged need for order, First Amendment protections should apply with less force on college campuses than in the community at large. Quite on the contrary, the vigilant protection of constitutional freedoms is nowhere more vital than in the community of American schools."

As a result of the landmark cases of Healy and Papish v. Board

of Curators of the University of Missouri, many courts, including the Supreme Court, have noted that "The university setting of college-aged students being exposed to a wide range of intellectual experience creates a relatively mature marketplace for the interchange of ideas, so the underlying assumption that there is positive social value in an open forum seems particularly

appropriate. . . The university is a tradition of free

expression...fundamental to the functioning of our society."

The college newspaper is a significant avenue for student expression. Where would a collegiate community be without such a venue?

"A people without information is a dead people," says Rosalina Tuyue Velasquez, a Guatemalan official. A

student-run newspaper is exactly the place where freedom reigns.

According to Thomas Jefferson,

"The university setting of college-aged students being exposed to a wide range of intellectual experience creates a relatively mature marketplace for the interchange of ideas...."
—The Supreme Court

the third President of the United States, "The press is the best instrument for enlightening the mind of man." The playwright, Tess Onwueme in the same idea as Jefferson stated, "We write to develop consciousness, not to entertain; there's enough entertainment going on."

Student journalists and journalists everywhere do not stop writing because of censorship, the lack of writers, or whatever the case, no, these situations only encourage them to write more often. As the British novelist, Kingsley Amis said, "If you can't annoy somebody with what you write, I think there's little point in writing." That's encouragement in itself.

What role does the Albrightian play on campus?

What is its significance to you?



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Albright College Box #107 • 13th & Bern Streets
P.O. Box 15234 • Reading, PA 19612-5234
Phone: (610) 921-7558 • Fax: (610) 921-7532

Editorial Staff

Editor-in-Chief	John Schestok
Consulting Editor	Michael Adams
Copy Editor	Jeff Siegel
News Editor	Nathaniel Carey
Features Editor	
Sports Editor	Emily Wagner
Photography Editor	Dave Sarkisian

Business and Administration Staff

Advertising Managers	Nichole Griffith/ Hillary Cassarino
Business Manager	Keene Turner
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Computer Consultant	Mike Ciccarelli

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