

**ESSAY CONTEST**

**$1000 PRIZE**

This year the **Kemper Human Rights Education Foundation** ([khref.org](http://khref.org/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)) is offering a $1000 first prize and a $500 second prize to high school students in the United States judged to have written the best answers to the following question:

**Eric Posner**, **a professor at the University of Chicago Law School claims** "**the central problem with human rights law is that it is hopelessly ambiguous**" and that this ambiguity allows "governments to rationalize almost anything they do."1 **With that thought in mind, how would you respond to the argument that by banning refugees from Muslim countries from traveling to the United States, deporting undocumented immigrants, and bringing back waterboarding President Trump is or would be ensuring that every citizen's "right to life, liberty and security of person"2 is enforced?** In other words, do some rights (e.g. the right of citizens to be secure) take precedence over other rights (e.g. the right of suspects not to be tortured)? And if so how should the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and other human rights documents be amended to specify what should be done when one right conflicts with another?

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1 *The Case Against Human Rights,* [*https://www.theguardian.com/news/2014/dec/04/-sp-case-against-human-rights*](https://www.theguardian.com/news/2014/dec/04/-sp-case-against-human-rights)

2 Article 3 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* reads: "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person." Article 5 reads: "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

**DEADLINE:** The deadline for submissions is November 22, 2017. **AWARDS:** Winners will be announced on December 10, 2017, Human Rights Day. **LENGTH:** Essays should be between 1000 and 2500 words with footnotes and a bibliography as needed. **CRITERIA:** Essays will be judged according to how clearly and well they answer the question posed and the extent to which they are supported by research. **COVER PAGE:** Submissions should include a cover page with the: title of the essay, author’s name, high school, teacher, grade level, date submitted, and the following signed statement: “I give the Kemper Human Rights Education Foundation permission to publish this essay.” **SUBMISSIONS:** Essays may be submitted as a Microsoft Word attachment to: kemperhumanrights@gmail.com or by regular mail to: KHREF, 184 Fillow Street, Norwalk, CT 06850.