



NOTEBOOK

## Texas Tech's 'Free-Speech Zones' Are Unconstitutional, Judge Rules

By SCOTT SMALLWOOD

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A federal judge has struck down "free-speech zones" at Texas Tech University, ruling unconstitutional a requirement that students who wish to give speeches must stay within a designated area.

The case was brought by Jason Roberts, a law student who had sought to speak publicly about his view that "homosexuality is a sinful, immoral, and unhealthy lifestyle." He asked administrators for permission to give the speech outside the designated zone -- a 20-foot-wide gazebo that can hold about 40 people.

According to the lawsuit, officials turned down the request, saying that it was "the expression of a personal belief and thus is something more appropriate for the free-speech area, which is the gazebo area."

The lawsuit was supported by the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, an advocacy group that has fought speech zones at several colleges.

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