

Alien and Sedition Acts (1798)

President John Adams signed the Alien and Sedition Acts into law in 1798. They made it harder for an immigrant to become a citizen, allowed the president to imprison and deport non-citizens who were deemed “dangerous”, and criminalized making false statements that were critical of the federal government. [Link.](#)

On Liberty by John Stuart Mill (1859)

On Liberty is one of the seminal texts on the topic of free speech and has remained the basis of much political thought concerning the subject. It has remained in print since its initial publication and has been studied the world over. [Link.](#)

“Freedom of Speech” by Norman Rockwell (1943)

This painting is one of the most iconic depictions of free speech ever put to canvas. Painted by the famous American painter Norman Rockwell, Rockwell powerfully depicted free speech in a way that art historians have dissected and debated over since its original release in 1943. [Link.](#)

Free Speech And Its Relation To Self-government by Alexander Meikeljohn (1948)

Meiklejohn was known as an advocate of First Amendment freedoms and was a member of the American Civil Liberties Union. In Free Speech, Meikeljohn argued that democracy is

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

PRIMARY SOURCES

essentially self-government by the people. For there to be self-government, however, an informed electorate is necessary. To be appropriately informed, there must be no constraints on the free flow of information and ideas. [Link](#).

Case Brief: *Morse v. Frederick* (2007):

In 2002, an Alaskan high school principal, Deborah Morse, suspended a student named Joseph Frederick after he displayed a banner reading "BONG HiTS 4 JESUS" across the street from the school during the 2002 Winter Olympics torch relay. Frederick sued, claiming his constitutional rights to free speech were violated. The case went to the Supreme Court to decide. [Link](#).