Media should be controlled by the government

One of the best things about being American citizens is our right to freedom of speech. Yet, everyone in the world is not as lucky. As technology becomes more important to our society, many government officials fear social media for its power to end careers or start rumors - but does that give them the right to regulate online content? Hugo Chavez, the Venezuelan president, seems to believe he has the right to impose restrictions on Internet content, similar to those seen in countries such as Iran and Cuba. He was quoted as saying, " the Internet cannot be something open where anything is said and done. Every country has to apply its own rules and norms." He even expressed criticism of social networking sites Twitter and Facebook because they are used to spread rumors, even citing Twitter messages as " tools of terror." The real issue began when a Web site allowed a false post claiming that Diosdado Cabello, a senior minister and close aide of Chavez, had been assassinated. Chavez believes allowing things like this to occur are a crime and people must be stopped from reporting fake information. However, that is eliminating the entire point of the internet. People are supposed to feel like posting their thoughts and opinions on public sites is accepted because that is what blogs and social networking sites are. They act as tools for people to keep in touch or ramble on about information that they deem important. While it is wrong to falsely state information about a person, that does not give Chavez the right to control what people can and cannot say online. Yet, this doesn't seem to bother him. Last August, Chavez closed down 34 broadcasters on " administrative grounds" and replaced them with own lengthy presidential broadcasts. That is not trying to better the country by removing false information; that is replacing things he doesn't like to hear

with his own thoughts. It takes away peoples' freedom to express themselves. This just goes to show how important a free and open internet is. People have the right to say what they want, and, even if it's wrong that does not give the government the right to censor them just because they don't agree.