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What Freedom of Speech?

Monday, September 28th, 2009 By [Marc Kilmer](#)

“If a corporation pays for something political, the government can ban it” — that’s Buckeye Institute Board member Bradley Smith summarizing current campaign law as viewed by federal regulators. Having been a member of the Federal Election Commission, Smith is something of an expert on this topic. As he points out, this view about what can be banned doesn’t just apply to advertisements or pamphlets or other kinds of traditional political speech. It also applies to books (almost all of which are, after all, published by corporations), as the current Solicitor General stated before the Supreme Court earlier this year.

Smith spoke at the Cato Institute on this topic and gave a good summary of the dangers this view poses to every American’s right to speak freely:



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