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**Media ethics in professional journalism:**

Human rights & Terrorism & War reporting

and corruption, slander and media lynch

Reliable war reporting considers truthful and objective reporting about suffering and tribulation of the civilian population because war propaganda can manipulate the public opinion with the pictures of that kind. It is very difficult for modern journalism to find the way to overcome very often confronted professional, commercial and ethical stands connected with finding and presentation of the news, in the same time through accepting the journalism as profession with distinguished social role of involvement. For example, report in which needless victims are explained as inevitable victims of „friendly fire“ or „collateral victims.“

Depending correlation on information that is provided by the media makes possible misuse to happen. Insofar as professional standards are not respected related to truthful and impartial reporting, journalists are very closed to the propaganda for the war purposes.

*Terrorism and reporting restrictions*

In the war, said Mrs. Thatcher at the time, [„you have to suspend some of your civil liberties“](https://www.margaretthatcher.org/document/107018). The war she was referring to is, presumably, war against the IRA, whish sees itself as fighting to liberate Six Countries of Northern Ireland from British control.

The common excuse of governments for restricting reports of terrorist incidents which commands a measure of support or sympathy from some sections of the population is that the reports can induce further public disorder. What may look at first sight like a mere propaganda exercise is presented as conducive to the public good.

The foregoing argument applies not only to the justification for restricting reports of terrorist *incidents,* but also to that offered for restricting dissemination of terrorist *opinions*.

So far as presenting an impartial picture of the situation is concerned the objection to reporting restrictions must be that they tend to distort the truth. The suppressing of certain *facts* in the national interest will not enable those who report the facts to give an *accurate* account – although the resulting account will not necessarily be a *partial* (i.e. biased) one. The suppression of certain *opinions* as to the facts may lead to *inaccuracy and* must lead to *partiality (*to bias).

An aspect of the criminalizing approach appears in a further reason offered for the Broadcasting Ban, namely that it helps to prevent the *intimidation* of ordinary citizens by terrorist threats.

The exclusion of terrorist supporters from the broadcasting media thus relies on an implicit distinction between its availability to public actors and to private agents.

*Political corruption and professional journalism*

Political corruption in the widest sense is every kind of misuse of the authority for the reasons of personal and group benefit regardless if we are talking about public or private sector. The word itself came from Latin word “corruptus” and that means “destroy” or “corrupt” and when it is use as adjective literary means: „completely destroyed/corrupted”. But, to be more specific, corruption is misuse of power to gain private benefit. Corruption can be high, petty or political corruption, depending on the amount of money that is lost within the sector in which it appears to happen. There is a definition from [Vito Tanzi](https://www.iaca.int/about-us/vacancies/59-speakers-and-panelists/735-vito-tanzi.html) who says that corruption is purposely not complying with the principles of impartiality during decision making process with the goal of realizing advantages for the perpetrator or connected persons through that kind of procedures.

Corruption exists in every country in the world, democratic of non-democratic, in the west or the east, developed or non-developed, transition or non-transition country, so it looks like it is inherent to the human civilization. However, within developing countries, media is very often faced with combination of the factors who creates fertile ground for corruption, as it is lack of training and technical skills, law professional standards, limited financial resources, mat or by state controlled ownership structures of the media, inadequate or antidemocratic made law framework. Forms of corruption in media starts from the bribe in the shape of cash for the news, through the organization of fake news, bestowal, hidden adverts and up to nepotism and controlling of the achieved private or political interests. Combat against corruption in media might involve wide spectrum of the approach, starting from the raising of the conscience about ethical standards, strengthening of the freedom of the press, introducing of the adequate media politics and legislature, accentuation of the media responsibility, as well as support towards investigative journalism through the adequate education.

*Public slander and Media lynch against professional journalism*

Public slander – it has been widely defined as infliction of the damage to the reputation of physical or legal person by bringing on or transferring of the expressing of spurious facts by identifying that physical or legal person to the third person.

Slander indicates when somebody buzzes, detract, and insult the honor or gives a statement in which he claims untruths, although he knows that are untruths, to create negative picture about individuals, business, products, group, state or people/nation. Buzzing is related on caustic, fake and defamatory statements. Majority of legal systems are sanctioning slander by the law.

***Advice for the professional journalists – more than advice – must be followed:***

1. **You should never write about something you cannot check.**
2. **Especially, do not write about something you are assuming.**
3. **Write only that what you can, if there would be a need, to prove.**
4. **Don’t forget – good will and professional behavior.**
5. **More arguments, less adjectives.**

Media lynch exists everywhere where ethics has been put aside of rational thinking and behaving.

There are more and more objections on media announcements and more and more journalists have been accused that starts battue and literary lynch persons from the public life.

Media lynch sometimes suites government, sometimes opposition the government, battue sometimes suites only yellow journalism which increases the selling of their media products. In general does not suite nobody, because that is the lowest possible human behavior – very often press accuse and become prosecutor and the judge for the certain issues, without consulting facts, ethics and knowledge about the specific area they are writing about. But, Hegel, famous philosopher underlined that speculative idea is everything and facts are aside of it as something incidental, with sideline. Looks like yellow journalism follows this speculative idea.

Those media who uses media lynch are forcing kitsch and pap, tastelessness and vulgarity, and those media became the biggest destroyers of the values. It was the period of heavy misuse of media for the reasons of destroying of the public and truth and shaping up of the public opinion towards narrow interests and the needs.

By practicing of the professional ethics, it introduces responsibility and discipline and stops any kind of aggressive and destructive behavior. In the place where people are bearing up with ethical codes it has been made impossible a violence and lynch. Without accepting ethical norms, it increases possibility of the use of all kinds of means, including the most dangerous ones.

In that kind of environment is possible to label somebody and to lynch somebody. Ethical codes make impossible professional lynch. It is especially dangerous to label and lynch somebody through the media and it is double dangerous: it can convert social groups into the crowd and to make the lynched person irreparable damage and loss, up to taking away somebody's life. Where the lynch in public area is used as a mean, it is a huge dangerous for the life.

In all societies that are still seeking for the real democracy, corruption, public slander and media lynch are normal appearance because the truth is potent by intent but impotent by effects. Lie has been put on pedestal-degree of the norm, promoted to general rank. [Theodor Adorno](https://www.iep.utm.edu/adorno/) stated…*it continues swimming through the known river of speech*…and [Friedrich Nietzsche](https://www.britannica.com/biography/Friedrich-Nietzsche), philosopher of the will for the power yells loudly: ”Once he was God, than he became human and now will become rabble.”

Question to think about:

Should Ethics apply regardless “love for the country and homeland” during the war, or...?

Next: Media ethics in professional journalism: Ethics within professional journalism as the conscience within human mind