The 21st Century Image of the Journalist In Hallmark Films
Introduction to Appendices

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Each film is categorized by decade, genre, gender, ethnicity, media category, job title, and description (evaluation of the image presented by each journalist or group of journalists on a subjective series of classifications: very positive, positive transformative positive, neutral, transformative negative, negative, and very negative). For reference, a complete copy of the legend is printed at the bottom of each appendix.

When a film features more than one journalist character, multiple instances of gender, ethnicity, job title, and description were recorded. These results were checked and re-checked until accuracy and consensus were confirmed.

One of the key problems in doing a fair evaluation is that an audience may view a journalist positively even if that journalist behaves in an unethical and unprofessional manner. This can occur as a result of a variety of factors: an attractive actor in the role, a character designed for audiences to root for no matter what he/she does, or a situation where the end (true love) outweighs the means (negative behavior on the part of the journalist). We have tried to evaluate the images as they might be conceived by the audiences of the period using the standards of the time, not the standards of today. While we might abhor a journalist who steals, lies, deceives, ignores basic rules of journalism and label his/her actions negative, the audiences of the period often considered such journalists heroes and perceived them as positive images. Obviously some of these decisions are debatable even after hours of debate. This is a subjective category and we worked hard to reach consensus, but it remains a subjective description. However, any researcher can go through each appendix, check each film’s encoding, read the comprehensive reviews and determine whether the description should be revised.

We divided characters identified as journalists into major and minor categories. A major character influences the outcome of the story or event. He or she is usually a leading character played by a major actor of the time. A minor character does not play a significant role in the development of the film. He or she is usually a part of a larger group – i.e. journalists in a news conference or roaming around in packs, or those journalists who function as a part of the editorial or technical staff. Films with unnamed characters or characters who appeared briefly and then disappeared are included in the minor category.
We decided to include films in which a newspaper story played a significant plot point. Examples include articles or pieces that expose scandals and wrong-doing, provide erroneous information (such as a fake death), alert principals about some important news or events that cause the characters to take important actions. Journalists in films with such articles were identified as “Unidentified News Staff.”

Legend for Encoding
A total of 360 films were reviewed for this study. They are described, encoded and illustrated in seven alphabetical appendices totaling 936 pages and found on the ijpc.org website under The IJPC Journal.

Genres
Action-Adventure
Animation
Drama
Comedy
Crime-Mystery-Thriller
Romance
Satire-Parody
Science Fiction-Horror
Serial
Sport
True Story-Biography-Documentary
War
Western.

Ethnicity-Race
White – a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East or North Africa.

Black or African-American – a person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.

Hispanic or Latino – a person who classifies him/herself as Mexican, Mexican-American, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban or anyone who indicates that they of Hispanic, Latino, Latinx, or Spanish origin.

American Indian or Alaska Native – a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.

Asian—a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or
the Indian subcontinent including Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Cambodian, and residents of Hong Kong, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, and Thailand.

**Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander** – a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

**Unspecified** – Mostly groups of journalists who are not easily identified by ethnicity. Also includes journalists who do not fit specifically into ethnic categories, or were not identified as major or minor characters. This category can include mixed-race characters.

### Media-Category

Book – Non-Fiction  
Documentary  
Internet  
Newspaper  
Newsreel  
Magazine  
Radio – Podcast  
Television  
Undefined (includes any media category that is undefined in the film)

### Job Titles

There are 18 specific job titles. Here are the definitions. Note: these definitions are used for all of the IJPC studies so there will be job titles that weren’t created until long after the silent film era was over. They are included for consistency of definition.

**Anchor, Commentator, Host**: a person who presents news and information on television, radio, the Internet, podcasts or other media. A news presenter also known as newsreader, newscaster, anchorman or anchorwoman, news anchor or simply anchor. This category also includes commentator – a person who adds analysis and occasionally opinion to his or her news reports for any media, usually radio or television. Also can be a Television, Radio or Internet Talk Show host, Radio Announcer, Meteorologist, or anyone who presents information orally or in print.

**Columnist, Blogger, Podcaster**: a person who writes a regular column or opinion piece for a newspaper, magazine, pamphlet, Internet site, podcast or any other medium.

**Critic**: a professional judge of art, drama, film, music, food, literature or any form of human activity, specializing especially in the evaluation and appreciation of literary or artistic works, such as a film critic or a dance critic. Forms and expresses judgments of the merits, faults, value or truth of a matter.

**Cub Reporter, Student Journalist**: a person who is young and inexperienced and works in all media. An aspiring reporter who ends up in the job, a novice reporter, a trainee. Knows little about journalism. First job in journalism. An intern. Someone who works on a newspaper
broadcast or multimedia project in school or as an extracurricular activity.

**Editor, Producer**: a person who assigns stories and edits copy for a newspaper, magazine, broadcast, Internet or other media. Usually referred to as a city editor, managing editor or editor-in-chief. This category also includes Producer and Executive Producer – a person who controls various aspects of a news or information program for television, radio, the Internet and other media. He or she takes all the elements of a newscast or information program (video, graphics, audio) and integrates them into a cohesive show. Title includes the producer of a specific news program, a field producer, a producer in charge of news and/or information programs. If the journalist is primarily working as an editor -- gathering the news, writing the stories, headlines and editorials, being the person responsible for the production and distribution of the newspaper -- we use that job title (editor). If the journalist does little as an editor, but acts mostly as the owner making publishing decisions, we use that job title (publisher). The same is true for television and radio, the Internet and other media where the journalist is either actually producing the program or just in charge of the program.

**Employee**: a person who works in any media with a nondescript job such as editorial assistant, any newsroom employee, printer, and miscellaneous worker in composition, telegraph operator, copy boy or girl, office boy or girl, newsboy or girl, web developer, graphic designer, audio and video technician, multimedia artist, digital media expert. Also includes Printer’s Devil, typically a young boy who is an apprentice in a printing establishment. Also includes production staff, technical staff, stage crew, staff personnel, any miscellaneous employee working in a multimedia situation.

**Executive**: a person in print, broadcasting or the Internet who is in charge of the news/information department. Executive in charge of news or any other information product. A management position. Newsreel supervisor. Director of News in any medium. Head or director of a department in a media company.

**Illustrator, Cartoonist**: a person who provides decorative images to illustrate a story in a newspaper, magazine, or other media. A commercial artist-journalist. A cartoonist who creates drawings that depict a humorous situation often accompanied by a caption. Drawings representing current public figures or issues symbolically and often satirically as in a political cartoon. A caricaturist: drawing humorous or satirical cartoons. A political cartoonist.

**Photojournalist**: a person who creates still or moving images in order to tell a news story. Titles include photographer, documentarian, cameraman, shooter, stringer, paparazzi, newsreel shooter, and anyone else using a photographic device to make a photographic record of an event. Also includes newsreel cameramen and women, and documentary producers, writers, and directors.

**Publisher, Media Owner**: a person who is a successful entrepreneur or businessman who controls, through personal ownership or a dominant position, a mass media related company or enterprise. Referred to as a media proprietor, media mogul, media baron. A publisher usually specifically refers to someone who owns a newspaper or a collection of newspapers.

**Reporter, Correspondent**: a person who reports news or conducts interviews for newspapers,
magazines, television, radio, websites, or any other organization that disseminates news, information, and opinion. Referred to as a journalist, a newspaperman or woman, newsmen or
women, a writer, a sob sister, a magazine writer, a writer of non-fiction books, a freelance writer
for any multimedia.

**Real-Life Journalist:** a person who exists in real life. Uses real name and real occupation in a
fictional film or TV program. He or she is not played by an actor.

**Sports Journalist:** a person who writes, reports or edits sports news and features for any media.
Includes writers, reporters, editors, columnists, commentators, hosts, online specialists. Includes
sportscasters and correspondents.

**War Correspondent, Foreign Correspondent:** a correspondent is a person who contributes
reports to a variety of news media from a distant, often remote, location, often covering a
conflict of some sort.

**Press Conference Journalists:** a person who attends a news conference or press conference in
which newsmakers invite journalists to hear them speak and, most often, ask questions.

**Pack Journalists:** a person who joins other reporters chasing after stories. They often travel in
packs, usually armed with television cameras and microphones. They cover fast-breaking news
by crowding, yelling, shouting, bullying and forcing their way into breaking news events. They
often show up with their lights, cameras, microphones and digital recorders as they shout out
questions to the usually reluctant newsmaker in question. Pack Journalism is also defined as
journalism practiced by reporters in a group usually marked by uniformity of news coverage and
lack of original thought or initiative. A pack of journalists can also be a group of reporters,
photojournalists, war correspondents, freelance writers, even newsboys, following a story or a
specific activity. Any group of journalists covering the same story at the same time.

**Miscellaneous:** Individual journalists unidentified in the film or TV program or any media.
Usually in the background functioning as editorial and technical staff.

**Unidentified News Staff:** Use of the news media – newspapers, magazines, radio, television,
Internet, multimedia – by some unidentified news personnel or by some monolithic news
organization as a significant plot point. Examples include articles or pieces that expose scandals
and wrongdoing, provide erroneous information (such as a fake death), alert principals about
some important news or events.

**Descriptions**

**Major Character (Major)** – a major character influences the outcome of the story or event. He
or she is usually a leading character played by a major actor of the time.

**Minor Character (Minor)** – a minor character does not play a significant role in the
development of the film or TV program. He or she is usually a part of a larger group – i.e.,
journalists in a news conference or roaming around in packs, or those journalists who function as
a part of the editorial or technical staff.

**Very Positive:** This is the journalist as a heroic character. This is the journalist who does the right thing, who fights everyone and anything to get the facts out to the public. He or she often exposes corruption, solves a murder, catches a thief, or saves an innocent. Everything he or she does is in the public interest. This is the kind of image that makes the public believe that journalists are invaluable to any democracy. Journalists in a film would be evaluated as Very Positive (VP) if they have the following characteristics:

* Shows that the journalist is an unqualified hero – he or she does everything possible to get a story out to the public resulting in making the world a better place to live.
* Shows the public that journalism is an important profession that holds the public interest above all else, that without journalists representing the public interest, corporations, government, and individuals would do terrible things. It makes the viewer feel that journalists are essential to making democracy work and to give the public the kind of information it needs to make informative decisions in a democracy.
* Presents an unvarnished image of the journalist as a heroic, important member of society.

**Positive:** These journalists will do anything to get a story that they believe is vital to the public interest, to the public welfare. They try to do their job without hurting anyone, basically people trying to do the right thing, but often frustrated by the system. They may be flawed, they may make mistakes, they may drink too much or quit their jobs in disgust, but they always seem to end up by doing the right thing by the end of the story.

* Shows the journalist often doing wrong things in pursuing stories that are in the public interest. The good the journalist does, however, outweighs the bad.
* Shows the public that even when journalists are offensive, their jobs are important in making a democracy work.
* Presents an overall impression that the journalist is more of a hero than a villain.

**Transformative Positive:** a journalist who conveys a negative image throughout the film constantly doing negative things (unethical behavior, drinking heavily, stealing, wearing disguises, committing crimes to get a story), but who in the end serves the public interest and transforms into a positive image.

**Transformative Negative:** a journalist who conveys a positive image throughout the film, but ends up not serving the public interest and using the news media for personal, economic, or political gain.

**Negative:** These journalists are villains because they use the precious commodity of public confidence in the press for their own selfish ends. They use the power of the media for his or her own personal, political, or financial gain. They care less about the public interest than their own interests. They are interested in making more money, gaining power, doing anything to get what they want.

* Show that the journalist ignores the public interest in favor of personal, economic, or financial gain, thus losing the public’s respect.
* Shows the public that journalism is – more often than not – a profession that is more
concerned with personal gain than serving the public interest. It makes the public suspicious of journalists and creates a bad impression of what journalism is all about.

* Presents an overall impression that the journalist is more of a villain than a hero.

**Very Negative**: These journalists often engage in unethical and often unlawful activities getting what they want at all costs, even committing murder or serious crimes. They are manipulative and cynical. Often, they are publishers who use their power to corrupt government or business, to take advantage of the public. They are cheaters who are only interested in what is good for them, no one else. They usually are involved with the tabloid or sensationalistic press and often make up the anonymous news media chasing after individuals without regard for their privacy or safety.

* Show that the journalist is an unqualified villain who has no redeeming value, who has no concern for basic values, who will do anything to get what he or she wants regardless of the damage caused.

* Shows the public that journalism is a profession filled with arrogant, morally bankrupt individuals who only care about themselves and not about the public or an individual. These journalists ignore the public interest completely.

* Presents a clear image of the journalist as a villain who engages in unethical and often unlawful activities including crime and murder.

**Neutral**: These journalists usually make up the anonymous members of the press corps and usually can be seen at press conferences taking notes or reacting to what the person is saying. They are usually nondescript characters who are simply there as journalists doing their job without offending anyone. They are often in the background and figure slightly in the plot or action of the film or television program. They are not major characters.

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1 Many genre designations could include multiple designations. The first genre listed in the Internet Movie Database is often used for continuity purposes. When the IMDb fails to offer a genre, or if the genre is not appropriate, other sources were used to form a consensus.