

We Should Be Thankful For Today's Censors

Today's censors do a job that is far more disgusting than collecting trash or cleaning out sewers. They take risks to their psychological well-being. [http: billallin.com](http://billallin.com)

A censor is a man who knows more than he thinks you ought to.
- [Granville Hicks](#), American novelist, educator, editor (1901-1982)

First of all, censors are no longer just men in western countries. Women comprise half of most censor boards.

In Canada, film censors watch three films per day, with usually a break between the first two and a lunch break before the third.

Some refuse to have a meal before their final movie of the day in case what they see in the last one causes them to lose their lunch.

Very seldom is anything censored in Canada, that is, removed from the list of items which may be sold to or viewed by the public, forbidden from public scrutiny.

There are those who oppose any kind of pre-screening of anything going before the public. Generally speaking those people are idealists who have little idea about what the censors actually have to take in. It's not just "dirty movies" and books about sexual encounters any more.

Censors usually only last a few years, at most, on their respective boards. By then, so a few claim who have spoken out publicly, their minds have become so enured by a constant assault of movies where people abuse each other that their lives are changed forever. They leave to try to recover what they once had, some semblance of respect for the vast majority of their fellow countrymen who are not abusive.

While most of us would rather not have anyone scrutinize what we see or read, we must admit that some people produce print or film material that is abusive to the point of being illegal if the people involved in the films could be caught. When one has seen many such movies or read many novels of this type, they tend in one of two directions. Either they become desensitized to the welfare of their fellow humans (in which case they no longer care if someone is abused) or they become abusive themselves.

Censors do not become abusive because they undergo psychiatric and psychological tests before they begin their service and once or more each year to check their reactions to certain shocking human motivators. Average citizens (who may not be so average in their lack of social and emotional well-being) often do not have the support systems that prevent them from straying off-centre into anti-social behaviour if they subject themselves to anti-social material repeatedly. Once an already unbalanced person comes to accept that a certain kind of anti-social behaviour is acceptable within a particular context (the film or book), that person may stray too far from what is generally accepted and chose to use some of the abusive methods he has seen or read about.

Censorship today is not about "protecting" God fearing citizens from shameful sexual exposures. It's about maintaining a level of respectability beyond which average people don't want to know people do to each other and the police should possibly intervene.

There is no doubt that censors see and read everything that people create that may border on the anti-social or may be intentionally outright anti-social. I, for one, thank them for taking the brunt of the most disgusting stuff that people produce today. I have seen some of the filmed material and I don't want to think that people do that to each other.

In times past, censors prevented average citizens from seeing or reading about sex, something that almost everyone did but no one was permitted to talk about publicly or to show any signs of it taking place. Those were the days when people devised euphemisms to refer to body parts and to sexual activities because saying the words for the real acts was horrendous to some. Today those who "cross the line" in literature, art or film are abusive. Abuse of others has never been socially acceptable.

Countries whose militaries are engaged in wars fairly often have soldiers who return to civilian life and some have trouble adjusting to non-violent ways of solving problems, including their own. Those countries tend to have the highest rates of civilian violence. Just recently a few have begun to offer psychological re-programming and some retraining to returning soldiers so they will be able to fit again into the society they had been working to protect. They got used to violence, now they need to become un-used to it.

We should not need to institute social reprogramming for people who have seen too much abuse in movies that they can no longer fit into society by staying within the bounds of acceptable behaviour.

Remember "Banned in Boston!" It was a surefire way to sell a book a few decades ago. Today kids watch more sex than what was in those book as they watch soap operas on television during the daytime. Sex is acceptable now. Let's hope that abuse of any kind never becomes a common way of life.

Censors do the job that most of us would not want (could not take psychologically) so that the police have something to use as evidence if the producers of abusive movies sell their product to the public. Most of us don't want to contemplate the fact that some people accept money to be physically abused so it can be filmed and shown to the public. Most porn is like sandbox play compared to what the hardcore abusive stuff is producing.

We really don't want to know. Censors protect us and those less psychologically stable than us.

Bill Allin

Turning It Around: Causes and Cures for Today's Epidemic Social Problems, a guidebook for parents and teachers who want to grow children who know right from wrong and to avoid what will be harmful to them.

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