

Our newspapers are such a wreck that **'Freedom of the Press'** should be buried and forgotten as a guiding principle for anything good ...

because ...

1. The press have probably started, promoted or enabled more wars than they have stopped or slowed. And the press denies the consequences of what they publish are relevant to the evaluation of what they do.
2. The press lie, distort and defame with pictures and headlines. What the print story actually says is largely irrelevant to its impact. The press pretends this isn't so. In this respect editors are far more dangerous to the public good than the reporters themselves. But the reporters who defend their editors under the banner of freedom of the press are traitors to the truth.
3. Hardly any so-called reporters do anything other than rewrite press releases handed them by charming flacks who work the system for the benefit of the rich. The ones who actually investigate are to be honored. But they also should be ashamed that they allow their occasional good work to be the rationale for so much harmful junk.
4. The worst sin of the press is their persistence in telling the public they can trust and believe what they read in the newspaper.
5. The gold standard for the press has always been – from the very start – sex scandals, which they believe are terribly important and the coverage of which is somehow fundamental to democratic debate. In this respect the most fundamental values of all the whole industry from the very beginning are, and always have been, truly sick.
6. Reporters truly believe that anybody who thinks before they answer, or even hesitates to try to think, is hiding something and a liar, and guilty of whatever they are accusing them of, even if they haven't told them what it is.
7. Television news is the press at its worst – headlines on stilts – intoned by grave voices with great hair, reducing complex problems to thirty-second sound bites with a few lurid clips designed to inflame.
8. The press think publishing a slightly plausible allegation is great news – even though they know it could never be proved. Lawyers who think there should be proof are, to news folk, obstructionists and enemies of justice. Once a paper “owns” an allegations it will never tell the other side fairly or fully. It undermines the franchise.
9. The idea that the “truth will out ... in the great marketplace of ideas” is fiction in a world where what get into the media is controlled by the rich for their own benefit.
10. The very essence of newspaper work is summarizing, writing snappy cut lines and headlines and story leads. The purpose is not to get people to read on, as commonly claimed, but to relieve the busy reader from the necessity of reading on, because “it's all there” in the first seven words. The claim otherwise is a ruse and a scam.