

**Family Issues in
Policy and Culture**

Family News

I N F O C U S

A Web site of Focus on the Family

October 1, 2003

Student Sues College Over Free Speech

by Steve Jordahl, correspondent

Senior was punished because some students were offended by his flier promoting a speech by a conservative black author.

Conservative speech should be protected on college campuses — that's what lawyers for Steve Hinkle are trying to prove in federal court.

Hinkle, a senior at California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo, alleges the college violated his First Amendment rights when it punished him for posting a flier announcing an appearance by conservative black author Mason Weaver, who has written a book called "It's OK to Leave the Plantation."

Some black students confronted Hinkle when he posted the flier in a university multicultural center.

"One approached me and said that I was disrespecting their right to not be offended," Hinkle said. "They just could not believe that I would try to post that flier in front of them."

The students called the campus police, and Hinkle was charged with and convicted of causing a disruption on campus. He's taking the school to court to clear his name.

"I need my records cleared of this," he explained.

Hinkle's lawyer, Terry Pell, said it's a blatant example of the college censoring speech it doesn't like.

[About Us](#) | [Press](#) | [Jobs](#)
[Resources](#) | [Contact](#)

[Family.org Home](#)

[Press Releases](#)

[Support the Ministry](#)

[Donate Online](#)

[Monthly](#)

[EFT](#)

[Volunteers](#)

[Creative Giving](#)

[Pray for Focus](#)

CITIZENLink

[Family News in Focus](#)

[Listen Online](#)

[Find a Station](#)

[Citizen Magazine](#)

[Issue Archive](#)

[Subscribe/Join](#)

[Hot Topics](#)

[Activism/Role of Gov't](#)

[Education Issues](#)

[Marriage](#)

[Public Vices](#)

[Sanctity of Life](#)

[Sexuality](#)

[International Issues](#)

[Protecting Children](#)

[Worldview and Culture](#)

[Research Papers](#)

[Family Policy Councils](#)

[State Councils](#)

[Legislative Action](#)

[Contact Your Legislator](#)

[Archives](#)

[Teachers in Focus](#)

"The charge of disruption is really a pretext for punishing him for his point of view, and the First Amendment does not allow that," Pell said.

He added that colleges around the country routinely set up speech codes that limit where students can speak and what they can say. Many only enforce the codes when conservative speech is involved.

"It's a sad fact that on college campuses certain points of view are looked with disfavor," Pell said, "and our point is that school officials can't do this."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) is sponsoring Hinkle's legal action. More information about intellectual freedom on campus is available on the FIRE [Web site](#).

(NOTE: Referral to Web sites not produced by Focus on the Family is for informational purposes only, and does not constitute an endorsement of the sites' content.)

You can receive family news stories by e-mail. [Sign up](#) now for this complimentary service.

Copyright © 2003 Focus on the Family
All rights reserved. International copyright secured.
(800) A-FAMILY (232-6459)
[Privacy Policy/Terms of Use](#) | [Reprint Requests](#)