

Freedom to peacefully assemble essay



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The first amendment states “ 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.” (4) Freedom to peacefully assemble allows the public to protest in what they believe in. Protests happen all the time throughout our country on all different issues. Should protest not be allowed to take place on public property without a permit? On some occasions protesters need to get a permit to protest, like in front of the State Capital Building.

You shouldn't be force to get a permit if it's public property because public means everyone can use the area. It is legal to protest only on public spaces and sidewalks without blocking any traffic or pedestrians. (1) The right to protest is justified because it creates a balanced society of people who want change and people who are not willing to accept change. If individual rights are considered about protesting the common good is balanced. In Seattle, 1999 the WTO protest took place. This protest which had over 50, 000 people at one time turned into a violent riot.

Protests can lead to violence and usually cause disruption. There were many protests against the Vietnam War. Most of them were very peaceful and not violent in any way. One event shocked the nation on May 6, 1970 where the Ohio National Guard open fired on peaceful protesters and killed four students at Kent Sate. Our society needs protesters because they are very patriotic just like the soldiers fighting. They are giving up their time to help change their country in a better way, peacefully, not violently.

Major protests are happening now about how the war should be stopped and the soldiers should be brought home. A person who takes part of a protest shows their support in this issue. What you protest for is your choice; you have the freedom of speech. Protesting shows our people and our government in what we care about as whole, our country.

People who want to make changes and believe in something should protest for what they believe in so people could hear their voices. Argument against Freedom of Assemble: Protests can lead to violence and vandalism which causes great damage in the community. Protest should be only permitted in an area were the government tells the protesters is allowed, which would make sure there would be no violence and disturbances. People would be arrested protesting unless a certain area.

The common good would be for protests not to be in public spaces, which causes disturbances. In the WTO protest, which lead to a riot was a very violent and angry people who created millions of dollars in damage to the downtown of Seattle in 1999.(Common good over individual rights)In Seattle, November 30th, 1999 the WTO (World Trade Organization) protest started. It started out with 6, 000 protesters that early morning. There was also about 2, 000 riot police.

Around 11: 40am the police had cleared two streets using tear gas which affected many of the protesters. By noon there were about 50, 000 people, even with their whole families marching against the WTO. Violence then broke our, bottles were starting to be thrown at the police and rubber bullets were then being shot back at the protesters. Vandalism started to rapidly

spread with people spray painting and breaking windows of buildings owned by large corporations. Then, the once peaceful protest turned into a riot.

After midnight most the peaceful protesters had left and the only ones still there were the punks, and the anarchist who were vandalizing everything.

Only 68 people were arrested on November 30th. On Wednesday, December 1st Police brutality became an effect on the protesters. They were firing hundreds of rounds of paint balls filled with pepper spray. The police arrested over 400 protesters on December 1st. The workers of the downtown Seattle buildings were finally allowed to go back to work.

Many of the commuters going to work were pepper sprayed because the police couldn't tell if they were a protester or not. The police became so strict and tore down protest every sign, wouldn't let any walk around the streets or speak out loud downtown. At around midnight on Wednesday the police arrested anyone downtown and set a curfew for the city. They chased most of the protesters up Capital Hill in Seattle away from downtown.

Police have attempted to declare downtown Seattle a protest free zone, which is violating the Constitution of the United States. There was about 7 million dollars worth of property damage done to the city and personal property. Around \$15 million was lost in holiday sales because of the vandalism done to all the stores downtown. Another \$6 million were spent on the police force prior to the state of emergency.

A total for about \$28 million dollars was lost because of the events that took place. (2)Argument for Freedom of Assemble: To have a voice in our country is very important to an individual. If you took that away from a citizen, our <https://assignbuster.com/freedom-to-peacefully-assemble-essay/>

country wouldn't be a Democracy at all even though we are turning away from a Democratic Government now. Protests are important to let others see how important some issues are, like the war.

By having protests it makes a difference by making people aware of the current events that are taking place in the world, or our nation that affects us. At Kent State in 1970 four students died protesting peacefully against the war in Vietnam. The police or the National Guard are feared by protesters and retaliate with violence even if there is no violence by the protesters. The Government wants the people to be feared so we won't protest about how the Government should change and how the war should be stopped.

People need to rise above the fear they have for the Government and protest in what they believe in. If enough people come together to protest an issue they can make a difference. Freedom of speech and peaceful assemble is a very important Constitutional Amendment.(Individual Rights over the Common Good)On May 4th, 1970 students went onto the Kent State campus protesting the bombing of Cambodia. Some students started throwing rocks and windows were broken which made the Governor of Ohio James Rhodes send in the National Guard.

The Ohio National Guard that went to Kent State on the order of the Governor were ill-trained and came right from riot duty elsewhere; they hadn't had much sleep. The National Guard had lack of military judgment and walked straight down a hill into the crowd of angry students. Then they turned back and were almost out of sight of the protesters when some of the

soldiers opened fire on the crowd of students, hitting thirteen and killing four. They shot at the protesters for 13 seconds with rapid fire.

The soldiers were not punished criminally, civilly or administratively for the death of the four students. One protester was shot because he was giving the finger to the National Guard. The National Guard wasn't threatened by the protesters and were almost around a corner of a building out of harms way. None of the soldiers were even injured, but they still opened fire on the protesters. The Government never took the time to investigate what happened at Kent State until a long time after the incident happened. Tapes from the White House were released and Nixon who was the President at the time talked about how demonstrators were bums and how the protesters at Kent State victims had it coming.

(6)The Constitution of the United States gives people the freedom to protest. Our government fears people who want change for our country. When there is very little violence at a protest on a college campus in Ohio, the National Guard open fire, killing four students. We have the right to a peaceful protest but most of the time it becomes a disruption to the community so the police have to come.

Police brutality is used on the protesters to make a strict example on what not to do. Protesting helps our community and our society see change which goes against our government. Freedom of assemble is an individual right for every one of the United States but the government doesn't give the citizens that freedom. They control the protests with violence and tries to make

people fearful of protesting. The government should support protesters but instead they punish them for exercising the First Amendment.

The common good is to enforce more laws about where protest could take place to make it less of a disruption for the community. Individual rights are more important than the common good because being able to voice your opinion to your community on public spaces is necessary.