

Pay 2 Play/Shadows of Democracy Meaningful Conversation

Round 1

Were you at all surprised to learn how much the influence of money has changed in politics?

Does it feel like it has “always been this way” or do you think the influence of corporations in the political arena has increased?

If a corporation is a “person”—how do we deal with their “bad” behavior?

Do corporations do “good things”?

How do we make sure that all political parties are not involved in cronyism?

How can the government redefine our economic system to benefit everyone?

Round 2

What is free press?

Are newspapers dying because corporations are running them or because we can get our news elsewhere?

How do we make sure that we are getting the truthful news?

Is there ever a time when national security more important than a free press?

What do you think about the comment stated in Shadows of Democracy that “If you give citizens the information they need, they will be able to govern themselves?”

What is the information they need?

Round 3

If you could change the election process, what would you change?

What is your response to Ennis’s, documentarian of Pay 2 Play, solutions?

Mandatory Voter Turnout

Public financing of political candidates

End Gerrymandering

Full Disclosure on who is making donations

Free Airtime for all candidates

Constitutional Amendment that says corporations do not have constitutional rights

What other ways would you change the political process?

Harvest:

Was there anything about the movie or the conversation tonight that you found really difficult to believe?

What will you do now that you have seen these movies and participated in this conversation?

Hard time believing that gerrymander is so pervasive. Seems illegal. Even when something is illegal, there has to be the will to prosecute.

Gerry--from the Revolutionary war--still going on.

The party in power gets to choose. After every year 10 year census, districts can be redrawn.

Lots of points, Air America used to make these points over the years, but Air America has gone away. Not a surprise--it is believable. We have to crystalize what the central issue is--then march on and share these ideas with others.

Can't advocate unless you really know the topic. David Cobb--google him. He debated James Bopp who was with Citizens United. Find David Cobb's revelations on the history of corporations. His argument is that corporations have statutory rights but not inalienable rights.

How do we differentiate between a PAC and a corporation?

PACS were created to get around the law.

Corporations are governed by the individual states so we are taking on 50 different sets of rules. Could be a challenge--corporations hold that over us. If a corporation doesn't like how it is being treated, then it threatens to move away, taking away jobs.

Delaware has very lax laws--so a lot of corporations are located there.

Capital punishment for a corporation that misbehaves.

They aren't held accountable even though they are being considered "people". But they can live forever!

They have limited liability--they should have to give that up.

Does a big corporation have more power than a PAC like the Gun Lobby?

Corporations and media have made it not okay to express public outrage. We need to start demanding that their leaders have to serve time for what they do. There is something wrong with us--why are we so angry? We need to be able to express that anger.

The other side is not evil or stupid--they think they are doing the right thing.

What are the advantages to having corporations?

No one wants to get rid of them. We should treat them as property not people. If they want to have influence--then we should know what they are pushing for, where the money is coming from. Transparency.

If you buy shares in a corporation--don't you have a right to know where they are giving their money--in fact they should be asking the shareholders where they want the money to go.

We need to be vigilant to what companies we invest in.

Who makes the decision within a corporation to where they donate their money. They do have to reveal their financial dealings--through an annual report.

Follow the money. You have to look at the money trail--not impossible. Movie titled is Big Sky, Big Money.

People power outweighs money power--get organized--responsibility comes back to us.

Have our lives been changed--when there are injustices--people don't often feel the consequences of Pay 2 Play.