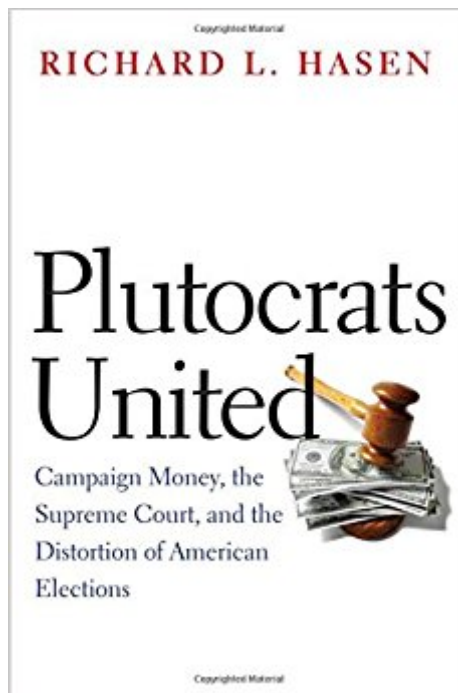




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# Plutocrats United: Campaign Money, The Supreme Court, And The Distortion Of American Elections



## Synopsis

From a leading expert on election law, a compelling answer to the dilemmas of campaign finance reform Campaign financing is one of today's most divisive political issues. The left asserts that the electoral process is rife with corruption. The right protests that the real aim of campaign limits is to suppress political activity and protect incumbents. Meanwhile, money flows freely on both sides. In *Plutocrats United*, Richard Hasen argues that both left and right avoid the key issue of the new Citizens United era: balancing political inequality with free speech. The Supreme Court has long held that corruption and its appearance are the only reasons to constitutionally restrict campaign funds. Progressives often agree but have a much broader view of corruption. Hasen argues for a new focus and way forward: if the government is to ensure robust political debate, the Supreme Court should allow limits on money in politics to prevent those with great economic power from distorting the political process.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"A war manual designed to equip and fortify would-be reformers for a brutal and uncertain struggle . . . but [one] that must be waged to prevent our democracy from sinking deeper and

deeper into plutocracy." •Greg Sargent, *Washington Post* (Greg Sargent *The Washington*

*Post*) "Plutocrats United will mark Hasen certainly as the dean of this field."

•Lawrence Lessig, author of *Republic, Lost: How Money Corrupts Congress--and a Plan to Stop It* (Lawrence Lessig) "There is no better analyst or interpreter of America's

campaign finance laws and regime then Rick Hasen. *Plutocrats United* is Hasen at his finest: a cogent, reasoned critique of what the Supreme Court has and has not done to shape money and American politics, and a roadmap to a better system if and when there is a Court willing to respond to reason.

•Norman Ornstein, co-author, *It's Even Worse Than It Looks: How the American Constitutional System Collided With the New Politics of Extremism* (Norman Ornstein)"Rick Hasen is the foremost scholar working today to make the case for a robust conception of political equality in thinking about the regulation of campaign finance. In this new book he displays all of his well-recognized skills and deep learning. It is clear and readable, both scholarly and accessible, and it will be highly influential in academic and policy development communities , and in the courts. There is no more authoritative source for anyone who seeks a thorough treatment of all the reasons one might care about equality in this era of mega-donors and Super PACs."--Bob Bauer, former White House Counsel and Professor of Practice, New York University School of Law (Bob Bauer)"

“While others complain about the corruption of money in politics, Rick Hasen, America’s leading expert on the electoral process, offers smart, innovative solutions. This book is a "must-read" for anyone who wants to understand the roots of America’s profound political inequality -- and wants to do something about it.

•Adam Winkler, UCLA School of Law (Adam Winkler)"Plutocrats United should become the go-to volume for anyone wanting to understand the role of money in American politics: how we got to where we are today, and a realistic assessment of the chances for improving the current situation. Hasen deftly interweaves fine-grained details with a lucid big-picture perspective. Even more impressively, he eschews simplistic solutions, recognizing that regulatory line-drawing in this area necessarily will involve a careful balancing of competing constitutional values.

--Edward B. Foley, Moritz College of Law, The Ohio State University (Edward B. Foley)"Eminently readable and compelling."

•Lawrence Norden, *The National Book Review* (Lawrence Norden *The National Book Review*)"A masterful blend of legal reasoning and political analysis, Hasen’s new book is the most thorough, nuanced, and compelling treatment I have read of how money in elections reduces political equality and thereby diminishes American democracy. He unabashedly proposes a reform strategy that goes to the heart of the problem."

•Thomas E. Mann, co-author of *It's Even Worse Than It Looks* (Thomas E. Mann)"Excellent . . . [makes] the case that equality, not corruption, ought to be the justification for regulating campaign finance . . . I agree wholeheartedly.

•Lee Drutman, *Vox* (Lee Drutman *Vox*)"An important new book.

•David Cole, *Atlantic* (David Cole *The Atlantic*)

Richard L. Hasen is Chancellor's Professor of Law and Political Science at the University of California, Irvine. In 2013 he was named one of the 100 most influential lawyers in America by the National Law Journal. He lives in Studio City, CA.

Rick Hasen is one of the nation's foremost experts on money in politics, and "Plutocrats United" is an engaging, no-holds-barred look at what's gone wrong with American democracy. Hasen's book had me right away, with a gripping scene of Republican presidential hopefuls going to kiss the ring of uber-donor Sheldon Adelson. The same kind of thing happens on the left, too, as Hasen makes clear. But, despite the allegations of reformers, the problem here isn't exactly bribery or corruption or vote-buying -- nothing illegal is going on here. Instead, the problems are perfectly legal (and, in fact, in large part protected by the Constitution, at least according to the current Supreme Court. Yet that makes the problem of big money in politics no less troubling, indeed, to some extent, it makes it worse. For years, Hasen has been a key voice on these issues, from his articles in leading law journals to the pages of the New York Times. His ability to cut through complex constitutional ideas and a morass of competing analyses comes through in every chapter of Plutocrats United. Hasen's writing makes the book a quick and easy read, despite the seriousness of its content. And his diagnosis of possible reforms is sober, clear-eyed, and pragmatic -- a valuable antidote to both those who say nothing can be done to fix American politics and those who expect pie-in-the-sky changes in the near term. (Disclosure: Hasen is a member of a nationwide, nonpartisan group of several hundred researchers, the Scholars Strategy Network. I am also part of that network, and have spoken with Hasen a few times and liked him. To be clear, I have no financial relationship with him, Yale Press, or the book, nor am I receiving any form of compensation for this review).

Hasen explains that not all of the influence exercised by purveyors of Dark Money is considered corruption, in legal terms. But ingratiation is just as, or perhaps more, insidious and we can and must fight it.

Very interesting and informative

This is the one to get, re campaign finance. Perfect touch, covers all the bases, both legal and political. Wonderful.

best service, patient. very fast, receive it next day, high quality and very value for this price . Great

and affordable product. Good weight which means less pressure while cutting. Excellent ergonomic. Sharp. Cutting tomatoes and onions was a pleasant experience. I bought this product to replace a old one. as a birthday gift to my husband,

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