

March 1, 2016

Liberty and the KKK

Does the white supremacist group the KKK have the right to liberty? As defined at Merriam-Webster.com, liberty is noted as the *state or condition of people who are able to act and speak freely.*

A recent demonstration by the KKK in Anaheim, CA turned violent when anti KKK demonstrators attacked KKK members. In retaliation, individual KKK members were accused of stabbing attackers with knives and the pointed end of an American flag pole.

Individuals commenting on the brawl expressed the belief that the KKK members were under serious physical threat with some of them being beaten and kicked to the ground. One CBS news headline read, *I thought they were Going to Stomp these Klansmen to Death.* The video clip here does not represent the full violence of the event-- <https://youtu.be/GpADdICq7qA>

No one at SEE is seeking to support, justify or advocate for the publically recognized racist positions held by the KKK. The question here is whether or not the KKK (or any group) has a right (the liberty) under US law to express their views in a public demonstration.

Students are asked to respond with sources of law that either support or refute the KKK's liberty to demonstrate. A second question for discussion is, what right (liberty) do anti-KKK demonstrators have in the presence of a KKK event?

Responses to these questions are key to understanding the great liberties outlined in the US Constitution as a point of law. The follow-up ethical question is, what core values should be demonstrated by individuals or groups as they meet and interact with those whom they strongly disagree?

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KKK demonstrators defend themselves from anti-clan response. CBS/AP photo