

Press Freedom

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In Hong Kong, having privacy seems to be impossible for many people, especially for the stars and celebrities. It is because their private life has been intruded too much by gossiping magazines in Hong Kong. As a result, some people advocate stricter censorship to be imposed on the mass media. I would like to discuss both sides of the coin.

The main advantage of imposing stricter censorship on the mass media is that there will be no more intrusion into the private life of stars and celebrities. Their privacy can be kept and their daily life will not be affected. For example, paparazzi like chasing after movie stars and celebrities anytime by using any means. In order to get valuable gossiping news, some paparazzi will even search in their target's rubbish bin to trace stories of their daily life. With these relentless pursuits, stars and celebrities feel insecure and threatened as there is nothing they can hide. Their private life is disclosed to the public without the stars' and celebrities' permission. After stricter censorship is imposed, this unscrupulous behavior can be put under control and the victims' peaceful life can be restored.

Obviously, there is a strong argument in favour of stricter censorship. However, there are some serious disadvantages as well.

A serious disadvantage is that the government and powerful people will use stricter censorship as an excuse to control the press. The public will be deprived of the right to know important issues that concern their welfare. For instance, the government may forbid the reporting of any news which is anti-government. In addition, powerful people may try to control the press to protect their interests and reputation. In short, mass media will serve the government and powerful people instead of the public if too strict censorship is imposed.

Another disadvantage is that freedom of speech will be suppressed. With strict censorship imposed, the mass media needs to consider whether the news and articles are suitable for publishing for fear of violating the law. For example, editors tend to publish news which will not offend the government and powerful people. Some important but offensive topics will not be considered. This will result in fewer news articles of great value being

published. The public will have no freedom to express their views on the government and its policies. Don't forget, the Basic Law has granted press freedom to us. We should treasure it.

To conclude, there are advantages and disadvantages of stricter censorship on the mass media. However, I believe it is better not to have stricter censorship since press freedom is a pride of Hong Kong and has led us to our success.

Teacher's Feedback : It is an essay delightful to read. You have developed the major body paragraphs quite well, substantiating each argument with appropriate examples. The paragraphs are arranged in logical organization, with clear topic sentences. I like the concise and logical way your arguments are presented. A variety of sentence structures and suitable vocabulary are used. (Miss Chan Siu Ying)

Food For Thought : With the publication of the covertly-taken photographs of Gilian Chung changing privately in a dressing room, there has been an outcry for stricter censorship on mass media. This essay looks at the issue from two perspectives. This is what we should always do when we come to some important social issues, especially controversial ones. Don't just listen to one side and don't jump to conclusion. Be open-minded and critical. This can be a good training for analytical thinking.