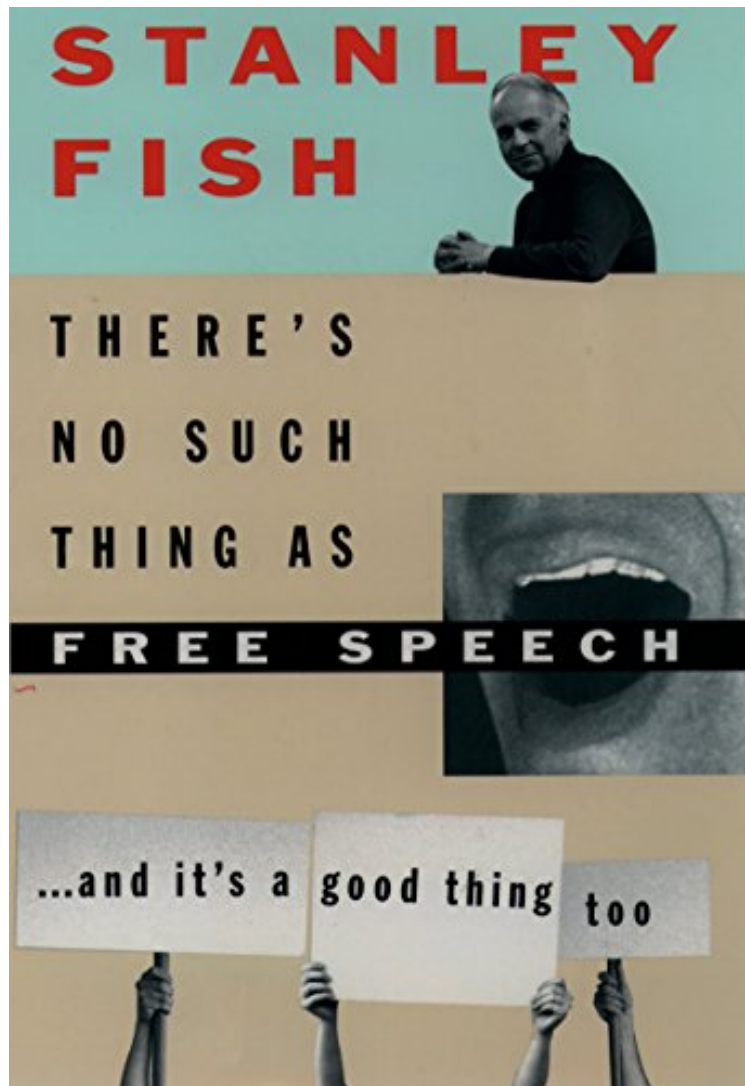


(Mobile ebook) There's No Such Thing As Free Speech: And It's a Good Thing, Too

There's No Such Thing As Free Speech: And It's a Good Thing, Too

Von Stanley Fish

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Von Stanley Fish : There's No Such Thing As Free Speech: And It's a Good Thing, Too before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised There's No Such Thing As Free Speech: And It's a Good Thing, Too:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. We repress with the best of intentionsVon Walter HearneStanley Fish is a provocative, clever, engaging.....charlatan. His main idea: censorship isn't bad, it just depends on what we're trying to do with it. Fish's most ludicrous claim is that the free speech paradigm is not "tolerant" of those who, like himself, argue for a "more restrictive" approach to

expression. Yet here he is, writing, publishing, and profiting from a book with such a view. Did I miss something here? Apparently he feels that because many people vehemently disagree with him, he is not being tolerated. Poor Stanley Fish attempts to compare the prohibition of "hate speech" to other limits on expression, such as those on obscenity, fighting words, or matters of national security, without recognizing the miserable failures and excesses that have resulted from all three. His one promising analogy, libel/slander law, is left unexplored. Fish also claims that the "slippery slope" argument is mere exaggeration. He argues that the PC culture on college campuses cannot be compared to McCarthyism because nobody has really been seriously victimized by it. His one piece of evidence is a quote from a Time magazine article. The Shadow University by Kors and Silvergate gives the lie to Fish's rosy scenario. Fish also fails to account for a mechanism by which we might recover from an unduly expansive or repressive application of his progressive censorship (an ideal borrowed from Marxist scholar Herbert Marcuse, an intellectual forebear whom he never acknowledges). Once Fish's program has been fully implemented, it is only a matter of time before such censorship precludes not only "hate" speech but arguments in favor of greater liberty of expression. For example, people often confuse the KKK's right to free speech with advocacy of the KKK's views. Despite the logical fallacy of this belief, Fish's "consequentialist" view of speech cannot recognize this distinction. Civil libertarian Nat Hentoff wrote a recent op-ed describing how a woman defending the right of the KKK to rally in New York City was physically attacked by a mob of presumably "progressive" citizens who apparently held this view. THIS IS THE FACE OF "PROGRESSIVE CENSORSHIP." (Nor does Mr. Fish explain how claims of "hate speech" may be adjudicated without ultimately relying on the wholly subjective assertions of the supposed victim, to the exclusion of objective fact. Case in point: the word "niggardly" as racist epithet). Fish's views are typical of leftist scholars who promise us "true" or "real" freedom if only we implement their prescribed policies. The catch is that we may have to curtail some previously cherished freedoms, but don't worry, this is only temporary and done for the sake of the oppressed....hmmmm.....where have we heard this before? What Fish and his ilk can't stand is watching a dynamic process like public discourse continue unimpeded. They feel a need to control it, or direct it, or guide it, or engineer it, however you want to describe it. Sorry Professor Fish, but I must unsheath the cliché he so dreads: the answer to bad speech is more good speech, not to ban the bad speech. When God forbade Adam and Eve from eating the apple, did it stop 'em? 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Fish is Right: Censorship is Inherently Unavoidable Von David Thomson Stanley Fish takes advantage of the fact that many people fail to grasp an essential aspect regarding all human communities: censorship is unavoidable and intrinsic. It is inherently impossible to do otherwise. The only legitimate question is how extensive and invasive the censorship of the society will be. We are all censors and somebody will ultimately decide if and when someone has gone too far in violating the values that the overall group considers heretical. It's only a question where one draws the line. Everybody practices censorship. All societies must select and impose the values considered non-negotiable. Heretics of either religious or secular dogmas are always punished. The philosophical premises of Logical Positivism are insufficient to underpin our democratic culture. Reasonable certitude is epistemologically the best humans can achieve. "Political correctness" is actually a neutral term. The only real debate is over the situations demanding tacit or explicit prohibition. Language is intrinsically nebulous. The meanings of words mutate endlessly. So what? Deconstructionism is merely the mistaken notion that since words cannot be preserved from inevitable change that logically we cannot oppose the forces of Nihilism. We might, for example, feel yucky about the murder of innocents in a concentration camp, but this is mere sentiment and not the result of rational thinking. Fish is simply taking advantage of our society's preference to indulge in self-delusion. Many feel reluctant to admit that our values are rarely absolute and there are indeed times when they must appropriately be abandoned. The occasional exception, if it is mistakenly perceived, always precariously places us on the slippery slope leading to Armageddon. The late Sidney Hook was one of the few who even dared to tackle the dilemma surrounding the paradoxes of democracy. An unspoken taboo prevents many others from even admitting a problem exists. Stanley Fish admittedly has half a point to make when claiming that hiring practices are rarely an exercise in total objectivity and meritocracy. Such decisions made by flesh and blood human beings will indeed be flawed. Subconsciously, if not even consciously, factors such as class, race, gender, etc. may play a disturbing and invalid role. Nonetheless, Fish seemingly pushes his argument to the point of absurdity. The real answer, of course, is that human beings must learn to confront their prejudices and develop the virtuous habits to overcome them. Stanley Fish is merely building a career around the fact that prudential judgment, and not a hard-science absolutism, underpins our decision making. He is something of a con man who exaggerates his main points to deceive us regarding their ultimate value. Perhaps others can perceive the debate over Fish as merely an abstract intellectual exercise of no real importance to the real world. I am not one of these people. Deconstructionism asserts that human beings cannot achieve reasonable certitude in their decision making. The underpinnings of this epistemology destroy any hope of building a democratic society. The result is that we must ultimately rely on pure brute force. One possesses power not because of the ability to persuade others---but you can kick the crap out of them! 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Stanley Fish: One of the nation's greatest journalists Von Ein Kunde One of the great things about Stanley Fish is that he tells us what we all already know, and gets us to pay him for it--even though we don't like what he tells us! After all, who DOESN'T know that the First Amendment is just a bunch of words. Who, these days,

DOESN'T think that the law is just however the court happens to be feeling that day? The answer is, unfortunately, a great many, which is why there continues to be a need for people like Stanley Fish. The fact that somebody has to do this job is, I think, really too bad. In fact, it might not be too much to say that what we really ought to do, as a country, is to apologize to Mr. Fish for making him do things that would make any sensible person disgusted. You would think that, as a nation, we wouldn't need Fish after having had Mencken, but there you go. Anyway, if you are a bright undergraduate, you might want to read this book, especially because your teachers have (and they've laughed at it), but if you really want to know about the things Fish is talking about here, you would do a lot better reading Mencken's "Chrestomathy" at the least. And then, just maybe, you might begin to have some idea of the sort of country you are inhabiting.

Kurzbeschreibung In an era when much of what passes for debate is merely moral posturing--traditional family values versus the cultural elite, free speech versus censorship--or reflexive name-calling--the terms "liberal" and "politically correct," are used with as much dismissive scorn by the right as "reactionary" and "fascist" are by the left--Stanley Fish would seem an unlikely lightning rod for controversy. A renowned scholar of Milton, head of the English Department of Duke University, Fish has emerged as a brilliantly original critic of the culture at large, praised and pilloried as a vigorous debunker of the pieties of both the left and right. His mission is not to win the cultural wars that preoccupy the nation's attention, but rather to redefine the terms of battle. In *There's No Such Thing as Free Speech*, Fish takes aim at the ideological gridlock paralyzing academic and political exchange in the nineties. In his witty, accessible dissections of the swirling controversies over multiculturalism, affirmative action, canon revision, hate speech, and legal reform, he neatly eviscerates both the conservatives' claim to possession of timeless, transcendent values (the timeless transcendence of which they themselves have conveniently identified), and the intellectual left's icons of equality, tolerance, and non-discrimination. He argues that while conservative ideologues and liberal stalwarts might disagree vehemently on what is essential to a culture, or to a curriculum, both mistakenly believe that what is essential can be identified apart from the accidental circumstances (of time and history) to which the essential is ritually opposed. In the book's first section, which includes the five essays written for Fish's celebrated debates with Dinesh D'Souza (the author and former Reagan White House policy analyst), Fish turns his attention to the neoconservative backlash. In his introduction, Fish writes, "Terms that come to us wearing the label 'apolitical'--'common values', 'fairness', 'merit', 'color blind', 'free speech', 'reason'--are in fact the ideologically charged constructions of a decidedly political agenda. I make the point not in order to level an accusation, but to remove the sting of accusation from the world 'politics' and redefine it as a synonym for what everyone inevitably does." Fish maintains that the debate over political correctness is an artificial one, because it is simply not possible for any party or individual to occupy a position above or beyond politics. Regarding the controversy over the revision of the college curriculum, Fish argues that the point is not to try to insist that inclusion of ethnic and gender studies is not a political decision, but "to point out that any alternative curriculum--say a diet of exclusively Western or European texts--would be no less politically invested." In Part Two, Fish follows the implications of his arguments to a surprising rejection of the optimistic claims of the intellectual left that awareness of the historical roots of our beliefs and biases can allow us, as individuals or as a society, to escape or transcend them. Specifically, he turns to the movement for reform of legal studies, and insists that a dream of a legal culture in which no one's values are slighted or declared peripheral can no more be realized than the dream of a concept of fairness that answers to everyone's notions of equality and justice, or a yardstick of merit that is true to everyone's notions of worth and substance. Similarly, he argues that attempts to politicize the study of literature are ultimately misguided, because recharacterizations of literary works have absolutely no impact on the mainstream of political life. He concludes his critique of the academy with "The Unbearable Ugliness of Volvos," an extraordinary look at some of the more puzzling, if not out-and-out masochistic, characteristics of a life in academia. Penetrating, fearless, and brilliantly argued, *There's No Such Thing as Free...* Pressestimmen Mr Fish deflates anointed truths with joyful abandon, and he is at his best in exposing the often baleful effects wrought by mean-spirited defenders of traditional values * The New York Times Book * Kurzbeschreibung In an era when much of what passes for debate is merely moral posturing--traditional family values versus the cultural elite, free speech versus censorship--or reflexive name-calling--the terms "liberal" and "politically correct," are used with as much dismissive scorn by the right as "reactionary" and "fascist" are by the left--Stanley Fish would seem an unlikely lightning rod for controversy. 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