

(Including a Running head and page numbers help to keep your assignment organized.)

2016-08-16 15:18:01

Please be sure to
note the format for te

✓ Are Contributions to Political Campaigns Ethical?

Joanna Student

SOC120: Introduction to Ethics & Social Responsibility

Dr. Ashford Instructor

June 20, 20XX



Ethical Contributions to Political Campaigns

✓ A question that comes up frequently in political discussions is whether organizations like corporations have too much influence over the political landscape today. Corporations have many resources through which to effect political change, including lobbyist *quo* back door arrangements and campaign contributions. Because these funds can have a large influence on who wins elections and the legislation that politicians support, it is important for an educated citizenry to be aware of these contributions, and to consider their ethical implications. I will argue using the utilitarian and deontology theories, in this section includes a contributions to political campaigns by organizations like corporations and unions can be ethical and should be allowed so long as there are sufficient regulations in place to prevent undue harm that might result from giving large organizations too much influence over the political process. I will contrast this view with that of ethical egoism, which would argue that such contributions are ethical inasmuch as they allow corporations to pursue their own long term interests.

According to the Federal Elections Commission (2004), “The Federal Election Campaign Act (the Act) places monetary limits on contributions to support candidates for federal office and prohibits contributions from certain sources.” However, corporations are allowed to create separate bank accounts and then make donations from these accounts to government websites can be useful of information. Consider using information as long as they are not connected directly to the operation of the business. This section describes an ethical theory in thorough, discuss what happens when corporations set up political action committees.

✓ Utilitarianism

✓ Utilitarianism is the ethical theory that actions are right or wrong to the degree to which they promote the happiness of all concerned (Mill, 2008). Accordingly, whether or not corporate campaign contributions are ethical will depend on the overall


consequences of such contributions.  If a corporation's making a contribution results in more overall consequences than not making it, or than making a different contribution, the contribution would be considered ethical. On the other hand, if the contribution results in more harm than good, then the contribution would be unethical. For instance, a contribution to a candidate could be unethical if it results in benefits to the corporation itself, but at the expense of many others in the society. The  primary question of this paper is not whether all cases of such contributions are wrong, but whether corporate contributions to political campaigns are wrong in general; that is, does permitting them have greater overall consequences than banning them would have? I will argue that with careful oversight, the benefits of such contributions can outweigh their potential harms, so allowing them is ethical from a utilitarian point of view.

2016-08-16 15:20:21
Apply ethical viewpoints

2016-08-16 15:20:45
Examples can help to clarify

2016-08-16 15:21:03
This passage clarifies the

There are various reasons that representatives of a corporation may want to donate to a political campaign. Corporations may be trying to advance their particular organizational objectives or they may stand to garner an economic benefit. While a corporation will always be concerned with its own future profits, this does not necessarily conflict with the interests of society as a whole. In many cases, attempting to have a political influence that benefits the corporation can also benefit society as a whole. For example, a contribution that helps a corporation to succeed in the market place can result in the continued employment of thousands of people, as well as the provision of important goods and services at lower prices.

Another example of the positive use of political contributions comes not from corporations but from unions.  According to the Center for Responsible Politics, the largest all-time contributors to campaigns has been labor unions such as the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America (UBA) and the Employees International Union (SEIU), which ranked number one with over \$10 million in contributions throughout the paper is

2016-08-16 15:21:31
Taking a few key examples that can be used throughout the paper is

donations since 1989. They were far ahead of the next two contributors, which were the National Education Association with \$96,619,681 in donations and the American Federation of State/County/Municipal Employees Union with \$96,445,616 in total contributions. The millions of dollars from these political contributions have served to promote the goals of their union, which in turn promote the well-being of the many members of the American work force that they represent.

✓ The Final Paper will further explore the role of PACs in providing information to their organizational members and society. Further, it will contrast possible negative consequences that can result from allowing corporate contributions, with alternative approaches to regulation.

Deontology

Deontology is the non-consequential ethical theory that the outcome of an action should never outweigh the action itself (Mosser, 2013). This means that the individual is responsible to the whole of the group, and pays special attention to people's inherent rights. Where utilitarianism allows for a relatively negative outcome for a few if the overall outcome benefits the majority, deontology rejects any action where the outcome is harmful. For example, deontology can examine indirect political contributions by organizations and deem them ethical if all organizations are equally allowed to contribute. This might require regulations on limits and other tactics used by an organization in order to keep it fair across the board.

This issue can also be examined at the micro level. When evaluating the ethical nature of campaign contributions, the nature of the political landscape and the candidate or legislation must also be taken into account. If a candidate or piece of legislation will ultimately harm people, even if only a few, deontology would not consider contributing to those as ethical because the outcome is harmful. In deontology, the ends can never justify the means to get there. Just as when applying utilitarianism to this issue, there will always be specific cases that must be

examined and considered before the action is deemed ethical.

The Final Paper will explore what current regulations are in place regarding contributions by organizations. It will also examine specific research findings related to financial contributions made by organizations to see if previous actions have resulted in negative consequences or harm.

Ethical Egoism

✓ Ethical egoism is the moral theory that one should do whatever is in one’s own interests (Mosser, 2013). This does not mean that one should do whatever one feels like in the moment, but that one should work hard to promote one’s greatest long-term success. When corporations donate to political campaigns, they generally will do so with the goal of promoting their own financial interests and thus are acting ethically according to the egoist theory. Some may feel that this kind of self-interested influence is unethical. One can imagine a business supporting legislation that promotes its own interests to the detriment of society as a whole. For example, corporations have often used their considerable influence to ✓ create legislation favorable to their own interests but not to the interests of employees, human rights, or the environment (Burley & Hoedeman, 2011). ✓ Because a lot of harm can come to society from such influence, some may feel that this degree of power in the hands of corporations should not be allowed.

The Final Paper will further explore the metric by which we measure an action based on its overall social consequences and, drawing from the (2007) and others, evaluate the societal implications of corporate pursuit of self-interest.


2016-08-16 15:22:52


Employ persuasive and applicable info from credible sources to develop an ample analysis or synthesis of the self-interest

2016-08-16 15:23:13

Considering strong objections is the best way to

Conclusion

 Donations from organizations to political campaigns can drive legislation and thus

 have a major influence on public policy in this country. While this influence can have

 positive and negative impacts, this paper argues that such contributions

 they satisfy the ethical egoist goal of allowing corporations to promote

 and, at least when regulated, can satisfy the utilitarian and deontology goals of promoting a


 happier society as well. One significant difference between the approaches is that the

 utilitarian and deontology view would insist on certain regulations designed to limit the

 harmful results that could result from organizations donating in ways that promote their own

 interests. However, the ethical egoist would disagree, and maintain that

 organizations to promote their interests has the highest priority; thus, the

 oppose most kinds of regulations on political contributions by organizations. Both theories

 appear to agree, however, that, at least when carefully regulated, corporations should be

 allowed to make political contributions that further their long-term interests.

2016-08-16 15:23:32
 This learner ends
 this paper by

2016-08-16 15:23:51
 Independently and
 accurately apply

2016-08-16 15:24:15
 It is nice to close
 with a brief

 References

2016-08-16 15:24:34

The references page is separate

- Burley, H., & Hoedeman, O. (2011, January). The best influence money can buy: The 10 worst corporate lobbyists. *New Internationalist Magazine*, 439. Retrieved from <https://newint.org/features/2011/01/01/10-worst-corporate-lobbyists>
- Center for Responsive Politics (2016). Service employees international union. Retrieved from <http://www.opensecrets.org/orgs/summary.php?id=d000000077&cycle=2010>
- Mill, J. S. (2008). Utilitarianism. In J. Bennett (Ed.), *Early Modern Philosophy*. Retrieved from <http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/mill1863.pdf> (Original work published 1863)
- Mosser, K. (2013). *Ethics and social responsibility* (2nd ed.). Retrieved from <https://content.ashford.edu>
- Smith, A. (2007). An inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations. In S. M. Soares (Ed.), *MetaLibri Digital Library*. Retrieved from http://www.ibiblio.org/ml/libri/s/SmithA_WealthNations_p.pdf (Original work published 1776)