The True Cost of Censorship

This subject has been raised a million times. Don’t think I can add much new substance. Still let me try.

To have censorship, there has to be a person or persons, actively interested in keeping a group of their fellow countrymen (or subjects) in the dark about something. They eliminate or manipulate facts, put a different spin on events, mix lies with truth. Censorship and propaganda go hand in hand. It is hard to say where one ends and the other begins. Censorship used to be a feature of totalitarian regimes or totalitarian way of thinking. Yet today, almost no society is free of the information censorship. In the modern world that must be free from restraints imposed upon human minds, we frequently find ourselves restricted.

Censorship is an active attempt to present the image of the world that best reflects the thinking of that group I mentioned earlier. Call them ‘the gatekeepers’. They don’t trust others. They have an agenda. They want their vision imposed upon everyone.

Here’s an example. ‘Racism’, the word we hear so much lately. It is also a form of censorship. Anyone called ‘racist’ must shut up and take his punishment from the people who know best – the media, the progressive public opinion and the newspaper circuit. If you don’t stand with then, you must be censored.

When the gatekeeper has his own political agenda, censorship becomes a feature of mind control. It is also a form of lie that turns our world upside down. Limiting our ability to speak the truth, no matter how well intentioned, is a form of violence committed against the population. Envision the people being handcuffed, gagged and blindfolded. This is the effect of censorship.

Here in America, the censorship reveals itself in the form of half-truths told on TV, in the left-oriented, Democratic party-aligned newspapers. Politically correct speech is a form of censorship. Filing the rough edges off events, calling them something else (“peaceful marches” instead of “riots”) is a form of censorship. It is also an exclusion of specific sites by the search engines, when the gatekeepers follow a political dogma. A site would not be found through common searches. This is a form of political control.

When you are the media and the social networks you rule over the masses. They cannot speak until you tell them they can speak. Anything not to you liking is

purged. We may think it is unfair, but there is no appeal process. Well, almost none. They, the rulers & gatekeepers make the rules, calling them the ‘terms of service’. You don’t like something? Butt out. Your account has been suspended or terminated. They permit and disallow as they are the ultimate judges. There is no higher authority. Being private enterprises, not controlled like utilities, the people and the state have no say in how the rulers see the world. What is fair and what is not. Weak attempts to set the record straight are quickly rebuffed by the corporate voices and the show goes on as before. Nothing changes.

Look past the smooth ‘corporate speak’ of the media corporations. They defend their policies of censorship for the bigger public good. No one calls the censorship by name. They all find other names for it and we imbibe that without much thinking. They condition us not to question what we see and hear. Censorship changes the reality in which we live. Are you, the reader, of the opinion this is good for you?

For some reason conservative views are out of fashion these days (if they ever were in fashion), but liberal, progressive, left, even anarchist are in, big time. Their views wouldn’t be censored. They espouse the future of the world. And the world must listen. This is censorship for you.

Opposing opinions is what makes the world move forward. Without them any type of competition dies a slow death. And so does public discourse, political discussions, controversial literature and the force of thinking. Politics becomes stale and caters to the false causes. Who wants to live in the censored world? Only the tyrants and totalitarian, communist regimes. Does it look to you like we are moving in the same direction also?

The gatekeepers think they maintain the law and order for us, by shutting out the alternate points of view. Censorship is their way to maintain the tranquility and societal order. In fact they promote hatred. They become a substitution for the law and open societies where anything can be discussed. They become the slave masters, where we are the slaves. How is that for censorship? They push us to be self-censored. We cringe at the thought that we cannot say this and we cannot say that. Yet we are learning what will pass the muster on a social network. We adapt. Like the lab animals that learn what lever to push to get a food reward. This is thought control at its worst. We are these lab animals on Twitter or Facebook or elsewhere.

Can this much power be in the hands of private individuals without public control or influence? Benevolent dictatorship is still a dictatorship. No single entity can have monopoly over our thoughts and public expression. Censorship is

a monopoly. As monopoly it should be broken into smaller bits, so they can complete against each other, for their place in the sun. In the sun of public opinion. Our society is yet to recognize this. The US Government fights and breaks up monopolies, seeing them as danger to society and business. The same should be applied to all major social media platforms that by their very nature stifle people's freedom of expression.

I'm not an idiot who advocates a boundless freedom of speech. There are a number of subjects we as society reject, because they are a threat to our fabric. Promoting hatred, criminal behavior, chauvinism, etc. should still be out of bounds to public online podiums. But not the honest open discussions by the members of society who speak their minds on the matters that concern them. When thoughts are controlled, the suppressed party still finds an outlet. As the anger boils over, that outlet is war. The war on the establishment that wants them silent. What happens afterwards is never pretty. How is that for a cost of censorship?

Censorship is the product of reduced tolerance to the 'other ideas'. Healthy societies find a way to discuss their problems. Left, right and middle have to try to find a common ground that satisfies majority of the polemicists. We were a healthy society once. But no more. Unending ongoing slow 'power grab' by the progressive, liberal and left-oriented people in all media outlets and online speech platforms leads us into the smelly swamp of censorship. It's now 'my way or highway'. If you disagree with the thought-control department, you can vent you frustrations elsewhere (i.e. nowhere). That in itself is very unhealthy.

We are way past 1984, yet we are on the way to that brightly lit future of "1984".

The true cost of censorship in any society can be summed up in one word – stagnation. It eventually leads to other diseases, some pain-producing and some just deadly.

You don't have to agree with me on any points I raised. Draw your own conclusions. Speak your own mind. In the censorship-free world this is the only way it should be.