

It is this writer's opinion that the film *The Post* (2017) accurately shows the risks and rewards that come with the trick of the trade, regarding reporting and journalistic writing. We learned in class that there is legitimate risk when it comes to the publication of any story, whether its merit needs to be told or not. Throughout the whole of the movie, there were references to the Espionage Act, which states that any form of espionage or obtaining of information that could hurt the United States was prohibited under the guise of federal law. What was scary to this writer, was the fact that such documents—nowadays at least—can be found anywhere on the internet, with just a simple click of a button—where in the movie, Ellsberg had to copy a couple of random pages at a time, over the course of several years. It is scary to think that as one gains more access to the flow of information, the higher the risk factors become, and the amount of litigation will grow.

Upon watching this film, I had no idea just how far litigation could be taken, regarding the printing and publishing of a single story. I had, at least, some idea of the amount of trouble that one could get themselves into, with the possibility of having time served if done a story incorrectly. But regarding this film, I had no idea that a single story could land individuals in trouble with the federal government, lead to a Supreme Court case, and involve the litigation of several publishers, not exclusive to the original.

This film also reflected the need of the press to hold people in power accountable. Looing at the response of the presidency of the film and finding out that their wrongdoings had been leaked cemented that understanding for me, just how much power the press yields, and, conversely, how dangerous that power can be not just to itself, but that of the government that it lies under law and order to. Throughout the film, there is the constant mention or feeling of the concept of accountability, both through the publishing of stories on the Pentagon papers, and through the litigation that follows. It is understood that the very process of publishing the papers, and making the public aware of the actions that the country has willingly committed, is a personal responsibility belonging to the press. Furthermore, the protection of the First Amendment remains to be one of the most prevalent themes throughout the film, as the Washington Post and the New York Times were brought before the power of the Supreme Court for expressing these very rights.

Overall, this film was highly informative of what is required of journalistic integrity, and the responsibility that one holds a writer. It is not just that someone must report only the facts, but that one must do so in a way that protects the will of the people, and their own integrity, doubly so. Further, this film shows the extremely dangerous risks involved with this line of work, such that the full force of the law can be brought down upon someone, and that the weight of said words cannot be understated.