

In *Citizens United*, the Supreme Court decided that corporations spending money counts as a form of free speech that falls under the protection of the first amendment.

In the minority opinion, Justice Stevens wrote: "Take away the ability to use general treasury funds for some of those ads, and no one's autonomy, dignity, or political equality has been impinged upon in the least."

The argument seems to be: free speech is valuable because it protects individuals' autonomy, dignity, and political equality; corporations spending money doesn't promote those goals. So, corporations spending money shouldn't be protected. Is he right?

1. Why is freedom of speech valuable? Is Justice Stevens right?

2. Two speakers are at a town meeting. A has to shout, while B has a megaphone. The town officials tell B that she can't use her megaphone.

One position: The town officials have restricted B's right to free speech!

Another position: The town officials were protecting A's right to free speech.

That's because B's using a megaphone *devalued* A's right to speech.

With that analogy in mind: Does spending money count as a form of speech? If so, is it just to restrict how much money people can spend?

3. Does a corporation's spending money count as a form of speech? If so, is that a form of speech that should be protected? (Does it promote what's valuable about free speech?)

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