

Page 135, The Law in Action

1. What limits on freedom of expression did you read about in Chapter 4 and in this article?

Freedom of expression is limited by sections of the *Criminal Code*. Specifically, the *Criminal Code* prohibits inciting hatred against an identifiable group.

2. Why is it necessary to limit freedom of expression?

- to protect vulnerable groups within society
- to protect people from false information
- if there were no limits on freedom of expression, then identifiable groups could be subject to false accusations and information could be spread that would create a negative perspective which might be dangerous to these individuals

What might be some dangers of limiting freedom of expression?

- legitimate opinions, particularly on controversial topics, might be suppressed
- limits may curtail freedom of thought and expression
- new or alternative ideas which may lead to real solutions might not be brought forth

3. Summarize the statements of Barbara Hall and Rex Murphy.

Hall: The media needs to be cautious so that it doesn't promote stereotypes because it may have a negative impact on a group. Media should make sure it's publishing facts, not opinions.

Murphy: Writers shouldn't have to defend themselves because their job is to start debate, express opinion, and stir thought. There should be no censorship.

What do you agree with in each of their statements? What do you disagree with? Explain.

Student positions will vary. They may agree with the idea that freedom of expression carries with it a responsibility to exercise caution and make sure that facts are being used. On the other hand, they may agree that limiting expression may stifle debate on a topic.