**E-CONTENT**

**MJMC,  SEM- IV, PAPER-XIV (CC-402)  
  
Topic : Media as Social Auditor**

**Date : 13-01-2020, TIME : 2.00 P.M.-3.00 P.M.**

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**Media as Social Auditor**

An independent media, in its role as an auditor, has often been described as

society’s watchdog. Unerring, loyal, vigilant, unforgiving and ready for corrective

action — these are supposed to be the qualities of a watchdog. Society needs its

watchdog but journalists, as mere mortals, are sometimes prone to doubt and

misguided action. At times, however, the media has let society down, and as a

result has been subjected to scrutiny and fierce criticism. Several questions related

to ethics arise in journalism.

A few of them are as follows:

1) What happens when a journalist sets her or his sights on destroying the

reputation, career, and dignity of an innocent woman or man?

2) What happens when the media, voluble and bullying like a mob, levels

unsubstantiated and false accusations against an individual or an

organisation?

3) What is the way to ensure that journalists act in a sensitive and responsible

manner when reporting on the grief-stricken?

4) When do journalists trade their conscience and humanity for a sensational

Story? Due to such factors, need for an effective institution arises in the society to keep a watch on the wrorng doings of media.

**MEDIA FORM AND ITS FREEDOM**

Mass media has come a long way since Johannes Guttenberg invented the printing

press in Germany in 1456. At present, the media comprises a huge, diverse and

variegated conglomerate of enterprises that exercise considerable influence on

not just the way people talk and dress but also the way they think. The origin of

the word ‘journalism’ is in the Latin word *diurnalis* meaning daily and signifying

the current and timely reporting of events. But journalism has, over the centuries,

been transformed into a far more complex series of endeavours, especially in a

day and age when news is read and watched 24 hours, seven days a week.

**Authoritarian Model**

Historically, media has enjoyed various degrees or levels of freedom. In the years

when print was the dominant medium of mass communication, the press was

stringently monitored and regulated by governments. The unparalleled and

unprecedented power of the press to reach and influence people was promptly

recognised by governments and by those in authority. Therefore, governments

wanted to utilise and harness the power of communication that the press enjoyed

and this they did by enacting strict licensing laws for publications. Governments

and authorities sought to control the press to ensure that they did not publish

anything that would be considered vaguely derogatory to those in power, even if

such information was based on empirical evidence. This was known as

Authoritarian model in which government excercised control over the press.