

# SALEM PRESS

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## **Salem Press Announces *Defining Documents in American History: The First Amendment***

These volumes explore the five freedoms protected in the First Amendment—speech, religion, press, assembly, and the right to petition the government. Together, these five guaranteed freedoms make the people of the United States the freest in the world. There is no age or citizenship requirement to exercise your First Amendment—they are guaranteed the day you are born as long as you are in the U.S. Few Americans would question the importance of the First Amendment, despite the misunderstanding that often swirls around the principles embodied in these freedoms. From the birth of the First Amendment in 1789 to today, most Americans exercise these rights every day.

*Defining Documents in American History: The First Amendment* offers in-depth analysis of 66 primary source documents, tracing the rights defined in the First Amendment and their evolution throughout the history of the United States, from 1637 to the present day. These include book excerpts, speeches, political debates, testimony, court rulings, legal texts, legislative acts, essays, newspaper and magazine articles, and interviews. The first volume of this set focuses on the early definition and role of the First Amendment, and themes such as freedom of religion, freedom of speech, and freedom of the press. The second volume dedicated to themes such as freedom of assembly, the First Amendment and education, and the First Amendment in times of crisis. These documents, and more, provide an overview of the history and contemporary issues surrounding freedom of speech, religion, press, assembly, and the right to petition the government in America in the past and the present.

The material is organized into seven sections, and each section begins with a brief introduction that examines the titular subject before exploring a variety of historical documents.

- **First Amendment: Genesis and Debate** includes documents that track the early history of the First Amendment, such as the Constitution of Massachusetts, Pennsylvania Charter of Privileges, and the First Draft of First Amendment Rights.
- **Freedom of Religion** includes documents on Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, *Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn, New York v. Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor of New York*, and more.
- **Freedom of Speech** begins with *Gitlow v. New York* and is followed by such important documents as *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, and an editorial article from the *Valdosta Daily Times* titled “Free Speech Comes with Consequences.”

- **Freedom of the Press** pulls from documents such as Andrew Hamilton’s Speech Defending Freedom of the Press, remarks from Thomas Jefferson on Freedom of the Press, and *New York Times Co. v. Sullivan*.
- **Freedom of Assembly** provides such important documents as the Olive Branch Petition, *Hurley v. Irish-American Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Group of Boston*, and *Cox v. Louisiana*.
- **The First Amendment in Times of Crisis** includes the Espionage Act of 1917, remarks by American economist Scott Nearing at his trial, *Schenck v. United States*, and more.
- **The First Amendment in Education** highlights more resources, such as *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette* and The First Amendment on Campus 2020 Report: College Students’ Views of Free Expression.

Each Historical Document is supported by a critical essay, written by historians and teachers, that includes a Summary Overview, Defining Moment, About the Author, Document Analysis, and Essential Themes. An important feature of each essay is a close reading of the primary source that develops broader themes, such as the author’s rhetorical purpose, social or class position, point of view, and other relevant issues. Each essay also includes a Bibliography and Additional Reading section that provides suggestions for further readings and research.

Appendixes in this book include:

- **Chronological List** which arranges all documents by year;
- **Web Resources**, an annotated list of websites that offer valuable supplemental resources;
- **Bibliography** lists of helpful articles and books for further study

### About the Series

The *Defining Documents* series provides in-depth commentary and analysis on the most important primary source documents in the United States and the world. *The Defining Documents* series is perfect for students, those researching a particular era, or anyone interested in world history. Visit [www.salempress.com](http://www.salempress.com) for more information about additional titles in this series.

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