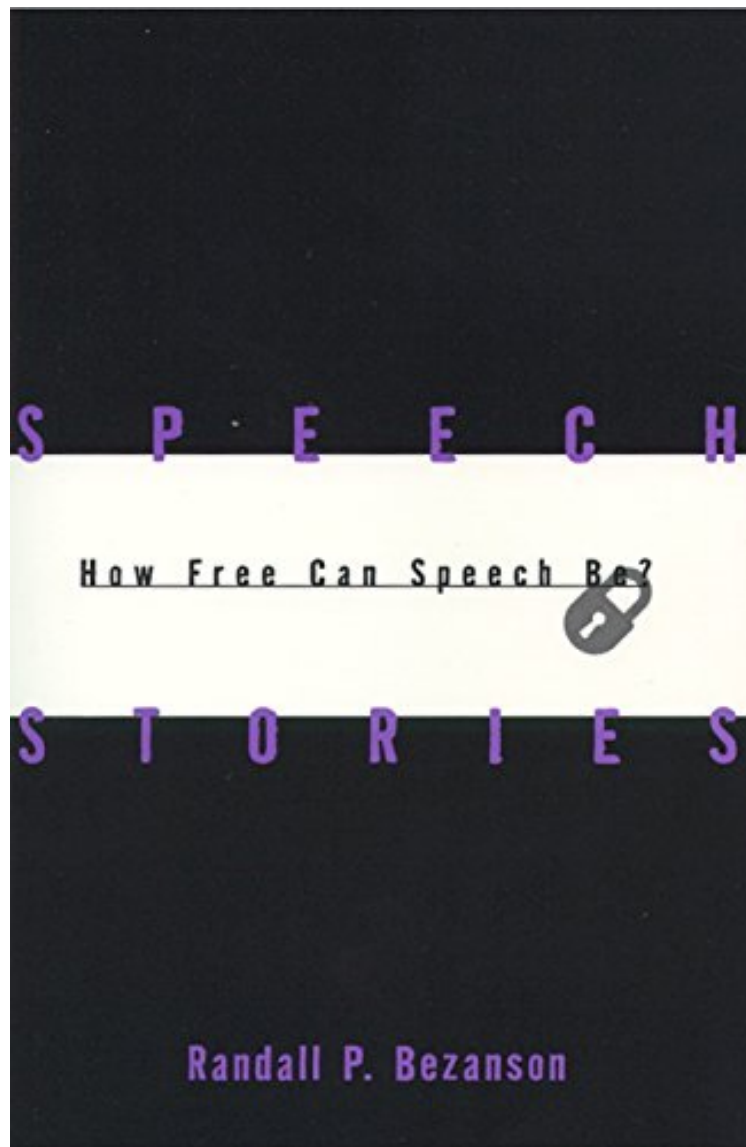


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Speech Stories: How Free Can Speech Be?

Von Randall P. Bezanson

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Kurzbeschreibung When we talk about what "freedom of speech" means in America, the discussion almost always centers on freedom rather than speech. Taking for granted that speech is an unambiguous and stable category, we move to considering how much freedom speech should enjoy. But, as Randall Bezanson demonstrates in *Speech Stories*, speech is a much more complicated and dynamic notion than we often assume. In an age of rapidly accelerated changes in discourse combined with new technologies of communication, the boundaries and substance of what we traditionally deem speech are being reconfigured in novel and confusing ways. In order to spark thought, discussion, and debate about these complexities and ambiguities, Bezanson probes the "stories" behind seven controversial free speech cases decided by the Supreme Court. These stories touch upon the most controversial and significant of contemporary first amendment issues: government restrictions on hate speech and obscene and indecent speech; pornography and the subordination of women; the constitutionality of campaign finance reform; and the treatment to be accorded new technologies of communication under the Constitution. The result is a provocative engagement of the reader in thinking about the puzzles and paradoxes of our commitment to free expression.

Pressestimmen "Are they needed? To be sure. The Darwinian industry, industrious though it is, has failed to provide texts of more than a handful of Darwin's books. If you want to know what Darwin said about barnacles (still an essential reference to cirripedists, apart from any historical importance) you are forced to search shelves, or wait while someone does it for you; some have been in print for a century; various reprints have appeared and since vanished."-Eric Korn, "Times Literary Supplement"

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