

Example by StudyDriver

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About a Censorship Example

With more than 336 million monthly active users worldwide as of the first quarter of 2018, Twitter is one of the biggest social networks worldwide (statista 1). With that many user accounts on twitter, it goes to show how powerful social media platforms have become. Many times, when content is posted online, the words, ideas, music, images, etc. can be taken out of context and if enough attention is given to it, then it is censored. Content censorship occurs regularly and can range in form from pornography to political views. There are many different types of censorship, such as: corporate, moral, political, and religious censorship, but have something in common is that they all get censored when something hateful has been said. That is called censorship of speech. In today's world, it is safe to say that majority of people get their news through one of the following social media platforms: Twitter, Facebook, Youtube and Instagram. With that being said, social media plays a big part into censorship because nothing spreads faster than something trending on social media, and if an unfavored content goes viral then it may be considered to be taken down/censored or they may get the account banned. Arguing for the protection of hate speech for example is difficult and sounds unpleasant. The internet and social media were designed to be open platforms, where people can express ideas and acquire knowledge from others freely in a public forum. An open dialogue of speech and of ideas, however controversial, needs to happen, because conversations are our primary way of resolving conflicts and gaining new knowledge. When hearing the term hate

speech, the most type of content that comes to mind is racism. So what is hate speech exactly? There is no clear agreeable definition of Hate speech as everyone hears things differently. According to Meriam-Webster, the legal definition of hate speech is: speech that is intended to insult, offend, or intimidate a person because of some trait (as race, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability). One would think the definition is clear enough, but the definition is similar to the saying beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but instead it is more like hate speech is in the EAR of the beholder. Just as everyone observes what they see differently, they also perceive what they hear differently. In the U.S.A, there is the first amendment which is: the freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly and petition. The first amendment states, Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances (Constitutioncenter.org 1). The First Amendment does not protect individuals against private companies/organizations, such as private employers, private colleges, or private social media platforms. The First Amendment shackles only the government. The Supreme Court are the ones who interpret all the amendments and have stated that: talking, writing, radio-broadcasting, and using the Internet, are forms of speech. Although, free speech also applies to figurative expression such as: displaying swastika signs, and burning flags and crosses. The first amendment protects hate speech as long as it does not directly imminent violence. Speech, whether it be said on TV or tweeted online, can not be punished because of its hateful content. Arguing for the protection of hate speech for example is difficult and sounds unpleasant. Those that do argue for in favor of such positions, do not argue for hate speech, but rather for the right to Freedom of Speech in all platforms. No one argues for the protection of Freedom of speech than Nadine Strossen, a Professor of Constitutional Law at New York Law School and was the first women national President of the American Civil Liberties Union from 1991 through 2008. In her book Hate: Why we should resist it with Free Speech, not censorship, she strongly argues that censorship is not the answer to hate speech. In her book she quotes the cure is worse than the disease; the ?disease being hate speech and the ?cure being censorship. (insert personal idea here). Throughout her book, she provides many examples of what has been labeled hate speech including modern day themes such as the Black Lives Matter movement. She discusses the BLM movement and describes how people affiliated with the movement have been targeted as perpetrators of hate speech against law enforcement and have therefore been blamed for countless

murders of police officers that were argued to occur as a direct result of BLM rhetoric. In total contrast to the BLM movement, neo-nazis and white nationalist groups have been equally accused of their own hate speech directed at, usually, non-white minority groups and for whatever reason, ?The Jews. Both opposing sides see things differently and point the finger at each other seemingly unaware of their own hypocrisy. Although Nadine does not touch the subject on hate speech censorship on social media, it is important to recall how individuals are not protected by the first amendment from private social media platforms. (insert twitter censor policy). With that being said, it is still important to protect the principle. P4: (Talk about legal court cases that won and lost hate speech and their importance) The Skokie case is a well known classic free speech case that took place on March 20, 1977. Frank Collin, the leader of the National Socialist ("Nazi") Party of America, informed Skokie's police chief that they intended to march on the village's sidewalk on May 1. Skokie is the name of the village in Illinois. At that time its population consisted about 70,000 citizens, 40,000 of whom were Jewish. When news spread throughout the media, that the Nazis wanted to have a march in Skokie, there was an outrage. The villagers wanted to prohibit the march. This turned in the National Socialist Party of America v. Village of Skokie. The village of skokie presented 3 reasons to the Illinois Supreme court; First, the display of the swastika promoted hatred against persons of Jewish faith or ancestry and that speech that promotes racial or religious hatred is unprotected by the First Amendment, second, the village argued that the purpose of the marches was to inflict emotional harm on the Jewish residents of Skokie and third, the village argued that if the Nazis were permitted to march there would be uncontrollable violence (Stone, Geoffrey R. 2). It is important to remember that we fight for the principle, which is freedom of speech. In contrast to the ?fight bad speech with more speech attitude of Nadine Strossen, many individuals such as, Barry Jason Mauer, an associate professor in the University of Central Florida Department of English, claim that hate speech is a form of anti-speech and therefore beyond the confines of dialogue. Others have said that they have felt physically threatened by hate speech and emotionally disturbed. Majority of the world has an account with Twitter, which one of the biggest social media platforms worldwide. Every second, on average, around 6,000 tweets are tweeted on Twitter (visualize them here), which corresponds to over 350,000 tweets sent per minute, 500 million tweets per day and around 200 billion tweets per year (internetlivestats.com). With so many tweets being written each each, it is no wonder why so many individuals have also experienced psychic trauma, and have felt silenced, because of hate speech content that has been posted online or heard

through TV. In Barry Jason Mauer article, Censorship Is Not All Bad, published in the Huffington-Post, Mauer starts out his article with, Free-speech idealists argue that the solution to bad speech (misinformation, lies, abusive language, etc.) is not censorship but more speech. But bad speech can, and often does, drown out the good. Mayer states that fighting free speech with more speech is not the answer as their are misused forms of speech, to which, is true. These are all serious concerns, to which many individuals have suffered with first hand and have been exposed to hate speech that is and will not be punishable. Although we acknowledge those harms, loosening up the constraints on government to allow it to punish speech because of those less tangible, more speculative, more indirect harms " that censorial power will do more harm than good, precisely because the pendulum can swing. P6: (Include personal research) I wonder if other people feel the same about censorship. I conducted my own personal research to get a sense of how people feel about censorship right now. I created a poll on my Instagram account asking, should hate speech be censored? I had also asked a friend, who has a set of different followers, to post the same question to eliminate a bias result. In total, there were 82 people who voted; 34% voted yes (28) and 65% voted no (54). Although, I did receive a few comments following with their vote. All of the comments revolves around the same content, I am for censorship, but . I felt those who messaged me felt some kind of guilt for voting no on censoring hate speech and had to justify why they voted no. P7: (conclusion)Hate speech does not translate into actual high crimes against those who the hate speech is directed to. If censoring hate speech is taken away, then someone's right to freedom of speech is taken away. The(bring it back to your thesis and discuss why this is important to uphold)