

Analysis of the Use of 6 Canons of Journalism Code of Ethics in the 'Spotlight' Movie

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ABSTRACT

Humans are social creatures who always want to socialize with other humans. Mass communication is communication that occurs in the wider community by utilizing mass communication panels. The film has become one of the commodity media for every individual. Spotlight is a journalistic-themed film that tells the story of investigative journalism drama. This study aims to understand the analysis of the use of the 6 Canons of Journalism codes of ethics in the Spotlight film. The approach used is a qualitative approach with the technique of case study research. Researchers combine evidence and data for research through interviews, observation, and documentation. The results of this study are to prove the professionalism of investigative journalists at The Boston Globe in digging up news according to the Canons of Journalism code of ethics. The development of investigative journalism and the code of ethics of the Canons of Journalism is well implemented.

Keywords: *code of ethics, canons of journalism, spotlight film*

1. BACKGROUND

Humans are social creatures who are always with other humans, have a sense of curiosity about the surrounding environment and are also curious about what happens to them. These feelings force an individual to carry out communication activities. According to Harold D. Lasswell [1], make the form of communication grouped into a form of linear communication. In the form of linear communication, communication is seen as a process that runs in one direction or one way communication, namely the sender of the message is the only aspect of communication that sends a message to the recipient of the message. Generally, the linear communication model is described in the context of mass communication, such as radio, television, and other media.

Mass communication is communication to the general public using mass communication platforms. Mass communication is undergoing drastic changes and what are known as developments today can be considered the past tomorrow. Mass media forms the usual polarization and manifested in the life of the wider community, as well as media theorists must be aware of how the influence of the media on the development of communication. Film is one of the media for entertainment commodities for each individual, generally film is a medium that describes events through dialogue and scenes that show drama to be

shown to the audience. Humans like to watch movies because it gives a sensation of relaxation and personal satisfaction to the audience itself, the film itself is also included in mass communication. In 1816, the inventor who was domiciled from France named Joseph Nicéphore Niepce knew that film was formed from a photographic concept. Niepce was the first human to make practical use of a camera as well as film. They have done many experiments in the world of photography and film. But it turns out that the images and prints can only last for a short period of time [2].

One year later, William Dickson from Thomas Edison's laboratory expanded with a film camera that could shoot 16 images per second. The film mechanism in making tools for recording and producing images was created by Thomas Alfa Edison in 1887. Dickson and Thomas used celluloid film which was later refined by George Eastman, who introduced the Kodak camera to the public [3]. The early history of film was actually created from an idea that arose in 1878. From America, a famous person named Edward James Muybridge made 16 images of horses that were collected in one frame and then could form the illusion as if the horse was running, and created a film.

Spotlight is a film that was released on November 20, 2015 and is set in late 2001 and early 2002 in America. In this film, Spotlight is known as a small division of The Boston Globe news agency, whose job is to produce investigative articles that require them to investigate a case for months to research and publish. The investigative journalism team

consists of editor Marty Baron (Live Schreiber), who leads the investigation team, and 4 members Walter "Robby" Robinson (Michael Keaton), Mitchell Garabedian (Stanley Tucci), Sacha Pfeiffer (Rachel McAdams), and Michael Rezendes (Mark Ruffalo). They dedicate their body and soul to the team and fight for cases that have not been resolved for a long time.

Spotlight is a film with a journalistic theme, telling the story behind the investigation of a journalist division in uncovering a child sexual abuse scandal that occurred in the Catholic church area in Boston, Massachusetts, United States. It is not easy for Spotlight journalists to uncover this case, because the case that happened to the Catholic church has happened several years ago. Meanwhile, the investigation that is being carried out by spotlight journalists is only a year. Moreover, this case is covered by various aspects, such as religion, media, police and Boston government law.

A journalist's job should be to bring up facts that happened at the scene, and these facts are still largely unknown to the general public. However, it is quite difficult to uncover these events and facts. Frequently, Spotlight journalists face threats and interventions that threaten their safety or property. Journalists must be prepared under any circumstances, must remain alert to events related to this work. However, the professionalism of journalists must be held firmly in following all the related efforts in news coverage, especially the lives at stake.

In this Spotlight film, the professionalism of journalists is highly displayed, because of the persistence of the journalists who are constantly looking for the roots behind cases of child abuse by priests in the church, because the case was closed in secret by the big church in Boston, therefore The Boston Globe conducted investigative journalism related to mass communication.

Mass communication is communication that is centered on the mass or communication that uses mass media, such as: films, press, television and radio. Mass communication is efficient communication, can cover a wide area and practical and countless audiences.

Mass communication has its special characteristics that are made up of the character of its components. The characters are: mass communication is one-way, communicator with mass communication, which is institutionalized, messages in mass communication are general, mass communication media make simultaneous, mass communication communicants have heterogeneous nature.

With the following characteristics, mass communication has a function to provide information to a wide audience.

According to Effendy, in Syaifinnuha, H. [4] the function of mass communication is as follows:

1. Information function

This giving function means that the mass media is a disseminator of information for readers, listeners or viewers. Various information is needed by the mass media audience concerned in accordance with their interests. The audience as social beings will always feel thirsty for information that is happening.

Mass media is one of the means of education for the community (mass education). This is because the mass media can present things that are educational. One way to educate the mass media is to teach values, ethics, and rules that apply to readers. The mass media can do this through drama, stories, discussions and articles.

3. Influence function

The influencing function of the mass media can implicitly be found in editorials, features, advertisements and articles. People can be affected by advertisements shown on television and newspapers.

4. Mass Media

Mass media related to the function of entertaining nothing but aims to reduce the tension of people's minds. This is because reading light news or watching entertainment shows on television can make people's minds fresh again.

Journalism comes from the words "journal" and "ism". Journals are reports, while isms are ideas or teachings. Journalism is an understanding or flow of journalism. Journalism is understanding. In terms of practicality, there is almost no difference between the meanings of journalism and journalism, which are essentially the same. Literally, the notion of journalism (derived from the word journal) is daily writing or writing about everyday events. Journalism is an art and profession with professional responsibilities (art and craft with professional responsibilities) which implies that journalists see with fresh eyes eyes that see every incident to capture unique aspects. Journalism is not just about writing, what is really looking for and what is really asking about complicated things with persistence [5]. According to IRE (Investigate Reporters and Editors) investigative journalism is investigative journalism that is systematic, in-depth, researches and reports what information is obtained. Often the information disclosed is highly confidential, uses many records obtained from the public and is supported by computer technology in reporting information and focuses on social justice and accountability. In the book *Investigative and Interpretative Journalism: An Insight Into Critical and Review Writing* [6] by Daniel Ofomegbe, Okoro, and Wilfred, they describe that every story investigated has implications for the guilty, the accused, and reporters and even law enforcement agents.

According to the code of ethics from the Canons of Journalism regarding the journalistic code of ethics as a rule:

According to the American Society of Newspaper Editors [7], the main function of newspapers is to communicate to a wide audience what their members do, feel and think. Therefore, journalism requires its practitioners to have various intelligences, or knowledge, and extensive experience, as well as natural and trained powers of observation and reasoning. His opportunities as history cannot be separated from his obligations as teachers and interpreters. In order to find some ways of codifying the sound practices and aspirations of fair American journalism, these points are set out as follows:

1.1. RESPONSIBILITY

The right of a newspaper to attract and hold readers is restricted by nothing but considerations of public welfare. The use a newspaper makes of the share of public attention it gains serves to determine its sense of responsibility, which it shares with every member of its staff. A journalist who uses his power for any selfish or otherwise unworthy purpose is faithless to a high trust.

1.2. FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

Freedom of the press is to be guarded as a vital right of mankind. It is the unquestionable right to discuss whatever is not explicitly forbidden by law, including the wisdom of any restrictive statute.

1.3. INDEPENDENCE

Freedom from all obligations except that of fidelity to the public interest is vital.

1. Promotion of any private interest contrary to the general welfare, for whatever reason, is not compatible with honest journalism. So-called news communications from private sources should not be published without public notice of their source or else substantiation of their claims to value as news, both in form and substance.
2. Partisanship, in editorial comment which knowingly departs from the truth, does violence to the best spirit of American journalism; in the news columns it is subversive of a fundamental principle of the profession.

1.4. SINCERITY, TRUTHFULNESS, ACCURACY

Good faith with the reader is the foundation of all journalism worthy of the name.

1. By every consideration of good faith a newspaper is constrained to be truthful. It is not to be excused for lack of thoroughness or accuracy within its control, or failure to obtain command of these essential qualities.
2. Headlines should be fully warranted by the contents of the articles which they surmount.

1.5. IMPARTIALITY

Sound practice makes clear distinction between news reports and expressions of opinion. News reports should be free from opinion or bias of any kind.

1. This rule does not apply to so-called special articles unmistakably devoted to advocacy or characterized by a signature authorizing the writer's own conclusions and interpretation.

1.6. FAIR PLAY

A newspaper should not publish unofficial charges affecting reputation or moral character without opportunity given to the accused to be heard; right practice demands the giving of such opportunity in all cases of serious accusation outside judicial proceedings.

1. A newspaper should not involve private rights or feeling without sure warrant of public right as distinguished from public curiosity.
2. It is the privilege, as it is the duty, of a newspaper to make prompt and complete correction of its own serious mistakes of fact or opinion, whatever their origin.

DECENCY: A newspaper cannot escape conviction of insincerity if while professing high moral purpose it supplies incentives to base conduct, such as are to be found in details of crime and vice, publication of which is not demonstrably for the general good- Lacking authority to enforce its canons the journalism here represented can but express the hope that deliberate pandering to vicious instincts will encounter effective public disapproval or yield to the influence of a preponderant professional condemnation.

The investigative journal research by the film *Spotlight* which is associated with a journalist's code of ethics, is based on the Canons of Journalism code of ethics.

2. METHODS

In general, the types of research are divided into two, namely quantitative research and qualitative research. This study uses a qualitative research approach in order to obtain information and data analysis of the 6 Canons of Journalism code of ethics in the *Spotlight* film. The subjects of this research are journalist sources from *One Championship*, *Assumption.co*, and directors from the production house of *Kamar Kosan Film*, and the object of this research is an analysis of 6 uses of the Canons of Journalism code of ethics in the *Spotlight* film which were previously summarized for the purposes of this research. In this study, researchers used 3 research methods, namely in-depth interviews, object observation and documentation. According to Gunawan [8] qualitative research method is a research method based on the philosophy of postpositivism, used to examine the condition of natural objects where the researcher is the key instrument, sampling of data sources is done purposively and snowball, data collection techniques using triangulation methods (combined), data analysis is inductive/qualitative, and qualitative research results emphasize meaning rather than generalization.

This study uses 3 research methods, including:

1. In-depth Interview

In-depth Interview or is an interaction/conversation that occurs between one interviewer and one informant according to Halim [9]. In the process of this method, the researcher deals directly with the informant and obtains information aimed at asking and answering face-to-face.

2. Observation

Observation is one of the elements of data aggregation. Observation is collecting data directly from the field, namely watching Spotlight films.

Based on the explanation that has been described above, the researcher has observed firsthand how the Spotlight film makes a journalistic work that opens the eyes of journalists to continue to uphold justice.

3. Documentation

This documentation is carried out by researchers by storing all data or events. The data collected by the researcher can be in the form of writing and pictures during the research process.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Canons of Journalism is a guideline that comes from the desire in the field of the press, to provide independence that is more responsible and has boundaries, a free press still has mutually agreed rules in order to provide the integrity of the press itself to the community and the state.

The emergence of this code of ethics for the press is due to critics who tend to think that the press has crossed the boundaries of existing norms, causing many parties to suffer losses from both a moral and material perspective. From these criticisms, the Canons of Journalism wants to restore the image and role of the press in people's lives. This code of ethics can be said to be the beginning of the birth of the modern press which has become the guideline for the press to this day.

Spotlight is a 2015 American investigative journalism drama biographical film by director Tom McCarthy. The script for this film was typed by Tom McCarthy and Josh Singer. It tells the story of cases of sexual abuse of children by priests of the Roman Catholic church in Boston, which were published by a team of investigative journalists.

The Spotlight film received many good reviews from its audience. On the Rotten Tomatoes website, the film received a 97% rating, based on 341 comments with an average rating of 8.8/10. The film was praised for showing the dynamic and honest work by the investigative team on universal acknowledgment. The film Spotlight tells the true story of the local newspaper The Boston Globe which exposed a major scandal about the sexual abuse of minors. This investigative team has the task of opening the case of a Roman church in Boston which was carried out

systematically by the priests of the Boston Catholic church. In this film, it is shown how the editorial team of The Boston Globe is looking for data on cases of obscenity committed by several priests. The data sought includes case documents, interviews with victims, lawyers, courts, and also the priests involved. The evidence will be strong data to open the church's case to the public.

1. Professionalism of journalists shown in the film Spotlight
The Spotlight film shows how a journalistic work is made interesting and worth watching. This film shows how being a journalist must be able to present the right news not scenarios, they can get accurate data and provide news with genuine evidence and facts, not just unreal issues. Spotlight journalists dive into step-by-step, in-depth information to bring up cases that have not been widely disclosed in years. Informants have commented on the professionalism of The Boston Globe journalists in providing to raise cases made by pastors and church authorities over the years and not publicly publishing. This case also illustrates that law enforcement officials, the judiciary, the attorney general, and the police have not helped much in this case. Because the church has a system that has power and is strong and protected by sacred institutions.

At first, Spotlight journalists were protested because they knew how difficult it would be to beat the domination of the church in the field, but the truth had to be revealed no matter what disturbances there would be. This statement is in line with the researcher's findings in the scene where Michael Rezendes wants to borrow secret documents from the church in Boston. Rezendes has a big responsibility because the document is very sensitive, and the editorial must take a big risk if the document is misused. The scene explains that point 1 of the Canons of Journalism code of ethics, namely Responsibility, has a strong influence in making news. In addition to being responsible for the news that will be disseminated, Spotlight explained that journalists have the freedom or Freedom of the Press in making a news story that will be published to the public. In the scene where Albano as a lawyer for the Boston Globe filed a motion with Judge Sweeney, he asked to make a document about the church. previously secret, became a public document so that previously only church groups and judges were allowed to open it, it became public for all. This scene shows how independence, which is the 3rd point of the Canons of Journalism, has a strong meaning, not to be influenced by any external links.

2. Application of Investigative Journalism in Spotlight films.

Investigative journalism is a form of news coverage by journalists in deep dives into an event that is not known to the public. Investigative journalism forces journalists to raise as high as possible issues and cases that are related to the public interest. Public interest refers to the quality in which an organization or group is harmed by not having the information, or is harmed, either materially or through the work of policies for which they consent to their knowledge. The application of investigative journalism in films usually has stages to reach an absolute point, in-depth news

coverage and the obstacles faced make investigative journalism works always get more appreciation when the news has been disseminated to the public. In the film *Spotlight*, investigative journalism is very clearly shown, they follow point by point, in line with the news they will develop. alignment with the Canons of Journalism code of ethics and the application of investigative journalism is a natural thing.

A true interview with the source, honest, sincere and on target makes the answer more detailed. This is evidenced by the similarities in the scene when Joe recounts the experience of sexual harassment by a priest at a Boston church. Joe describes the beginning where he was victimized by the priest. Sacha Pfeiffer as the interviewer asked how the priest did sexual harassment to Joe, he approached it according to point 4 of the Canons of Journalism. The answer given by Joe is a detailed answer according to the answer mentioned by the priest, it can be concluded that to be able to know accurate investigative journalism, journalists must have a healthy and fair conscience in reporting a case that will be developed.

3. How to implement the journalistic code of ethics in the *Spotlight* film according to the 6 Canons of Journalism code of ethics

That a thing that exists in the real world when it wants to be implemented into a media must have a clear and valid accuracy. In the film *Spotlight*, the 6 Canons of Journalism code of ethics serve as guidelines for journalists of The Boston Globe. , *Spotlight* films are films that have strong attention. A journalistic film, with the Canons of Journalism code of ethics guidelines makes this film has great value.

The consistency provided by The Boston Globe in extracting information through interviews with victims is evidence that the Canons of Journalism code of ethics guidelines is a strong foundation. In line with the scene in the film *Spotlight*, where the scene explains how the Baron wants to develop the news that has been explored by the Boston Globe team, he wants to focus the news focus on the direct church, not just the pastor. This shows that the Baron wants the news that has been investigated to be fair in accordance with the facts on the ground.

The Boston Globe's investigative journalists' professionalism in extracting news in accordance with the Canons of Journalism code of ethics does not have the slightest fault. The investigation team was very careful in interviewing sources, asking questions without cornering the victim, and processing the data sources properly. The researcher saw how the Canons of Journalism code of ethics was implemented very well in the *Spotlight* film. By showing the indifference, humanity, and struggle of the *Spotlight* team. The world of investigative journalists is explained through the work order, data, and systems depicted in the film.

The implementation of the Canons of Journalism code of ethics is shown in detail for each scene, the documentation obtained by the researcher shows how the application that occurs in the film is in accordance with the points written in the Canons of Journalism code of ethics. Researchers have

analyzed the results of the findings that will be used to draw conclusions on the research results objectively. The results of the researcher's observations show that the Canons of Journalism code of ethics is continuous with the *Spotlight* film. This is a benchmark that a good journalistic work must have a strong foundation, just like the *Spotlight* film which uses the Canons of Journalism code of ethics.

The applied points in the Canons of Journalism code of ethics form the basis for The Boston Globe's investigative team, from finding sources, collecting documents, sorting data, analyzing findings, interviewing sources, plus the processing time that can take months and the consequences that arise in the process. society is huge. So the data and the *Spotlight* report deserve to be called an investigative report. Based on this research, the professionalism of journalists, the application of the development of investigative journalism, and the implementation of the Canons of Journalism code of ethics in the film *Spotlight* are described by conducting investigative coverage and applying the code of ethics, until news about sexual abuse by priests in the Boston church is disseminated by The Boston Globe team. The development of the application of investigative journalism by the *Spotlight* team whose information was provided by the 1st informant, 2nd informant and 3rd informant according to their respective perspectives with explanations from each informant having the same similarities.

4. CONCLUSIONS

In general, researchers have concluded that the professionalism of journalists, the development of the application of investigative journalism, and reviewing the implementation of the 6 Canons of Journalism code of ethics are shown properly and correctly in the *Spotlight* film. More specifically, researchers can conclude the following:

First, the results of this study show that the professionalism shown by The Boston Globe journalists in the film *Spotlight* is in accordance with the guidelines of professional journalists in real life. Second, this study also shows that the development of the application of investigative journalism in *Spotlight* films is in accordance with actual investigative journalism. Third, overview of the implementation of the 6 Canons of Journalism code of ethics on the *Spotlight* film in accordance with the guidelines and points written in the Canons of Journalism code of ethics. Fourth, *Spotlight* film is a film that represents an investigative journalism work in accordance with the investigative plot.

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