

How Corporations Became People And How You Can Fight Back

Have you ever wondered how corporations hold so much power in our society? The answer lies in a controversial legal doctrine that has allowed them to be treated as if they were people. This concept, known as corporate personhood, has been the subject of much debate and activism in recent years. In this article, we will explore how corporations became people and discuss how you can join the fight to reclaim democracy from corporate interests.

What is Corporate Personhood?

Corporate personhood refers to the legal fiction that grants corporations the same constitutional rights and protections as individual citizens. This means that corporations can exercise their First Amendment rights of free speech and religious freedom, contribute to political campaigns under the guise of their right to political expression, and even claim protection against unreasonable searches and seizures.

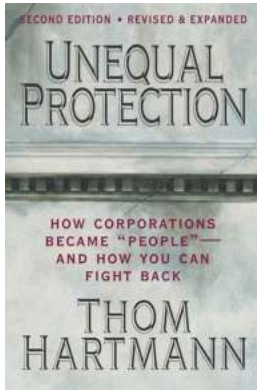
The idea of treating corporations as legal persons goes back to an 1886 Supreme Court case, *Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad*. Although the Court's decision did not explicitly establish corporate personhood, a clerk's note in the case ruled that corporations were indeed entitled to the same rights and protections as individuals under the Fourteenth Amendment.

Unequal Protection: How Corporations Became "People" —and How You Can Fight Back

by Thom Hartmann (2nd Edition, Kindle Edition)

★★★★★ 4.7 out of 5

Language : English



File size	: 4362 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 385 pages
Lending	: Enabled



The Implications of Corporate Personhood

The interpretation of corporations as people has had far-reaching implications in various aspects of our lives. One of the most notable consequences is the influence of corporate money in politics. With the legal recognition of corporations as individuals, they gain the ability to donate unlimited sums of money to political campaigns. This has led to the rise of super PACs (Political Action Committees) and a flood of corporate-funded campaign spending, which often tilts the scales of democracy in favor of corporate interests.

Furthermore, corporate personhood has allowed businesses to lobby and exert influence on public policy-making processes, effectively shaping legislation to benefit their interests. This influence can often undermine the will of the people and compromise the democratic functioning of our society.

The Fight for Democracy

Perhaps now more than ever, it is crucial for citizens to take an active role in reclaiming democracy from corporate influence. Here are some ways in which you can fight back:

1. Support Campaign Finance Reform

Campaign finance reform is a critical step towards reducing the influence of corporate money in politics. By advocating for stricter regulations on campaign contributions and spending, you can help level the playing field and ensure that individuals, not corporations, have the power to shape our democracy.

2. Educate Yourself and Others

Knowledge is power, and in the fight against corporate personhood, it is essential to understand the issues at stake. Educate yourself about the history and consequences of corporate personhood and share this knowledge with others. By raising awareness, you can help inspire collective action and mobilize public opinion against corporate influence.

3. Get Involved in Grassroots Movements

Joining grassroots movements that advocate for corporate accountability and democracy is an effective way to make your voice heard. Whether it is through participating in protests, signing petitions, or supporting local organizations fighting against the influence of corporations, your involvement can contribute to building a stronger democracy.

4. Vote with Corporate Accountability in Mind

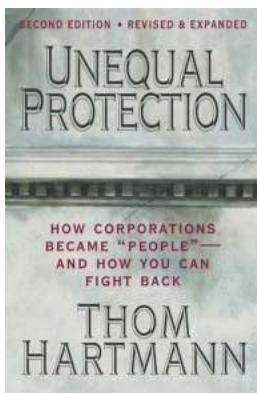
When casting your vote, consider the candidates' stance on corporate accountability and campaign finance reform. Support candidates who prioritize reducing corporate influence and promoting fair and transparent democratic processes.

5. Support Ethical Businesses

By consciously choosing to support ethical businesses that prioritize social and environmental responsibility, you can help shift power away from corporations that prioritize profit over people and the planet. Seek out companies that embrace sustainable practices, fair labor conditions, and demonstrate a commitment to social justice.

The concept of corporate personhood has undeniably tilted the scales of power in favor of corporations, undermining the essence of democracy. However, by understanding the history and implications of corporate personhood and actively engaging in the fight for democracy, we can work towards a more equitable society that prioritizes the needs and voices of the people.

Remember, change begins with individuals like you, and together we can reclaim democracy from corporate interests.



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“This is a seminal work, a godsend really, a clear message to every citizen about the need to reform our country, laws, and companies.” —Paul Hawken, New York

Times-bestselling author

NEW EDITION, REVISED AND UPDATED

Unequal taxes, unequal accountability for crime, unequal influence, unequal control of the media, unequal access to natural resources—corporations have gained these privileges and more by exploiting their legal status as persons. How did something so illogical and unjust become the law of the land?

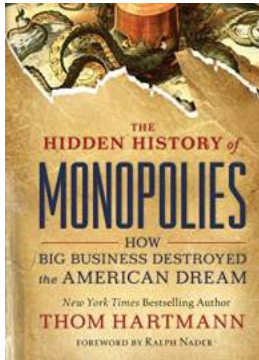
Americans have been struggling with the role of corporations since before the birth of the republic. As Thom Hartmann shows, the Boston Tea Party was actually a protest against the British East India Company—the first modern corporation. *Unequal Protection* tells the astonishing story of how, after decades of sensible limits on corporate power, an offhand, off-the-record comment by a Supreme Court justice led to the Fourteenth Amendment—originally passed to grant basic rights to freed slaves—becoming the justification for granting corporations the same rights as human beings. And Hartmann proposes specific legal remedies that will finally put an end to the bizarre farce of corporate personhood.

This new edition has been thoroughly updated and features Hartmann's analysis of two recent Supreme Court cases, including *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, which tossed out corporate campaign finance limits.

“If you wonder why and when giant corporations got the power to reign supreme over us, here's the story.” —Jim Hightower, national radio commentator and New York Times-bestselling author

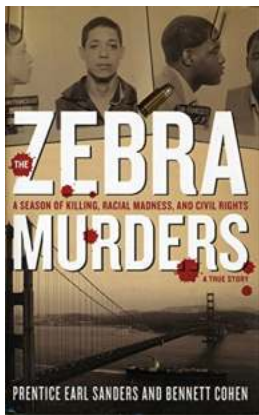
“Tell[s] the grand story of corporate corruption and its consequences for society

with the force and readability of a great novel. ”—David C. Korten, bestselling author of *When Corporations Rule the World*



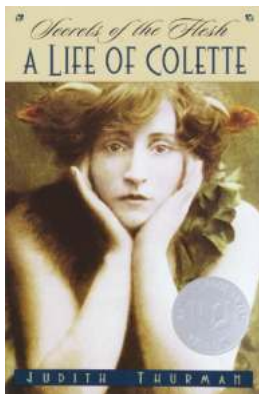
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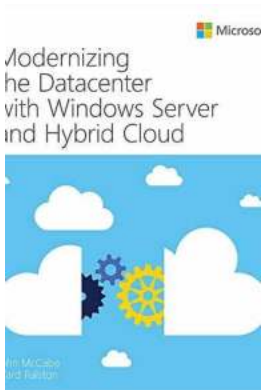
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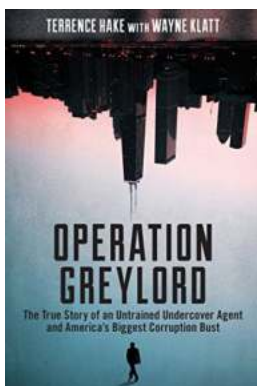
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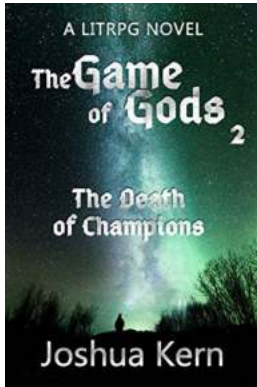
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