

Cinematic Liberty vs. Offending Social, Religious Beliefs: With Special Reference to the Controversial Contents in Cinema and Print Media

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Abstract : The divergent opinions in the society are important for its development but with reasonable restrictions. The world recently witnessed one of the most violent protests by a group against the editor and publisher of the magazine 'Charlie Hebdo' for publishing cartoon of their religious leader. The supporter of freedom of speech and expression around the world were in shock and termed it the strongest attack against the free speech. People all around the world condemned the killing of the journalists but many soft voices from several corners were also coming for reasonable restrictions on the freedom of speech and expression. Of late, Indian society has witnessed many protests and supports of films with controversial content. It is the beauty of the Indian democracy which gives an opportunity to all for discussion and debate on any issue that challenges established social norms. However, many organizations as well as individuals misuse it for their personal benefits. There have been many film directors who faced protest from several quarters for their controversial themes. This research aims at analyzing the controversial contents published in print media and shown in films. To understand the nature and frequency of such media reports, content analysis technique is used. The research also highlights the perception of the public regarding the controversies. For getting the popular opinion on the coverage of controversial content in cinema and print media, five hundred people from Lucknow, UP, India were randomly selected. The findings of this research are important to understand the response of media and society towards the controversial content presented in cinema and print media. The research highlights that how a handful of people curb free speech in a democratic country like India.

Keywords : cinema, censor board, free speech, liberty, social-religious beliefs

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