The Ethics Of The Media Essay, Research Paper

The Ethics of the Media

The purpose of the media has become an ongoing question since the large amount of conflicts between the consumer and media. Why is the original purpose of the media so damn hard to figure out? It is time to confront this issue instead of blowing it off by saying, “We can never change the media, so why bother?” What kind of chickenshit statement is that?! If there are so many people with so much power, surely one of them realizes the downward spiral of the ethics of the media. I feel my sole purpose of this paper is to tell everyone my ideas and viewpoints on censoring the media.

Ooooooo, censor. What a bad word that is when used in the same sentence with media. So many people believe censorship is a bad thing, but there is no other solution in stopping the “bad press.” When I sit back and look at the stories about stories that are bad and offending to someone, I realize something needs to be done. The media is out of control. True, there are many informing and needed stories, but, my god, how many times a day to we need to hear and read about how much money O.J. Simpson has to pay the family of Ronald Goldman? We, as consumers, need to sit back and ask ourselves, “What was the point of hearing or reading that story?” Back to the censor issue. I, as an aspiring journalist, do not believe in total and complete censorship of the media, but also, as an aspiring journalist, I am embarrassed of some of the stories that are run, for instance, when the crime scene photos of Jon-Benet Ramsey were run in Globe magazine. Was there not anyone, an editor, a writer, or even a custodian at Globe who thought, “Uh, oh. These photos may get us into some trouble.” Was there not a single sole who had enough ethics to try and stop these pictures from being printed? This is where censorship comes in. If I could do anything in the world, I would first, stop world hunger, and second set up some guidelines and laws that the media must obey.

Guidelines such as, no digging through peoples trash and no peeking in windows. Of course, we know that by law, there is to be no peeking in windows, or over fences, but there is no one at the editors desk to implicate these laws. There is supposed to be someone there to prevent these stories from running, but remember, their paycheck depends on how many copies are sold or how high the ratings are. This “censor person” needs to have a set wage. If there was someone to stop these types of occurrences, half of my problems with the media would be taken care of. This may sound like a lame solution, but we need to start somewhere.

Obviously this is not a complete solution to these problems with the media, so the next step would be to start using the editors for weeding out the stories that are not giving some type of information that the consumer wants and needs to hear or read. This is also easier said than done. This solution also brings up questions like, how does the editor know what stories the consumer wants to hear or read about? That is the responsibility of the media. Let them take polls and give every effort to find out what we want. Journalism will only survive if it establishes a more valuable and clearly defined mission, (Morality of Mass Media , Ellen Hume.)

I could write a book about all the things I want to see changed in the media before I become a part of it, but I will not. There should be a line drawn so that the media can be punished for their wrongdoing. Many people agree that there should be a line drawn and like it or not, that line is called censorship. Our founding fathers did not want censorship on the media, but they probably did not think that the media would be doing such a crummy job. I do not want to say that all media is doing a bad job. Overall, they are doing a fairly good job, but there is still a large amount of dirty press that needs to be cleaned up.