

The Melodrama of the United States Postal Service

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What's the difference between thinking of the USPS as a business and thinking of it as a public service? In what ways is the USPS more like a public service? In what ways is the USPS more like a business?

What are some of the benefits of privatization in general? What are some of the benefits we might see with the USPS in particular? What might be some of the negative consequences of privatization?

The role of the postal service is explicitly laid out in the Constitution. It acts as an establishment of the executive branch of the United States government, and the Postmaster General is a political appointment. What might explain this relationship between the postal service and the government? What is the political nature of the USPS? What role might the postal service have to play in a democracy?

The author states that "The question to ask is what services do we as a society want to allow to be governed by a principle of profit; and are there any services that it is immoral, or just unwise, to allow to be so governed?" What kinds of businesses might we not want to be managed this way? Does the USPS belong on that list? Why or why not?