

Is censorship right?

Yes:

Censorship helps to **prevent conflict**. Censoring hate helps to **promote peace**. It provides **security** for the country, e.g. certain information is 'confidential' and therefore cannot be used against the country, e.g. terrorism. It **avoids children being exposed** to adult content, including issues of sex, war, drugs and violence. It helps to **control panic and fear**. Completely free media fans the flames of panic. Therefore government intervention can **control rumours** and over-exaggeration. Religious values would be reinforced.

No:

Censorship can **promote negative agendas** – the information can be manipulated and therefore the country and what it is thinking can be controlled. It **violates the rights of citizens** as it puts a stop to freedom of expression and free speech. Censorship only **promotes ways of living life that are considered "morally correct,"** which would no doubt end up offending some people by labelling person's lifestyle choice as 'immoral' or 'wrong'. **Companies** have a powerful place in governments and can **control censorship**. Big companies might therefore censor their competition or any information that might lead to a reduction in profit.

Censorship

Suppressing or limiting access to materials considered obscene, offensive or a threat to security.

censorship

The Worst Part of Censorship is

Declaration of Human Rights

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media." People can read this in several ways:

- We should be allowed to say what we want and express our religious and non-religious opinions in public
- We should be able to talk about our beliefs in public but not if it is going to offend others or encourage hatred against people
- No views should be allowed to be stated in public that are going to offend or harm others. Religious beliefs should only be expressed in the home

In UK, people are free to express their views about any religion unless the content is likely to incite violence or discrimination against its followers

Censorship means to prevent the publication or broadcast of certain content

- Charlie Hebdo: murdered for drawings publicised in his newspaper. They were drawings of the Prophet Muhammad, which might have been very offensive or considered Islamophobic
- The Westboro Baptist Church in the US campaign against gay people and Jews. Their language and actions are incredibly offensive.
- Extreme views do not reflect the opinion of the whole religion
- If people held extreme views then they would still hold them
- Saying what we like is a personal opinion and should be related to context - it is uncertain whether there can be a balance between free speech and censorship
- Some people dislike being disturbed at home when an evangelist comes knocking to talk about their religion

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Religion can be expressed in many different ways:

1. **W** - Worn (Through what sort of clothes and symbols people wear)
2. **A** - Actions (Through the actions people do)
3. **S** - Symbols (Through symbols, both worn and in a place of worship). Often in the media we read of situations where a person's desire to express their faith has led to others complaining or being offended. In France, it is illegal to wear religious symbols or religious clothing in public.

Symbols

It shows respect to that person's faith, beliefs and God

- It is a personal conviction to express faith through symbols
- The cross is sometimes worn to represent the belief that Jesus died and was resurrected for humanity
- The crucifix is sometimes worn to represent the belief that Jesus sacrificed himself on the cross so that the sins of mankind can be forgiven and humans might be able to earn a place with God in heaven
 - The ichthus (fish sign) represents belief in Jesus Christ: God's son and Saviour of mankind



Freedom of Religious Expression



Worn

It is a personal conviction to express faith through what is worn.

The Salvation Army uniform reminds everyone that members stand for justice and that they are soldiers for God. Priests wear vestments when they lead worship. It makes them feel humble and closer to God. The cross is sometimes worn to represent the belief that Jesus died and was resurrected for humanity. The crucifix is worn to represent the belief that Jesus sacrificed himself so that the sins of mankind can be forgiven and humans can earn a place with God in heaven

Actions

Evangelism is the act of spreading faith to others. Some believe that it is important to try to talk to others about your faith. Interfaith dialogue (different faith or belief groups coming together to talk about their views) is important to understand other peoples' points of view. Some believe it is their mission to express their faith and to try to convert others to their religion. For example, Christians believe it is a duty to teach the Gospel, as Jesus said, "Make disciples (followers) of all nations." Some give out leaflets, go door-to-door or preach in public places



In UK, people have the rights to express their religious beliefs, as long as it doesn't hurt anyone. 'Freedom of religious expression' also refers to our tolerance of other peoples' beliefs.

However, there have been some notable cases where this freedom of religious expression has been denied to people. For example:

- In UK, Nadia Eweida was sent home from her job with British Airlines at an airport for not covering or removing her cross necklace
- Lilian Ladele refused to conduct civil partnerships for same-sex couples as it was against her religious belief. As a result, Ladele has to leave her job as she felt it was a choice between her faith and her employment.
- In France, all religious clothing and symbols has been banned from being worn in public. However, this does result in cases like a woman being forced to remove her hijab whilst she is playing on the beach with her children, despite it being against her religious beliefs. Many would consider her lack of dignity whilst she undressed in public a denial of her human rights.



SONGS OF PRAISE



Evangelism: Some religious programmes have a regular slot on TV or the radio. Songs of Praise is a popular TV programme on Sundays, with real-life stories, interviews and live music, bringing the whole Christian community together.

Celebrating Festivals: Christians can tune into broadcasts which are held during religious festivals, such as Christmas and Easter Sunday. They enable people to worship together as a community despite differences in location.

Community Cohesion: Local media can be very useful in keeping faith communities together, e.g. Flame FM on Wirral reflects Christian belief locally.

Debates: The Big Questions is a television show which discusses problems within society. The show shares the opinions of religious and non-religious people, which can benefit religion, as their beliefs and ideas are being expressed and understood and common concerns are recognised.

Education: Most religious groups see the media as a useful tool to provide people outside of their religion with information and to promote their faith in a positive way.

Awareness: Documentaries can help raise the profile of a religion among the population. BBC documentaries such as Life of the Buddha and Life of Muhammad help the audience to understand important historical facts about Buddhism and Islam.

Charity: Religious groups can also promote their religion through radio, TV, or via the internet. For example, charities such as Christian Aid and World Vision rely on public exposure.

How does religion use the media?



In the UK

GO ON MISSION AND MAKE DISCIPLES