

Lecture 20 Reading Questions

“Money & Elections”

Readings:

Selections from *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* .

“American Democracy in an Age of Rising Inequality.” APSA Task Force.

(1) In *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, the US Supreme Court declared unconstitutional all laws prohibiting direct corporate expenditures on political campaigns. What is the “anti-distortion” rationale for such laws, and why did the Court reject it?

(2) According to the Court, does the US Constitution permit restrictions on speech intended to equalize the relative ability of individuals to affect political outcomes?

(3) What is the “anti-corruption” rationale, and why did the Court reject it?

(4) Do you agree with the Court that corporate expenditures on political campaigns do not give rise to “corruption or the appearance of corruption”?

(5) What is the Court’s view of the relationship between democracy and unequal influence over elected officials?

(6) Judging from the report of the APSA Task Force on Inequality and American Democracy, would you say that opportunities for political influence are distributed unevenly? Do you find this troubling? Why or why not?

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