

Rebuttal (affirmative)

[Law](#), [Constitution](#)



Rebuttal (Affirmative) Our first rebuttal point is that Censorship would take away our first amendment rights. The First Amendment of the US Constitution states, " Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances." Censorship according to the Encyclopedia Britannica is " The Act of changing or suppressing speech or writing that is considered subversive of the common good." Censorship, therefore, undermines and is contrary to the First Amendment, which is intended to allow freedom of speech. The second rebuttal is that it is impossible to define what is subversive or inappropriate writing or speech. People define offensive or inappropriate material from different viewpoints. For example, someone might find some of the material on TV's reality show " Fear Factor" outrageous, whereas another person may find it very entertaining. Therefore, instead of censoring material it should be the person's responsibility whether or not they watch something. Nowadays, it is very easy to read up on a TV program before it airs, such as reading a TV guide or going on the internet for more information. The other option would be just to pick up the remote control and change the channel. If a majority are allowed to determine what is inappropriate or offensive material then the minority is discriminated against. If it is defined by the powerful such as large corporations, then the weak are discriminated against. This could lead to minority or individual opinions being crushed. In 1996, a group of powerful cattle ranches tried to sue Oprah Winfrey because she expressed an opinion that she might become a vegetarian, implying that eating beef would cause

her physical harm. After the show cattle prices dropped for two weeks so the ranchers sued Oprah for expressing her opinion. Thankfully, the first amendment was upheld and the courts ruled that Oprah had a right to express her opinion. If Censorship is allowed, it will take us down the slippery slope of control by the state and the economically and politically strong at the expense of minorities. Individual opinion will eventually be crushed similar to what we saw in Communism in the 20th century. The purpose of the First Amendment of the Constitution was to provide freedom of speech for the individual and this should be defended at all costs. Our third rebuttal is that the answer for inappropriate material is not Censorship but rather that the state and parents should take responsibility to educate individuals on the damage the material can cause them. With the growth of the internet and children's confidence and knowledge in its use and access (which is usually way above their parents) it is unrealistic to think that inappropriate material can be kept away from children. For example; A. The Internet is a global network and as hard as parents try, children who want to, will be able to find access to inappropriate material either from their own PC's, or via a friend's. B. Children can also get easy access to inappropriate material on TV via friend's homes, or Pay Per View. C. Material on the black market is very easy to get hold of. The fact is, one of the consequences of Globalization is that children can get access to inappropriate material. Without a doubt, inappropriate material is readily available but censorship is neither the answer nor the solution. What is the answer is to place responsibility on the State and parents to train and instruct children on what the consequences and potential dangers of listening or watching the wrong material. When

children reach an age that they can get access to this material from their own initiative (and this will vary by child) then parents and schools should teach children how they can be damaged by inappropriate material. Train them to guard against the dangerous " animals or predators" who are waiting to pounce on innocent victims of our society. What we can't do is destroy those animals, but we can train our children on why and how they can avoid them.