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Censorship

The freedom to read is essential to the democratic way of life. But

today, that freedom is under attack. Private groups and public authorities

everywhere are working to remove both books and periodicals from sale, to

exclude certain books from public schools, to censor and silence magazines

and newspapers, and to limit “controversial” books and periodicals to the

general public. The suppression of reading materials is suppression of

creative thought. Books and periodicals are not the only ones being

suppressed by pressures to the political and social systems. They are also

being brought against the educational system, films, radio, television, and

against the graphic and theatre arts. However or whenever these attacks

occur, they usually fall at least one of the following categories:

Religion

War & Peace (Violence)

Sociology & Race

Language

Drugs

Sex

Inappropriate Adolescent Behaviour

What is Obscenity? Clearly something hard to talk about

constructively. “Obscenity” is difficult to discuss honestly. After all,

what makes a thing obscene? It is Something too vague perhaps to be

defined. It’s an elusive term we use, but can’t explain. Different people

often see things differently. Some see obscenity in nude pictures, statues,

paintings, etc. While others find less obscenity in these things. All the

same, “obscene” isn’t the same as “wrong” or “bad”. Clearly obscenity is

not identical with evil. It only covers a single segment of it. But what is

that segment? A look at the words “obscenity” and “pornography” suggests

that it is a segment that didn’t worry people very much till relatively

recently.

Though censorship was known in english law quite early on, it wasn’t

for obscenity but for heresy and sedition.”Undue” exploitation of sex” is

what criminal law in Canada prohibits. This is how criminal law defines

obscenity. But it is rather vague. It doesn’t differentiate between

“ordinary obscenity” and “hard-core pornography.” The first denoting the

ordinary run of “girlie magazines and the second denoting pictures ,

literature and so on that deal with rape, sadism, masochism, bestiality,

necrophilia and other perversions. People tend to object far more to

“hard-core pornography.” Another distinction unfortunately overlooked by

our criminal law is the distinction between isolated instances of obscenity

and the products of vast commercial enterprise.

There has been an increasing trend towards children’s literature that

reflects a more realistic approach to the life both fiction and

non-fiction, with subjects that include sex, homosexuality, divorce, child

abuse, drugs, violence, etc. And they are these realistic books that have

people outraged. In school libraries, the most frequent complaints come

from parents about the school’s selections. And in public libraries,

parents were once again the single greatest source of challenges to

materials.

The world is filled with “obscene” things. And it would seem that

those parents are just trying to protect their children from the outside

world. But does it really help? These day, an average elementary school

student knows many things. They are influenced by a wide range of sources,

from television and other forms of media, their environment at home and

school, their personality and their background. Why they read does not

necessarily mean that they will follow. Literature is a valued source of

knowledge for these children, and should not be held back. So rather than

applying full censorship, it should be made an age-related censorship. Many

of the complaints that were issued were of the immaturity of the readers.

And younger children should be prevented from borrowing material intended

for an older age group. Controversial materials should still be held either

in reserve stock, available on request, or under a section for parents and

teachers who can decide for themselves whether the material is suitable or

not.

Our would is not perfect. We are a world filled with violence, sex,

racism, etc. Certain literature like “hard-core pornography” should be

censored to the general public. These types of “explicit sex” truly have no

meaning. They degrade the human race by increasing physical, mental and

sexual abuse against women, animals, and sometimes against men. These

inhuman treatments should not be shown to prevent other potential people

from “experimenting” these acts of disgust. “Ordinary obscenity” should be

censored closely, but with an objective view. They may also cause an

increase in the violence against women, so they must be reduced and kept

out of reach of the immature readers. To make a tree grow correctly, you

must start caring from the very beginning. You must not block its

nutrients, water nor sunlight, but allow it to move around a bit. We have a

governing social system that mainly frowns upon the violence against women.

There should indeed be access to most types of literature, but in varying

degrees of freedom, determined not by censorship, but by controlled access.

Parents are trying to protect their children from the harsh realities of

life, but are they really helping, or hindering?

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