

Media law and media ethics media essay



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Media plays a very important role in disseminating information in our society through the means of broadcasting. Information and ideas are able to reach and penetrate the public through broadcasted media such as television, radio, internet, and etc. However, there are restriction and limitation pertaining to the amount of truth that can be implemented and that is how censorship policy comes about. So what is censorship policy? Censorship policies are policies that are created to filter the content in media that can be considered as sensitive, harmful, inappropriate and even malicious. On the other hand, there is freedom of expression but what exactly is freedom of expression? Based on Google, the meaning of freedom expression is the freedom to speak freely without censorship or limitation, or both. That is only providing if the speech or act does not cause conflict or pose any threat to the public's interests. Freedom of expression also acts as a channel that allows the public to voice their opinions and views.

Based on my understanding in Broadcasting Act 1988, I've to disagree with the statement because freedom of expression and censorship policy are both essential to a country's development and growth. Censorship policy is a necessity to media because contents that are published through the media must always be checked and filtered in order to prevent harmful and misleading contents to reach the public. Examples are sex-related scenes, violence and gore scenes, and some to the extent of causing racial controversy among the people. It is true that the contents found in media are not 100% true and authentic; However if too much truth and info are exposed to the public, then how certain are we that the public are ready to accept all the facts?

Secondly, freedom of expression is essential for a democratic country to grow and develop succeedingly without the abuse of power. Freedom of expression also allow different views and opinions to be voiced out to the public and a country such as Malaysia that has citizens of diverse race, religion, and culture can share their beliefs and be more aware. In addition, freedom of expression has many beneficial effects to society. Freedom of expression also opens opportunity for citizens to take part in decision making of the country such as the rights to vote. Furthermore, citizens can voice out their thoughts and opinion freely without being judged. We refer to freedom of expression rather than freedom of speech because it is more accurately conveyed that it does not have to be words that is said but by the acts that we did.

However, freedom of expression may cause harm to others and if it is not controlled properly, libel and slander might occur and conflict will happen. A good example will be the case of Wee Meng Chee aka Namewee that has caused a racial controversy by putting a video of our national anthem with racial slur in it. So this is why freedom of expression should be controlled even though it is necessary for a democratic society. As we can see, freedom of expression and censorship policy synchronizes together and a democratic country could not grow with just one and without the other.

That boils up to the point, is all this restriction and limitation really necessary and needed? I will say it's very important to be able to balance both freedom of expression and censorship policy. We need to have strong moral values in order to be able to filter contents that are useful and contents that may be harmful and malicious. We the people of the country are actually the cause

of all the conflict and controversy that has happened in our nation. As long as we are not educated with proper moral values and ethics, there will always be issues regarding censorship policy and freedom expression. There is a saying: “ With great power, comes great responsibility”. Based on that quote, I believe that both freedom of expression and censorship policy can be a very useful tool if we were to use it wisely but it can also be a very destructive weapon if we do not imply wisdom in using it.

There must be boundaries and limitation concerning freedom of expression because more and more individual are starting to rise up and make a stand by voicing out their opinion. It is a good thing that we are able to listen and share different views and opinion. If freedom of expression is used with the intent of helping others and bringing unity then those kinds of acts and speeches should not be blocked and restricted. A very good example pertaining to good use of freedom of expression is the issue of Martin Luther King. Quoting from his speech, he said that we should face hostility with peace. If the public can have a mature and rational thinking like Martin Luther King then freedom of expression can lead to a good thing.

The government should control the public from delivering hate speech but they shouldn't restrict and stop the public from expressing honest opinion or we as a nation would always be distorted and blinded with lies. The case of Irene Fernandez has sparked up a very sensitive issue among the public. Irene Fernandez published a report on the living conditions of the migrant workers entitled “ Abuse, Torture and Dehumanized Conditions of Migrant Workers in Detention Centres” and she was detained and charged for maliciously publishing false news. Do you think it is fair for a woman that <https://assignbuster.com/media-law-and-media-ethics-media-essay/>

merely defended the rights of migrant workers to be under the longest trial in Malaysia history?

Malaysia is recognized as a democratic country with variety of races, religion, and culture and Malaysia supports freedom of expression but the charge of Irene Fernandez has bring about confusion to the public. It is said that we have the freedom of expression but the arrest of Irene Fernandez has proven that we do not really have the freedom of expression rather it is just a cover up done by the government. We the people make the government so henceforth if we can grow to be a wise and developed society, then freedom of expression and censorship policy can be a channel for us to share beliefs and opinion without worrying that conflicts might spark.

I will end this essay with a question. Can our voices be heard fairly despite all this restriction and limitation?