



## [The Newsroom's Latest Blather: Kochtopus! Citizens United! We're All Pawns!](#)

[Scott Shackford](#) | July 23, 2012

The shadowy tentacles of the Koch brothers were invoked again during Sunday night's new episode of *The Newsroom* as it grows more and more unwatchable with each passing episode.

The rather inaccurate description of *Citizens United* and the Koch-funded groups involved came directly from [this Think Progress piece](#) from January 2011. This, by the way, seems to be *News Night's* system of gathering information. Despite these self-described media elites saying they're going to change the way news is reported, a significant amount of their coverage is based on what they've read from other news outlets and blogs.

Cato has provided [their own response](#) to having themselves described as nothing but a Koch front group for Citizens United:

But, you see, this just shows Aaron Sorkin's unwavering commitment to realism in his shows. Reporters regularly get the holding of *Citizens United* wrong. After all, if reporters were crystal clear that *Citizens United* cleared the way for all manner of groups to use "corporate treasury funds" to fund broad and overtly political statements about candidates, they would inevitably conclude that their own right to make those kinds of statements would be jeopardized by much of the campaign finance regulation on the books prior to *Citizens United*. And it's hard to demonize libertarians when they're fighting for the rights of everyone, including reporters and entertainers who work for subsidiaries of Time Warner (CNN, HBO), Viacom (CBS), Disney (ABC), Comcast (NBC, MSNBC), General Electric (NBC, MSNBC), News Corp. (FOX, Fox News), etc.

It is fairly absurd that Will McAvoy, the allegedly Republican news anchor battling with his corporate masters over how to report the news, does not realize that without the *Citizens United* decision, laws could be used to suppress his ability to comment about the behavior of elected officials or candidates running for office on his own show. Without the *Citizens United* decision, that villainous CEO played by Jane Fonda would have an easy excuse to yank him off the air.

It's also quite amusing that these "media elites" have also apparently never heard of the Cato Institute or the Heritage Foundation, have no idea what they are, what they stand for, or anything that they've done. If McAvoy were the rational Republican he claimed to be in a previous episode he would know full well about the Cato Institute's efforts toward both civil and economic liberty (just this past weekend Cato Scholar Walter Olson held a benefit to encourage [conservative support for gay marriage equality](#)). He would likely be familiar with the Institute for Justice's efforts to protect average citizens from [oppressive government agencies trying take their homes](#) and hand them over to rich corporations. He should know what ultimately happened in New London following the *Kelo* decision. McAvoy would love those groups. But because McAvoy isn't what Sorkin thinks McAvoy is because Sorkin doesn't really understand any of this and doesn't really want to, we just end up with this stupid, thoughtless repetition of stuff Sorkin wishes were true.

Also, as an alleged arm of the Kochtopus (David Koch sits on the board of trustees for the Reason Foundation, which publishes this site), it's annoying and frustrating to be reduced to mere tools with no ability for personal agency. We see this with any invocation of the rich's involvement with politics, be it the Koch brothers or George Soros. The argument is that they pay the money for us to hold these positions. It doesn't seem to occur to folks like Sorkin that it's because we hold these positions that draws in the money. The Kochs wouldn't have much political clout at all with their millions if there weren't so many other people out there who agreed with them. I support the *Citizens United* decision without a single cent of outside money. It was the right and appropriate ruling.

And completely unrelated: I don't know how Sorkin makes it through a single day without getting punched in the face by every woman he comes across.