

THE REVELATION

STUDENT LIFE OPINION SPORTS LIFESTYLE



A CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT AND AN ACT OF PATRIOTISM

OPINION EDITOR: TATJANA OLINYK

The NFL is hands down the most popular professional league in the United States, and according to Bleacher Report brings in an annual revenue of \$9.5 billion. Because of the immense popularity of football in America, San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick believed he could emphasize the wrongdoings against minorities in America by protesting before a game. His decision to kneel during the national anthem immersed him into controversy and painted him as a disrespectful hypocrite, according to some Americans.

Many harsh insults have been thrown at Kaepernick calling him everything from ungrateful, to a hypocrite, to racial slurs. It is apparently hypocritical for him to exercise his constitutional right as an American citizen. By kneeling during the national anthem, he is essentially disregarding the patriotic symbolism that accompanies the anthem and being hypocritical for fighting for rights that he would not be guaranteed if he were not an American citizen.

"I tend to doubt that Kaepernick is being hypocritical in his actions, unless his sole purpose is merely to draw attention to himself," Dean of Students Dan Roach. "I must assume that he is sincere in his decision to kneel during the National Anthem as a symbol of protest. If that is indeed the case, then his actions are not hypocritical, and in perfect accord with his First Amendment guarantees of 'Freedom of (Symbolic) Speech...'. While many may view Kaepernick's actions as 'disrespectful' or 'offensive,' as one of the basic Civil Liberties enjoyed in our nation, his freedom to express his opinions or feelings on any issue are no less valid than those of anyone else."

Kaepernick's protests embody what it means to be an American and prove his patriotism. In an editorial for the Washington Post former NBA all-star Kareem Abdul-Jabbar states that he believes that "patriotism isn't just getting teary-eyed on the Fourth of July or choked up at war memorials," but it also includes "supporting what the Fourth of July celebrates and what those war memorials commemorate: the U.S. Constitution's insistence that all people should have the same rights and opportunities and that it is the obligation of the government to make that happen," and it is also patriotic to speak up if any Americans feel these rights are being infringed upon.

Kaepernick also jeopardized his career and his reputation during his protest. According to Abdul-Jabbar, "What makes an act truly patriotic and not just lip-service is when it involves personal risk or sacrifice." Kaepernick's decision to protest publically shows that he believes he has a voice and that he believes that through protest America can change for the better.

Colin Kaepernick also has a valid reason to protest because America is in a position where it can improve race relations with the recognition and understanding of racism and its prevalence in America. Shaun King of **New York Daily News** agrees that Kaepernick's reason to protest, despite his questionable execution, is valid because "the levels of injustice, racism, bigotry and brutality faced by people of color has crossed an invisible threshold in America"

A DISRESPECT FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

STAFF WRITER: LARRY QU

Colin Kaepernick found his spotlight after Alex Smith's injury in 2012. He took over the position of quarterback on the San Francisco 49ers, played the best football of his life, and led the team to Super Bowl XLVII. Three years later, he lost his starting job to Blaine Gabbert. However, he did not lose the spotlight. On Aug. 14, Kaepernick sat down during the national anthem and two weeks later, the message was ubiquitous: a change had to be made.

In recent weeks, the country has seen other athletes jump into the fight, but most worrisome are the young high school students who are joining the cause. The problem is not that they are standing up for their beliefs – it is that they do not know what to believe in.

"I hate the way it's affected [young people]," girls basketball coach Burney King said. "A lot of young people are doing it now, and I don't think they fully understand why they're doing it."

According to dailynews.com, Eric Scott, a high school football coach in Los Angeles, wanted his players to understand what they were fighting for before they made any demonstrations. When his players wanted to wear pink to support breast cancer awareness, he told them to each write a two-page paper about the disease. Many of the players declined the challenge, which showed that the kids only wanted to wear pink because of what they saw on TV. As kneeling during the national anthem has caused a greater uproar than wearing pink, high schools across the country are witnessing more student imitations of Kaepernick than real, meaningful protests.

The national anthem's lyrics are an adaptation of a poem by Francis Scott Key who wrote the poem inspired by the American victory over the British at the Battle of Fort McHenry in the War of 1812. The "Star Spangled Banner" was made the official national anthem in 1831 in honor of the men and women who died for this country, and in 1916, President Woodrow Wilson declared that the song be played at all military occasions. One hundred years later, Kaepernick sits down in front of the same soldiers who provided him with the opportunity to succeed in this society. While they fight overseas, he makes millions of dollars throwing a ball. If the national anthem honors the men and women in uniform, then Kaepernick is blatantly disrespecting those on the field and around the nation who served in the military.

"A lot of people have stood up for him to have the right to do that," King said. "And a lot of people have died for him to have the right to do that. That's my issue."

In his Letter from Birmingham Jail, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said that the biggest setback to desegregation was not the Ku Klux Klan, but the man "who constantly says 'I agree with you in the goals you seek, but I can't agree with your methods of direct action.'"



LIFESTYLE:
SNAPCHAT IN YOUR
EVERYDAY LIFE



SPORTS:
MISS. FOOTBALL
PLAYERS IN THE
NFL!



OPINION:
TEXTBOOKS:
WASTE OF
MONEY?



**STUDENT
LIFE:**
GHANAISANS VISIT
MISS!

SOMETIMES TEXTBOOKS ARE A WASTE OF MONEY

OVERALL EDITOR: ALEX AUCHUS

So John, what did you do in math today? Did you finally use that \$150 textbook I bought? Well at least tuition isn't going up this year.

Among the endless list of things parents have to pay for at St. Andrew's, textbook expenses are often forgotten. Overshadowed by \$10 school lunches and the constantly skyrocketing price of tuition, people seem to forget that St. Andrew's may be wasting our parent's money on unnecessary books. Meanwhile, students lockers grow dusty as textbook upon textbook remains unopened.

Last year I bought an art textbook that we used once and it wasn't even mandatory," Senior Emily Watson said. "My mom wasted over \$100 and the teacher even had classroom copies of the book."

Unfortunately, stories of students who never end up cracking open that 600 paged, 30 pound textbook, are anything but uncommon.

"Junior year I bought a history textbook American Pageant and we used it maybe twice," Senior Adia Reed said.

And it's not just art and history classes that prescribe unnecessary books.

"This year I bought a huge calculus textbook and we've never opened it," Watson said. "We don't even have homework in that class so the book doesn't help with that either."

Besides unnecessary textbooks, some classes offer an "optional textbook." The idea of a student willingly studying an optional textbook on their own accord is beyond laughable. Who would want to do extra homework?

An optional textbook doesn't make any sense," Senior Peyton Seago said. "We are already required to do lots of homework so having an other textbook is just excessive."

Although I have yet to find a student who claims to have benefited from purchasing an optional textbook, some teachers believe that they can help supplement a student's education.

"A student might benefit from seeing a presentation on a particular topic that is different from the way the material was covered in class." Math Department Co-chair Ben Sabree said. "In a math class, a student might benefit from having an additional bank of exercises and problems to practice"

It is true that an optional textbook would be a second resource for students, but even Sabree agrees that the practicality of using an optional textbook is questionable.

"I would think that the number of students who crack open optional texts must approach zero," Sabree said. "It's hard enough to get students to utilize their required texts."

Optional textbooks shouldn't even exist anyways. Why would a teacher require a book that doesn't completely cover the curriculum? If one textbook doesn't cover everything, the solution isn't an optional textbook as a supplement; the solution is to find a better textbook.

Unfortunately, reckless textbook assignments end up wasting parents money on an expensive hunk of wood. Students and parents see the word "optional" on the MSDirect website and think maybe they should buy it just to be safe. In reality, parents are just being lured into a money trap. It is important to note that the administration is not really responsible for requiring wasteful textbooks because individual teachers are the ones who decide what textbooks are needed for their classes.

"I don't think its the administration's fault," Senior Matt Harjes said. "But individual teachers should be 100 percent sure they are actually going to use a book that they require their students to buy."

Unless St. Andrew's wants to continue feeding the wasteful rich kid stereotype we unfortunately carry, teachers should pay more attention to how they are making families spend, or waste, their money. So teachers: before you submit the required (or God forbid optional) textbooks for your classes, stop and think about how useful they are and if they are actually necessary for class.



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and "the accumulation of injustice and the corresponding unwillingness of this nation to truly take the problem seriously has put us where we are now."

Many support Kaepernick's cause, but believe that he could have found a much more effective way to protest. Roach provides alternate scenarios that would have most likely been as effective as Kaepernick's current method of protest.

"I could envision this going a number of different ways in a variety of alternative scenarios," Roach said. "Colin Kaepernick stands during the National Anthem before playing the sport for which he is a well-paid professional, and then goes out and attends protest rallies on his own time to use his celebrity status to raise awareness and to try and effect real change... [he] organizes community functions to combat institutional racism, and uses his celebrity status to improve relations between law enforcement and people in urban communities, and inspires other NFL players to do the same, [or he] walks away from his career in professional football and his salary to become a community organizer and to mobilize citizens to pursue lasting change through political means."

While there are many different approaches Kaepernick could have taken in his protest, his method was effective and he achieved his goal of bringing recognition to his cause.

Kaepernick's reason to protest, despite his questionable execution, is valid because "the levels of injustice, racism, bigotry and brutality faced by people of color has crossed an invisible threshold in America" and "the accumulation of injustice and the corresponding unwillingness of this nation to truly take the problem seriously has put us where we are now."

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A DISRESPECT FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA CONT.

Today, the United States is facing a similar problem. According to Forbes, New Orleans Saints quarterback Drew Brees said, "He can speak out about a very important issue, but there's plenty of other ways that you can do that in a peaceful manner that doesn't involve being disrespectful to the American flag."

Kaepernick's intentions were obviously to protest black oppression, not to disrespect the military. His form of protest, however, is not only offensive – it is ineffective. Although it may not have been his motivation, his protest has rejuvenated his career and has made him relevant again. The one person it has benefitted is himself. If Kaepernick were concerned about improving the lives of African Americans in this country, he would do more than sit. Right now, more attention is being drawn to himself rather than to the issue.

An effective argument can be made that Kaepernick is using his rights as an American citizen to speak his mind, but a time has to come when he realizes that his method is hurtful to members of the military and simply unproductive. Whether he respects the flag or not, it will forever represent the land of the free and the home of the brave.