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Student Spotlights: Orla Murray

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From this aspect Murray had several things to say about the different rights she was guaranteed in the US and her home country, Northern Ireland. Something that people should know is that Northern Ireland is still part of the UK and their government is run by Parliament in London. Like Scotland and England, Northern Ireland uses the pound and has the same legislative values as the rest of the United Kingdom.

Murray explains that there needs to be a distinction between Northern and Southern Ireland because Southern Ireland is part of the European Union, uses the Euro as their currency, and holds different pieces of legislature to govern their country.

As a student studying politics, Murray had a good grasp on what rights she was granted in the UK. As we talked over tea and some pre-dinner snacks, she explained to me that while citizens of the UK are guaranteed, there is no written constitution for Britain.

"I think their [Parliament’s] approach to human rights is good, but, there is always a but," Murray explained. "It's difficult to know what your rights are."

When Murray studied at UCSD, it gave her some insight to the American legislative and judicial system and how laws, like the First Amendment, affect American citizens. One of the higher praises that Murray made was about the fact that American citizens have their rights clearly listed out.

Even though civil liberties are laid out in the First Amendment of the US Constitution, Murray had several critiques that she felt the American people haven't addressed.

"I felt that I always had a choice in the states. However in the UK I felt like I had much more freedom to say whatever the hell I wanted," Murray said.

Inevitably after free speech and censorship came up in the conversation, SOPA was brought into question. Murray felt that the American government doesn't realize that it will not only affect the American people, but the rest of the world as well.

"People are kind of complacent about their rights," Murray said acknowledging that the American people know that they have the constitution and just expect their rights to be upheld.

"I feel like all of those rights have been violated by all of the different governments," Murray said about having local and federal governments in the US. "[But] at the end of the day our rights are being violated too."