Chapter 19 in Brief

SECTION 1
The Unalienable Rights (pp. 532–536)
★ The guarantees in the Bill of Rights reflect Americans’ long-held commitment to personal freedom as well as the principle of limited government.
★ Individual rights are not absolute; they can be restricted when they come into conflict with the rights of others.
★ The Bill of Rights restricts only the National Government, but the Due Process Clause of the 14th Amendment “nationalizes” most of these guarantees.

SECTION 2
Freedom of Religion (pp. 537–544)
★ Free expression, including freedom of religion, is necessary to a free society.
★ The Establishment Clause sets up what Thomas Jefferson called “a wall of separation between church and state.” The nature of this “wall,” particularly as it applies to education, has been a matter of continuing controversy.
★ The Free Exercise Clause protects individuals’ right to believe—but not to do—whatever they wish.

SECTION 3
Freedom of Speech and Press (pp. 546–553)
★ The 1st and 14th amendments’ guarantees of free speech and press protect a person’s right to speak freely and to hear what others have to say.
★ These freedoms are not absolute; the Supreme Court has limited such expressions as seditious speech and obscenity, but seldom allows prior restraint of spoken or written words.
★ The media also can be limited. Reporters do not have an unlimited right of confidentiality, and radio and television are subject to more regulation because they use the public airwaves.
★ Symbolic and commercial speech enjoy constitutional protection but can be limited under certain circumstances.

SECTION 4
Freedom of Assembly and Petition (pp. 555–556)
★ The 1st Amendment guarantees the right to assemble peaceably and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.
★ Government can reasonably regulate the time, place, and manner of assembly, but those regulations must be “content neutral.”
★ The right of assembly does not give demonstrators a right to trespass on private property.
★ The guarantee of freedom of assembly and petition carries with it a right of association.