

# Media and journalism ethics in the united states

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In the United States, free expression is being practiced, especially in Media where privacy is not an issue anymore. Media people are open to talk about everything and everyone. After all, in the US system, free media is a reflection of free country and free people.

In most nations, government takes big part in maintaining Media rules and policies. In the United States, they have Journalism Ethics that people working in Media industry must follow. These are taking full responsibility of everything that you write and broadcast to the people, and are some-what set rules in order to have fair and constructive news and information in the society.

Journalism Ethics provide a process in checking all journalistic write-ups, news or any, even simple information without violating the freedom of expression by media people. Journalists in every place provide the public with awareness on important issues and knowledge on everything, especially on things that are essential to us. They play a vital role in everyday lives of the people and for this; they should be guided accordingly in order to have proper and fair distribution of information and responsible and constructive views for all.

Media is a term used to people who gather, make and broadcast news and information to a very large audience. This serves as a relevant source of information and deeply affects public's lifestyle and thinking.

Centuries ago, media is already evident but people from the past didn't have the term " media" yet. Not until the 1920's where it was deliberately distributed, used, and practiced that the people came up with the term "

Media.” This term is associated always to the dissemination of facts, opinions, and ideas through the use of newspapers, journals and magazines, television, radio, the web, books, and even cinema films. Its growth was fast that made it as one of the credible sources in receiving news and information.

Media plays a huge role in our society. Nowadays, we always see people reading newspapers, watching television, or listening to radio to get news and information, not just inside the country but also all the things that are happening around the globe.

Media has its purpose for the society and its people; these are to educate, to inform, and to simply entertain. We learn from all the information media is providing us. Education today depends on the advance reports of everything that is happening in every place all the time. Students, especially teachers gather information from media because all of us have this “ trust” in media people on all the information that they supply. Also, media has its way to inform the public; these are through the use of newspapers, magazines, radio, and the most common and in demand of all, the television.

We rely on these things very much because without the media providing the information, people will be detached not only from what is happening around the world, but also from the governance of our administration, law-makers and all the things that are essential in our society as a democratic country. Another thing is media plays a role of just simply entertaining the public. In all the problems that our society is facing today, all the tragedies, hazards and fear that we are experiencing, media finds a way to divert our attention

to some other things and somehow relieves us and make us forget even for some time all the anxiety that we undergo these days.

Media really help and educate us through the information that they provide. Without the media, perhaps our points of view on everything will be limited and our opinions inadequate. The flow of information that media is doing is very important and useful and we must realize how it helps us in our everyday lifestyle, and how it affects our culture, our beliefs, and our attitudes and behavior towards everything surrounding us.

Freedom of the press in the United States before, especially during the 17th century, was not guided accordingly by rules of the government, thus resulting to media people being fined for libel or even sedition especially when the government finds their published opinions threatening or aggressive. The notion of "freedom of the press" started when John Peter Zenger was prosecuted for seditious libel in 1735. Eventually, Zenger was found not guilty in his case when his lawyer, Andrew Hamilton argued to the jury that there is nothing wrong in publishing the truth and telling the public about a reality that is really happening.

When the American Revolution came, one of the essentials that Revolutionary leaders need to save and maintain is the Press Freedom, this was followed by the amendment of the United States Constitution stating the restriction of the congress from editing the freedom of the press that is also closely connected to freedom of speech. During this time, Thomas Jefferson was an important figure. He wanted the government to be transparent in providing security and opportunity for every citizen of the nation, especially the things that concerning the society and every individual's concerns and needs.

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He believed that a press that is free and active will be effective in educating the public and maintaining transparent news and information for all. An active press will help in the dissemination of all relevant information concerning the government and the public. And for this to happen, Jefferson wants the press to be out of control of the government. He stated that a state or a government that is not open in receiving criticisms and cannot stand condemnation deserves to fall and be out of governance. He stood by the fact that press is one of the measurements of freedom thus it should be ruled by reason and truth. Truth; which is very important in every aspect of our lives and which we deserve more than anything else especially now that we are committed to democracy in our country.

When somebody enters the world of media, the person should be guided by responsibilities in any information to be released. There are certain rules that any journalist or media individual must watch out for in order for them to be perceived as acting responsibly in what they do, some of these are unsubstantial or feathery write-ups, sensationalizing every detail of information, not recorded facts, and many more. Any journalist or press officer should be honest and fair in gathering and reporting incidents, cases or any event happening in the community and in the world.

Any information should be surrounded by accurate details, objective opinions and points of view, and of course balanced and fair judgment. Press people should also be aware of not receiving any favor or gift from anyone especially if it will affect the information that the public deserve to know and be informed of. They must be also aware that in every fact, news, or information that they write, they should be accountable to their followers

such as their readers if it is newspaper, listeners if it is radio and viewers from television, internet and other sources of information.

Being a responsible journalist should also be making sure that their sources of information are dependable and trustworthy, and for this to happen, they should avoid anonymous sources and always cite sources properly. Media individuals should not also fabricate any information and detail of news even it is just a tiny detail of information. Responsible media individual should not cross the line up to the point where invasion of privacy has already become an issue.

When criticizing someone, especially if it is a political figure, be sure to get his side and the chance to respond to the same story. And be sure to maintain the standards of the society or the community regarding obscenity or any pornographic information that will have a great effect to the public. Whenever a press officer states opinion, be also sure that fair comment rule is being followed to avoid being charged of libel.

Community standards, as I have mentioned earlier vary in every situation and in every place. What I am going to discuss is one of the most important event happened in the world that the community set the standards in delivering news and coverage. This is the standards of the community when it comes to bringing news and information about the War.

The society is greatly affected in any international coverage of different events especially when there is War occurrence around the globe. Just to set expectations, there are rules that media industry follows whenever covering an event, a tragedy or any complex issue that needs to be brought in the

awareness of the public. One of these is the most common standard; always cite the sources where the journalist gathered the information.

Also use different types of sources, do not just depend on one source, consider the views and opinions of other individuals especially if it will greatly affect the news and will send an important knowledge to the public. Investigate further about the issue just to clarify any information and to make the people aware of every detail. If it is War coverage, always provide the story of all sides, the different images, but also avoid sensationalizing the situation and just stick to what is essential to the public. And always provide post-incident report just to make sure that there will be a closure and finality in every story.

Another issue when we talk about Media is the privacy. More often than not, privacy is really affected and invaded when media enters the scene. Since privacy is subjective, the government set regulations on how the privacy should look like just to protect every individual especially politicians and public figures. In this case, it is also perceive that the government is the main threat to the privacy of every individual because they control any information, and also they have surveillances and collection and sharing of public information.

Because privacy issues are rapidly growing, there are now certain boundaries that the law established to protect all individuals especially public figures that are perceived to be public owned. The right to privacy was made into consideration in 1890's when a lot of sensational stories, gossips, sexual scandals and even publication of obscene images became uncontrolled.

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Individuals became less private because media people have the freedom to invade personal lives. For example, if all of us can walk on the beach, sidewalks, or any public place, a journalist, a photographer, or any press officer can also do all of these things.

The government implemented certain rules so that privacy cases will be minimized. The government set certain places that any press individual is not allowed to enter or go into. If there are special events that the public must know, government issues special media access for them to cover and make the public aware of the event. Only in the 1970's when the government let the media roll their cameras and cover the discussion in the U. S. House of

Representatives and only in 1986 when it permitted the media into the Senate chamber. In courtrooms, media is allowed to cover the proceedings just for the public to know that the justice system guarantees the right and fair trial, but still most of the federal courtrooms still not allow cameras inside. Another thing that the government made sure that privacy is protected is by issuing a search warrant whenever there are cases that a private home or place needs to be searched. Only people with this court-issued paper are allowed to enter premises and conduct search.

These are just some of the so many privacy issues that media people is being held responsible especially to cases where they really disobey the law and totally invade private lives. At least, I can say that the government and its laws are there and being implemented to protect every individual's right to be alone and be private.



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