

CONSTITUTION DAY 2017

By definition, a constitution is “a body of fundamental principles ... according to which a state or other organization is acknowledged to be governed. Synonyms: charter, social code, law; bill of rights; rules, regulations, fundamental principles, e.g., “the constitution guarantees our rights””*

Drafting it was a creative and visionary act, during the revolutionary war, “times,” Thomas Paine observed, “that try men’s souls,” words also suited to today’s political climate. But though it was written over 200 years ago, the Constitution is a living document, reviewed, argued over, occasionally amended, continuously.

Why is it important, *especially* in this current moment?
Do you feel protected by it?

The recent white nationalist protest and counter-protest in Charlottesville, among other things, challenged the definition of “**free speech**,” protected under the first amendment to the Constitution. Should hate speech be protected under the first amendment?

On September 5, the White House announced it would repeal DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals aka The Dream Act), putting 800,000 young people, many in school or college, whose parents emigrated to the U.S. illegally, in jeopardy. What are your feelings about DACA and its repeal?

Trump and his allies on the right have often cried “Fake news!” about the mainstream media’s reporting; federal investigators have uncovered fake news stories about the 2016 election promulgated by Russian agencies. How does the specter of fake news influence your reading? How important is **Freedom of the Press**?

Check out the interactive app of the Constitution, & see the copy of the Constitution in the student lounge, where you can draw &/or write your thoughts this week.

*Google Dictionary, accessed 9/15/17