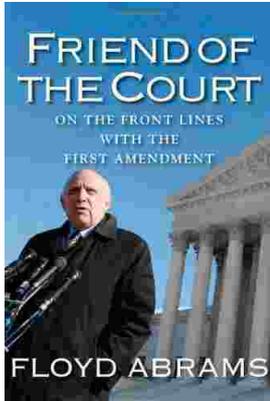


Friend of the Court: On the Front Lines with the First Amendment



Friend of the Court: On the Front Lines with the First Amendment

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4/5 From 651 Reviews

Floyd Abrams

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6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Won Me Over. By The OCThe primary reason I bought this book was the Supreme Court's decision on the Citizen's United case. This overruled federal legislation that limited corporate spending on political campaign messages. When I heard that the Supreme Court had decided that the First Amendment's protection of free speech applied to corporations as well as individuals I felt something had to be wrong. I felt that there were no corporations at the time the Bill of Rights was written so how could they have provided such a protection etc. Mr. Abrams was the attorney who represented Citizens United who challenged the law. He has a long history of important First Amendment cases going back to the Pentagon Papers in the 1970s. He has a history of always being on the "right side" of these cases. How could he have gone so wrong? He persuaded me, against my personal bias, that what the First Amendment protects is political speech - whether it is exercised by individuals or corporations. He pointed out that the majority opinion by Justice Kennedy cited 25 other Supreme Court cases in which corporations had been provided this protection. Of course many of those corporations were newspapers and the First Amendment specifically includes freedom of the press. However other corporations have also been protected. Abrams also warns of the potential dangers of allowing Congress and/or state legislatures to decide which speech should be limited or banned. (I of course recommend you read the more complete and expert explanations of this issue in the book). The book consists of copies of Mr. Abrams' speeches, newspaper and magazine articles, transcripts of media interviews and debates etc. Many other First Amendment cases are discussed including the Pentagon Papers case. Discussions of Wikileaks and the Internet are also timely and thought provoking. I won't say this is a "page turner." I had to read several of his sentences more than once and stop and think about his opinions and reasoning. Usually 20 to 30 pages was enough for one day. However there is humor included and the effort to understand this material is worthwhile. While Abrams is generally considered a liberal he strongly hits back at the liberals who attacked the Citizens United decision. I found many of these comments entertaining. I highly recommend the book and I expect not all who read it will be as convinced by his arguments as I was. 9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. A good read for those interested in the First Amendment By J Sexton This is an excellent compilation from one of the foremost First Amendment lawyers of the past half century. Mr