

# Perspectives on free- speech zones on college campuses research paper examples

[Philosophy](#), [Freedom](#)



- Evaluate Lukianoff's and Scott's arguments for and against free-speech zones on college campuses. Evaluate which person made the stronger argument.

Greg Lukianoff argued that a policy on free-speech zones is a curtailment of an individual's or group's freedom of expression – given the fact that “ only a tiny portion of the campus” is allowed for use during protests/rallies. He strongly believed that anything that impedes or hinders people for free speech is a violation of their constitutional rights. He calls for the toppling of all free speech zones to make them all, ultimately, free speech zones (that is, that there should not be any designated zones for free speech). Lukianoff advanced further that “ scholarship cannot flourish in an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust;” rather, exercise the fullest constitutional free-speech protections as the legitimate proofs and actions to undertake.

On the contrary, Robert Scott presented, at the outset of his argument, an opposing view why there is a need for free-speech zones. Because free-speech zones are insignificant “ threat to free-speech rights,” the underlying reason for their use is to minimize disruptions or maintain public order (that is, given the fact that rallies/protests are mostly violent and damaging to properties). He made his point much clearer when he said that the “ First Amendment is not a license to do and say” whatever one (or a group) wishes, anytime, anywhere, anything. He added that the Constitution does not exempt anything from doing harm, damage, etc. to anyone, anywhere, anytime. Instead, he believes that free-speech zones only offer the right avenue/place for people to stage their protests under reasonable time and manner.

Based on my evaluation above, I believe that given the two persons' perspectives, they have both strong arguments, but the stronger one is that of Scott. The reason for my choice is that liberty does not equate to anarchy and that freedom ends when another person's freedom is at stake (e. g., rallies versus disruption of the regular class sessions).

- The First Amendment to the Bill of Rights states: Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; of the right of the people peaceably to assemble to petition government for a redress of grievances. Are free-speech zones consistent with the First Amendment, as Scott argued, or do they violate it, as Lukianoff argued?

I think that free-speech zones are consistent with the First Amendment, as Scott argued, because of the fact that people's freedom of speech (or of the press) are not abridged whenever people assemble peaceably for them to air and ask redress for their grievances (for that's exactly the purpose for having designated free-speech areas). Inferably, Lukianoff has made a powerful argument only if protesters/rallyists/demonstrators can assure the public to conduct non-violent and vandalism-free demonstrations. However, that is not often the case given the emotional tensions that often burst out during confrontations. At this point of my answer, I would rather suggest a free-speech time, place and manner wherein, depending on the urgency or need to protest, protesters should notify the police or security personnel that they will hold a rally at these particular places and times with the assurance that they will not cause any harm to other people and/or properties.

Protesters will have them the leeway to do whatever they want democratically.

- Are there any instances when freedom of speech should be restricted on college campuses? What about hate speech, inflammatory speech, or a display of symbols, suchs as swastika?
- What is your campu's policy on free speech? If you think the policy should be changed, discuss steps you might take to get it changed.

My campus is a free-speech institution where individuals can express their thoughts, ideas, opinions, emotions, and actions freely. But just like any other freedom, students are free to make protests as long as they do not cause disruptions to other people. Students can use various media just to make known their grievances. However, the most appropriate media, avenue, or means is that which is given priority and resorted. As such, I do not think that our college policy should be changed at the moment, except for the fact that supposedly free-speech areas should be strategically located within our campus and its proximity.

- When University of Colorado professor Ward Churchill published an essay in which he compared some of the workers who died in the World Trade Center in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, to little Nazis, outraged Colorado legislators unanimously passed a resolution condemning his words as "evil and inflammatory." Given the influence that language has in shaping our thoughts and behavior, discuss what action, if any, the university should take against Professor Churchill.

In the name of utmost freedom of speech, the university should take nothing against Professor Churchill for simply broaching out his opinion/feelings/understanding of the matters based on some facts. If, indeed, Churchill's essay is "evil and inflammatory," he should be the

chance to present evidences for his statements/claims. However, given the sensitivity of the issue, it is just fitting that any human violations or moral damages should be proven beyond reasonable doubt in a proper court of law. Just like what I read, the University of Colorado apologized publicly for Churchill's essay and fired him - not because of the essay - but concerning academic /scholarly dishonesty; Churchill filed a lawsuit against the said university and won, but never got his job back. His final appeal to be heard was refused by the Supreme Court .

- When Richard Perle, chairman of the Defense Policy Board and supporter of the war in Iraq, spoke at Brown University, students continually interrupted his speech by booing and jeering. The students justified their jeering as part of their right to express their views. Discuss whether freedom of speech justifies the use of jeering to prevent someone with an opposing view from speaking.

Depending on the nature of the occasion, booing and jeering a formal speech do not justifiably support freedom of speech or expression. Students should hear first an opposing view before they butt in. After the speech, they can ask the speaker questions or clarifications. If they are still dissatisfied, they can go on their booing or jeering up to a certain extent that the reputation of Perle is never maligned unjustifiably. If the students still want to continue their " booing and jeering," they can use other outlet or media (e. g., student paper, student forums, etc.). Any action should be directed to the issue and not to the person (except otherwise called for) in order not to commit the ad hominem fallacy.

- Keele Houghton, 18, was sentenced to prison in England in 2009 for posting

death threats on her Facebook page against 14-year-old Emily Moore. There also have been cases where targets of cyber-bullying have committed suicide. Given the effects of words on people's self-image and actions, discuss whether cyber bullying falls within freedom of speech or whether cyber-bullies should be held accountable and punished for their words.

There are legal bases why cyberbullying is never an exercise of one's right for freedom of speech. Whenever an individual, who is of legal age, slanders or charge falsely another person's self-image and actions, he/she should be accountable and punished for his/her words. In most social media sites and given the fact on human behavior, most people oftentimes are prone to believe what other people hurl to others without any evidence at all. In such a case, it is hard to defend oneself. In the case of death threats, such as towards Moore, who is an underage teen, Houghton deservedly incarcerated because he/she has done a great deal of emotional harm to the child. I strongly believe that cyberbullying is never a freedom or right because it inflicts undue harm against other people.

## **Reference**

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