

Censorship

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The meaning of my art piece

Complex ideas are difficult to communicate. It is easier to reduce the complexity and then explain it, but then significant portions are lost.

Some people avoid complex ideas, and some people push through.

If complex ideas are avoided, then there is nothing to challenge one's mind with and people find themselves in a bubble made up of only their ideas, thoughts and opinions.

When complex ideas are confronted and spoken about, the person speaking risks being offended, and being offensive. People do get offended, and feel inclined to censor that person who is offensive.

However, you can always offend someone. If you are talking to one person, it's easy to avoid offending them because they can tell you how they prefer to be spoken to. If you are speaking to a room of ten people, the chances of offending someone are still low. If you are speaking to a room of one-thousand people, there is nothing you can say that will not offend at least one person.

The issue that I shine a light on here with my art piece is censorship. Even self-censorship, the more common kind of censorship, which people do either to be polite or because someone who spoke out was made an example of in a negative way and they don't want that to happen to them.

Censorship is not entirely all bad, and my argument is not to say that censorship should be abolished. I would not advocate to be completely unfiltered in your speech when talking to a group of kindergarteners. There should be a degree of censorship in schools, so as not to expose children to dangerous people or anything that can scar them.

Free speech is part of the charter of human rights and freedoms. The right to religion is also in the charter of human rights and freedoms. It also states that you cannot discriminate against someone based on their skin colour, in charter 15.

The problem with censorship today is that people are being censored for their controversial ideas that differ from the popular narrative. Why is Jordan Peterson is censored? Because he is offensive.

Why is he offensive? Because his complicated arguments are easily misunderstood and sometimes seen as attacks to certain people, sometimes seen to hinder progress in movements like the feminist or trans-rights movements.

Jordan Peterson is always talking about data from studies and research. He comes to interviews with his arguments well prepared. He thinks before he speaks. He is always willing to think and advocate that we think too, and on top of that he dedicates his efforts to teaching us how to think.

How is this wrong, offensive, or justifiably worthy of being censored?

I believe that a man with good intentions who teaches people how to think is perfectly suitable for a social justice and equity class.

The following will explain how I believe people grow to disagree with or see Jordan Peterson in a negative way.

It is easy to take long arguments out of context, to twist words, straw-man, and influence people with simpler ideas. It is difficult to steel-man, take time to process information, allow information to challenge your ideas/morals, and to keep an open mind.

In other words, it is difficult to think.

Jordan Peterson is seen as controversial because he speaks freely, honestly and many of his ideas are misunderstood, misinterpreted or generally disagreed with. Of course, it is okay to disagree with someone. It is good, even, to be willing to challenge the ideas in your head.

Imagine a world where you are only allowed to say certain words and terms, your ideas are not challenged, and there are some people you are not allowed to talk about because you are afraid to cause an uproar. It is very interesting to realize that the name 'Jordan Peterson' causes a bigger uproar than 'John A. MacDonald'.

This is where most people get caught; the first sentence to an argument. It may sound astonishing to hear "find yourself a partner that does not accept you for who you are." Instead of assuming the worst and shutting the door, I feel compelled to dig deeper and find out what that could possibly mean, and why that could be a good thing. Keeping a closed mind will prevent you from learning what the lesson is.

The lesson is simple: a partner that supports you for everything you ever do is not helping you become a better person. A supportive partner will help you recognize your faults and guide you to burn them off and overcome obstacles. An example would be your partner noticing an unhealthy diet and finding out why and how they can help solve the problem. A supportive partner would support you in becoming independent, an individual, rather than relying on someone.

To get this far, one must jump over the first obstacle. For example, *To Kill a Mockingbird* has very valuable lessons - the book has helped people realize their racial bias and rid themselves of it. However, it has slurs in it, which is the first obstacle in which people get stuck in, which prevents them from seeing past that into the message that is being sent through a novel.

The idea is not understood, and it is taken as a personal offense. The worst is assumed. The words, novel, idea, or an entire person is censored. Jordan Peterson is known as a toxic, transphobic misogynist, when really he is trying to create change for the better, to educate people, and to teach them how to think.

This has not only occurred with Jordan Peterson. Many people are self-censoring or being censored because they're thought to be offensive or bad, when in reality, if taken the time and effort with an open mind, they could be seen as intellectual and good-willed. But thinking is hard, and life is a big game of Broken Telephone.

With this art piece, I am being honest, standing for what I believe in, learning to think, and hoping to see change in the world. I hope that this will be permitted to be shown in an art event later this school year, and I hope it can influence students to ask questions, think, and stand their ground.

The inspiration, feeling, and challenges.

The biggest challenge is researching, writing, and re-writing this paper. The art itself is difficult, but it does not have to be detailed to begin with, because this is not an art project. It is entirely about the meaning and the message that's being sent. If my logic is flawed and my argument is not neatly organized, then the meaning loses its' value a little bit.

I did not want to do something basic like racism or sexism - everyone knows about it.

Censorship is something that I've seen swinging like a pendulum over the years, from nothing being censored to everything being censored. I see it all over Twitter, in schools (which is not always a bad thing, but some things don't need to be censored) and in the law. It has caught my attention a few times, sometimes at school. Jordan Peterson is someone to be avoided, and I can't even watch The Closer by Dave Chappelle, because their ideas are controversial and offensive. Like I stated earlier, that is something you cannot avoid. It is good to face topics that challenge your ideas or that you disagree with and ask *why*.

If you think about it, whoever your opposition is is not so different from you. Why is that? Because we are all homosapiens, and our brains are wired similarly. So of course, I think it's important to find out where the other sides' argument is correct, rather than succumbing to confirmation bias.

When I was creating the art, I had to start by brainstorming a lot. I had many ideas running through my head, all wondering how I could possibly convey this very specific message.

Censoring someones' eyes, to me, was perfect, because often in the media you may see a middle finger being censored. If someone wishes to remain anonymous in a video, their eyes are blacked out, sometimes blurred.

I listened to a few videos with Jordan Peterson where he would discuss a few things about his ideas. He is a great role model for how to even have an argument - he is respectful to the other person, admits when he does not have the answer, he thinks before he speaks, and he admits when he agrees with the other person.

At the end of the day, there doesn't have to be an opposition, or division. It's okay to disagree with someone. You can move on.

I hope that the audience notices that the bar is on the eyes, to convey that this person is censored - the individual themselves. It is not on their mouth, to say that their words or ideas are censored. No, in fact, the person entirely, as a whole, is censored.

My idea is to go against this. No, do not censor a person. Even someone who has done evil. In that case, it is important to learn why what they did was wrong so that it is not repeated.

Don't censor someone who hasn't done wrong.