

Banning the depiction of violence from the media is not a viable solution to the dilemma of how to deal with violence in the first place. Indeed, violence existed long before the media could be conceived of and thus there is no apparent relationship to the extent to which people undergo influence of the depiction of violence and more violent behaviour in real life. Violence should rather be treated as a phenomenon that is inherent to all human beings and not per se dangerous or unwanted, as it may be necessary to resort to it in order to defend a settlement or the life and property of an individual. The only real problem here is excessive use of violence and the use of violence in an inappropriate context, and that is, among other things, a matter of socialisation, assessment of one's environment and a healthy and good upbringing. Indeed, the issue about censorship is that with the first link, the chain is forged that binds us all. I.E. the first appearance of censorship, even if under the noble aim to abolish violence from television nationwide would necessarily entail further cases of censorship, such as sex, crime, may be political parties and their workings and thus would undermine the freedom of the media to an extent that would equal the situation in a police state or authoritarian dictatorship. Indeed, the problem that might develop from excessive censorship is that the upbringing of children may even be fairly problematic, as the media, as one of the great sources of information, would not reflect the actual situation in the world and thus would estrange the people.

The discussion of whether to ban violence from the media is one that is, in many cases, conducted in a shallow manner. It does certainly not reflect all the issues that go along with violence and/or the depiction of violence in modern-day society. Thus, banning violence, or rather its depiction, is a short-sighted attempt to mould the world to some questionable ideal of little value. The questions that must be raised before this issue can be contemplated are firstly that of violence and its usefulness, or lack thereof, and the true import and influence of its depiction in the media. Finally, the suitability of censorship measures must be discussed, not only focused on the issue of violence, but rather in a general manner.

When it comes to violence, there seems to be a consensus in modern-day society that it is unwanted, unnecessary and should be abolished. Nations and individuals are often willing to go to great lengths to achieve this, disregarding the true import and function of violence. Violent behaviour arose long before the media could be conceived of, even long before people started covering the walls of caves with paintings. It follows that violence arises without any intervention by the media, but rather the opposite is true: the media pick up on the existence of violence and use it as a means to attract "customers". Violence as such did, however, serve to face dangers that were bountiful in man's environment. Men often had to resort to violence to protect themselves, their community or their property; in a way, thus, violence secured our existence as individuals and as a species. The true problem is that violence does not necessarily occur in the right contexts or can be made use of excessively; but these problems are only remotely linked to violence itself, but rather to conditions of upbringing, socialisation, the right assessment of threats in one's environment and other factors. Thus, these are issues that need to be discussed first before violence, and its depiction, should be addressed.

The overly simple solution to ban violence from public life by suppressing its depiction and banning violence from the media altogether will eventually backfire, in particular if seen before the background of a liberal, democratic society. First, if violence is banned from the media altogether, which would also include news coverage, what would follow is a warped, distorted, fictitious world that bears no resemblance to the world we live in. The complete lack of violence in the media would either alienate people from the media or their own lives and drives, and would thus be harmful with regard to coming to a clear

perception of the world. Secondly, once censorship has become a suitable tool to deal with unwanted information, it is only a matter of time until censorship is expanded to coverage of differing, and perchance unwanted, political views, sexuality, crime and many other fields. It is one thing not to overtax people with the depiction of violence; it is, however, an entirely different thing to envisage a make-believe world where everything that may seem disagreeable or uncomfortable is being denied and suppressed. Banning violence thus is the first step to denying citizens free access to information on a larger scale and thus our democracy would slowly develop into an oligarchy, where few people decide what the majority may know. We might even have to face yet another authoritarian dictatorship, a type of media fascism of the 21st century.

It thus stands to reason that it is both impossible and not desirable to ban violence from the media, as it is an integral part of human character and survival and it would severely restrict the media and thus lead us into dark times of ignorance again. Therefore, the matter is not if violence is addressed in the media; it is on us to decide to what extent we will expose ourselves to it and to determine how well we are adapted to our environment.