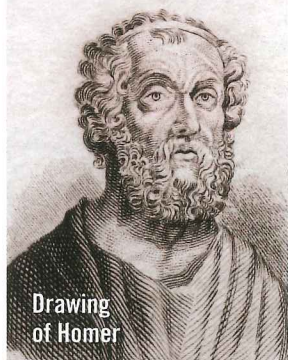


CENSORSHIP THROUGH THE AGES

CENSORSHIP HAS BEEN AROUND FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS.

However, the types of censorship have changed through the ages. Check out the following timeline to learn about some important milestones in the history of censorship.



HOMER'S ODYSSEY

The Roman emperor Caligula objects to *The Odyssey*, Homer's epic poem written hundreds of years earlier. Caligula objects to the Greek poet's positive portrayal of freedom.

THE WAR MEASURES ACT

This act is established at the beginning of World War I to stop anti-British material from coming into Canada. It provides for "censorship and the control and suppression of publications, writings, maps, plans, photographs, communications, and means of communications." In order to protect national security, the act strips Canadians of many rights.

35

1694

1818

1914

1942

OFFSTAGE

Censorship is said to begin in Canada this year. The Governor General of New France, the Comte de Frontenac, bans *Tartuffe*, a play by French playwright Molière. A local bishop objects to the behaviour of a character who pretends to be very religious. The play is seen as an attack on the Catholic church.

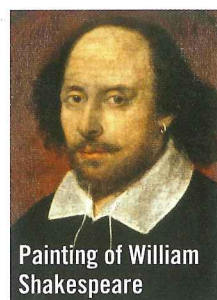


Copy of
Tartuffe

CENSORING SHAKESPEARE

Thomas Bowdler publishes a collection of Shakespeare's work that takes out all words and expressions that he finds offensive. He is a member of the English Society for the Suppression of Vice. To this day, the word "bowdlerize" means to change or chop out passages or sections of a longer work to get rid of vulgar or offensive words. This process often results in the material becoming weaker or less effective.

vice: immoral
behaviour



Painting of William
Shakespeare

COVERING UP

Animator Bob Clampett draws Tweety Bird without feathers. The Hays Office censorship bureau thinks the bird is too naked, so Tweety is covered with yellow feathers.



Still from the first
appearance of
Tweety Bird

CODE FOR COMICS

The Comics Code Authority is established in the US. The Code is written to respond to an anti-comics movement started by parents angry about graphic horror comics. It sets out strict content guidelines, outlining what is allowed and what is forbidden to be shown in comics. In order to stay in business, the comics industry realizes it has to start censoring itself with these guidelines.



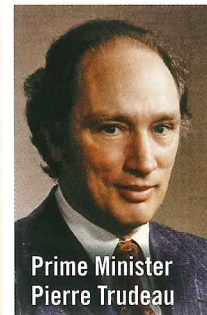
1954

1970

2006

2011

2013



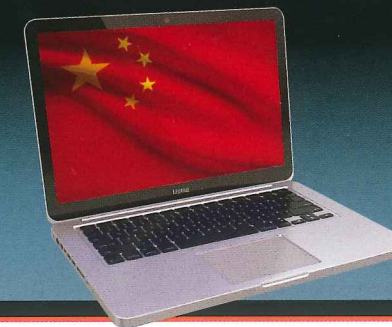
Prime Minister
Pierre Trudeau

CRISIS IN QUEBEC

Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau uses the War Measures Act for the first time in peacetime to deal with the extraordinary crisis in Canada caused by FLQ terrorists and their supporters in Quebec. Under this act, the government is allowed to censor writings and suppress communications as it sees fit in order to protect society by restricting the terrorists' ability to spread their information to others.

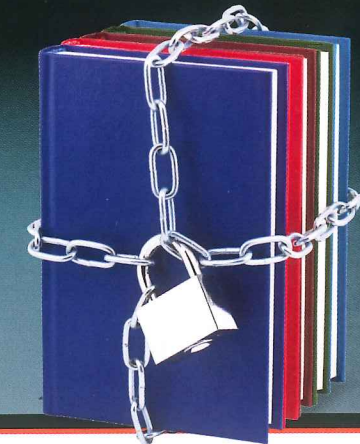
Hmmm

The position of censor was created around 443 BCE by the Roman Republic. A censor was someone who collected statistics and checked their accuracy. The word "censor" comes from the Latin word *censere*, meaning "to assess or rate." Compare this to what a censor usually does today.



CENSORING THE WEB

The Global Online Freedom Act (GOFA) is introduced in Congress in the US. The sponsor of the bill, Congressman Christopher Smith, criticizes Yahoo, Microsoft, Cisco, and Google for giving in to pressure from China to censor the Web. Six years later, GOFA passes, but it's not yet law. This bill prohibits US companies from selling technology that can be used for Internet censorship to countries that restrict Internet access.



CHALLENGING BOOKS

Fifty-two books are "officially challenged" in Canada by patrons or library staff wanting them reclassified or removed from public libraries and schools. These books include *The Golden Compass*, by Philip Pullman, which is challenged on religious grounds.

SILENCING SCIENCE

The Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada surveys government scientists and finds "evidence of widespread muzzling," with 90 percent of scientists working for the government saying they feel they cannot speak freely to the media about their work.

muzzling: preventing
from expressing ideas
and opinions freely



DIVE DEEPER

Do you think any of these examples of censorship are justified? Why or why not?

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

START UP For what reasons would a country want to censor the news that its media reports?

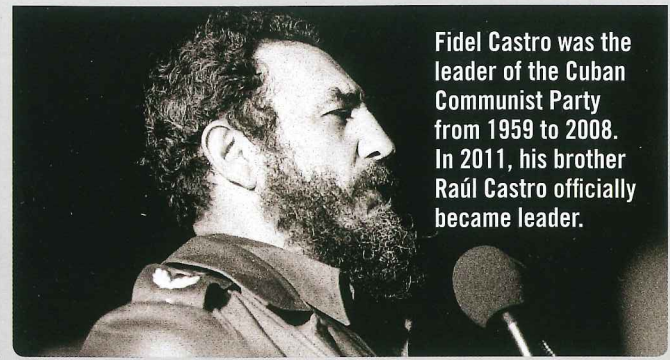
HOW FREE THE MEDIA IS IN A COUNTRY TELLS A LOT ABOUT THE LIFE OF THE CITIZENS IN THAT COUNTRY. Organizations such as Reporters Without Borders (RSF) and the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) monitor the state of the media in countries around the world.

RSF: *Reporters sans Frontières* ("sans frontières" is French for "without borders")

CUBA

The Communist Party runs Cuba and controls all authorized news media. The press is free only as long as what it publishes agrees "with the goals of the socialist society." Any content that criticizes the government is blocked. Independent journalists do manage to smuggle out news stories to overseas websites and write blogs, but the government persecutes journalists who criticize it. The persecution includes arrests, beatings, and surveillance.

socialist society: *way of organizing a society where the government, not individuals or private companies, owns and controls major industries*
persecutes: *treats cruelly*



Fidel Castro was the leader of the Cuban Communist Party from 1959 to 2008. In 2011, his brother Raúl Castro officially became leader.

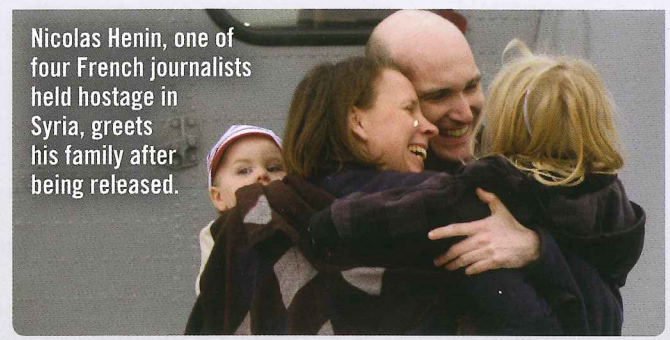
RSF Map: Freedom of the Press Worldwide in 2014

	GOOD SITUATION
	SATISFACTORY SITUATION
	NOTICEABLE PROBLEMS
	DIFFICULT SITUATION
	VERY SERIOUS SITUATION

SYRIA

RSF has named Syria "the world's most dangerous country for journalists." From the time the political conflict in Syria started in March 2011 to the end of December 2013, nearly 130 news providers have been killed. Others have been taken hostage or are missing. At least 120 news providers have fled the country. There is no freedom of expression in Syria.

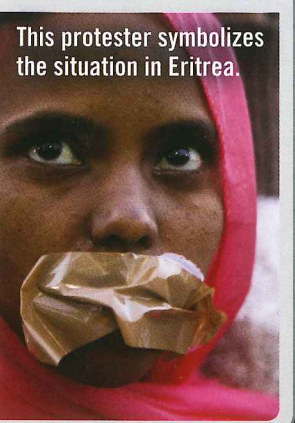
hostage: *prisoner*



Nicolas Henin, one of four French journalists held hostage in Syria, greets his family after being released.

ERITREA

The only news media in Eritrea are owned by the state and are carefully monitored. The government hides what it doesn't want citizens to know about. Also, journalists are told what to write about by the Information Minister. According to CPJ, as of 2012, Eritrea was the most censored country in the world.



This protester symbolizes the situation in Eritrea.



IRAN

The government controls the media by imprisoning any journalists who disagree with it and suppressing any news that criticizes it. Iran also has very strict Internet censorship and blocks millions of websites.

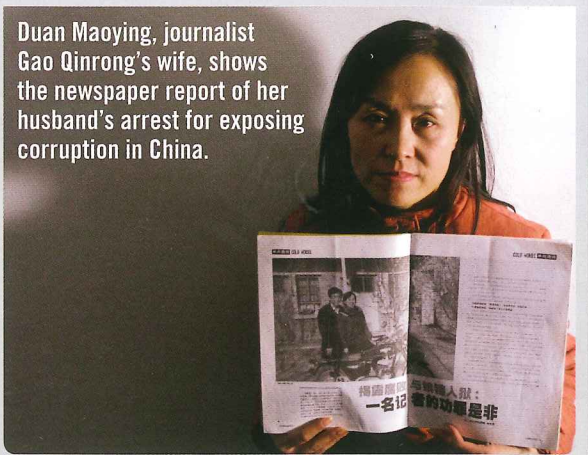


Protesters demand the release of Maziar Bahari, an Iranian Canadian journalist and filmmaker.

CHINA

The Department of Propaganda controls what the media are allowed to report. Online censorship is constant. China has the largest number of arrests of journalists and netizens in the world. China is considered especially dangerous because it exports its censorship techniques to other countries.

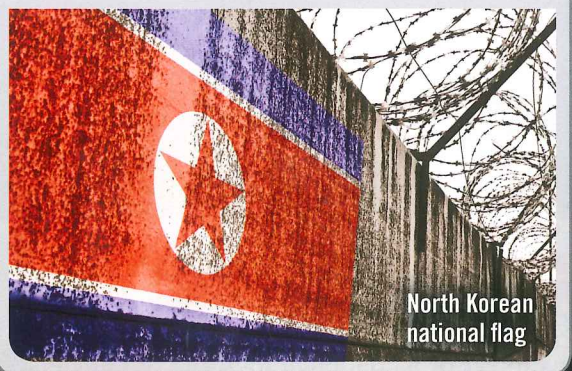
netizens: *users of the Internet*



Duan Maoying, journalist Gao Qinrong's wife, shows the newspaper report of her husband's arrest for exposing corruption in China.

NORTH KOREA

According to RSF, North Korea has one of the least free media in the world. The government adjusts radios and TVs so that they receive only state broadcasts. It carries out raids in middle of the night to find people who are accessing foreign media.



North Korean national flag

DIVE DEEPER Why do you think some people continue to work as journalists despite the dangers they face?

CANADIANS' RIGHTFUL ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION

BEING BLOCKED, EXPERTS SAY

**START
UP**

What are some examples of government information that you think the public should be able to access easily?

BY WENDY GILLIS, *TORONTO STAR*, 27 APRIL 2014

Want to read federal drug reviews for high-profile medications, including antidepressants, sleep aids, and diabetes drugs? Too bad.

Want to know how much Canada Post shelled out in overtime during last year's mail delivery backlog? Sorry, that's commercially sensitive information.

Same goes for the details of how Montreal, Maine & Atlantic Railway, the company implicated in the Lac-Mégantic train disaster, assured Transport Canada it could operate a one-man crew safely.

These are recent examples of public interest information that is far from public. ...

And if there were doubts that, in some cases, public information is being deliberately blocked, they were erased in a damning report from Canada's information watchdog [Information Commissioner Suzanne Legault] released earlier this month. ...

... Information watchdogs, researchers, media, and others say Canadians are not gaining their rightful

access to public knowledge, even as advances in technology allow for much greater opportunities for transparency.

"The government has essentially done everything they can to make access to information impossible," said Tom Henheffer, executive director at Canadian Journalists for Free Expression. ...

The federal government ... says it is dealing with more requests and releasing more information than ever.

Others disagree.

"Right now, it's not an Access to Information Act," Duff Conacher, a director of Democracy Watch, recently told the *[Toronto] Star*. "It's a Guide to Keeping Information Secret Act."

When Canada's Access to Information Act took effect in 1983, it was considered by many one of the most advanced transparency laws in the world.

implicated: *involved in*

watchdog: *person or organization that makes sure there is no wrongdoing*
transparency: *openness*

The legislation allows any member of the public who pays \$5 to request a variety of records, including correspondence, reports, and briefing notes from governments and other publicly funded organizations. Departments and agencies are required by law to respond within 30 days. ...

A major problem is that the legislation has simply not kept pace with technology.

[Kelly James is a spokesperson for the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, which is responsible for federal government accountability.] James said that in 2013, there was a 27 percent increase in the number of access requests over the previous year. At the same time, more than six million pages were released, an increase of nearly two million.

But researchers who study government transparency agree that a major problem is that the legislation has simply not kept pace with technology. ...

"At present, you can email your Member of Parliament and subscribe to the prime minister's Twitter feed, but if you want to access internal government documents, you need to dig out envelopes, stamps, and a cheque," [Mike] Larsen [a BC criminology instructor and author] said.

Critics say technology is more often used to circumvent the public's access to information. In a recent special report to Parliament, Legault sounded the alarm on the use of text messaging and personal instant messaging on the estimated 98 000 BlackBerrys issued to public service employees. Though these conversations concern issues of public interest, they are typically not held on servers long enough to be accessed if a request is filed.

That could partly explain why some requests are coming back indicating that no relevant communication can be located.

Frequent users of the legislation also point to numerous requests coming back as inaccessible due to being classified as matters of "cabinet confidence" — essentially, information too valuable to the workings of government to be released.

Indeed, some government bodies, including the Prime Minister's Office and the Privy Council Office, are not subject to access to information laws, something that has been frequently criticized. ...

It's not only information typically obtained through access to information requests that critics are concerned about.

Henheffer, of Canadian Journalists for Free Expression, says he's also worried about other types of official documents that can be difficult to obtain, such as ITOs (Information to Obtain). These documents detail the evidence police presented to a judge to be granted a search warrant. ...

Why is it important for the public to know details of the evidence used to get a search warrant?

"To have this onerous requirement of having to spend a colossal amount of money on lawyers' fees to get everything — from that piece of information that's the crux of an investigative piece to something routine for everyday work — it really does not bode well for journalism in Canada," Henheffer said.

"It's a massive handicap for freedom of expression." ...

circumvent: *avoid; get around*
confidence: *privacy; secrecy*
onerous: *difficult; troublesome*
colossal: *huge*
crux: *vital point*

**DIVE
DEEPER**

Should the Canadian government have the right to keep some information secret from the public? Why or why not?

HARPER GOVERNMENT'S MUZZLING OF SCIENTISTS

A MARK OF SHAME FOR CANADA

START UP

What reasons could the government have for trying to stop scientists from reporting the results of their research?

JEFFREY HUTCHINGS IS A PROFESSOR IN THE FACULTY OF SCIENCE AT DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY AND THE PAST-PRESIDENT OF THE CANADIAN SOCIETY FOR ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTION. In this opinion piece, Hutchings explains the damage to society when scientists are censored by the government and not allowed to communicate the results of their research to the public.

BY JEFFREY HUTCHINGS, *TORONTO STAR*, 15 MARCH 2013

"In my view, scientists should stick to science."

This was a Conservative MP's response to my testimony at a 2012 parliamentary committee after I'd chaired a Royal Society of Canada expert panel on how climate change, fisheries, and aquaculture affect Canadian ocean biodiversity. Among other things, our report concluded that constructive and respectful debate on salmon aquaculture is hindered by a lack of full disclosure of diseases on fish farms, a concern echoed by Justice Bruce Cohen in his October 2012 report on Fraser River sockeye salmon. ...

Since 2006, the federal government has been shortening the leash on its scientists. In some departments, researchers are now not allowed to speak about their studies without ministerial (meaning political) permission. And in several documented instances, that permission has been refused. In February, Fisheries and Oceans Canada raised additional non-science barriers to the publication of scientific research.

testimony: *statement given under oath*
aquaculture: *raising fish or aquatic plants for human consumption; also called fish farming*
hindered: *prevented*
disclosure: *making information known*



I can personally attest to the destructive nature of such policies. In the late 1990s, one decade before the current communications noose was deployed, government research with which I was involved was censored at an international conference. Our work indicated that seals did not cause the collapse of Canada's cod fisheries. Why was it censored? Our science was at odds with what federal fisheries spokespersons had been saying to Canadians.

Let's be clear. When you inhibit the communication of science, you inhibit science. The legitimacy of scientific findings depends crucially on unfettered engagement, review, and discussion among interested individuals, including members of the public.

And when you inhibit science, you inhibit the acquisition of knowledge. Is this something that best serves society? The Royal Society of Canada and Democracy Watch, among reams of others, think not. ...

... Gro Harlem Brundtland, three times prime minister of Norway and chair of the renowned Brundtland Commission on sustainable development, argues that:

"If we compromise on scientific facts and evidence, repairing nature will be enormously costly — if possible at all. Politics that disregard science and knowledge will not stand the test of time."

If politics that diminish and devalue science should not stand the test of time, then neither should politically motivated barriers to the communication of science.

The Canadian government's current communication controls are clearly not the hallmark of a confident, mature, and progressive society. We can and should do much, much better.

noose: *large loop at the end of a rope that gets smaller when pulled*
inhibit: *prevent; block*
unfettered: *not restricted*
reams: *large numbers*
diminish: *weaken; belittle*
hallmark: *sign; characteristic*
progressive: *modern; advanced*

DIVE DEEPER

"When you inhibit the communication of science, you inhibit science." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?