4.1

Ethics

What you should do.

Focuses on shared professional standards and duties.



Law

What you may do without penalty.

Focuses on limitations, protections, and boundaries of reporting.

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4.2

Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics (Est. 1909)

Seek Truth and Report It

Minimize Harm

Act Independently

Be Accountable and Transparent

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4.3

Constructive Actions

Accuracy

Context

Clear Labeling
(Opinion, Ads, Staged Images)

Ethical Baseline of Publication.

Grave Breaches

Fabrication
(Inventing facts/quotes)

Plagiarism
(Stealing work)

Deliberately misleading or distorting facts constitutes a catastrophic breach of truth-seeking.

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4.4

1981

Janet Cooke
(*Washington Post*)

Invented an eight-year-old heroin addict; Pulitzer Prize returned.

1998

Stephen Glass
(*The New Republic*)

Fabricated parts of multiple stories.

2003

Jayson Blair
(*New York Times*)

Resigned after extensive plagiarism and fabrication were uncovered.

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4.5

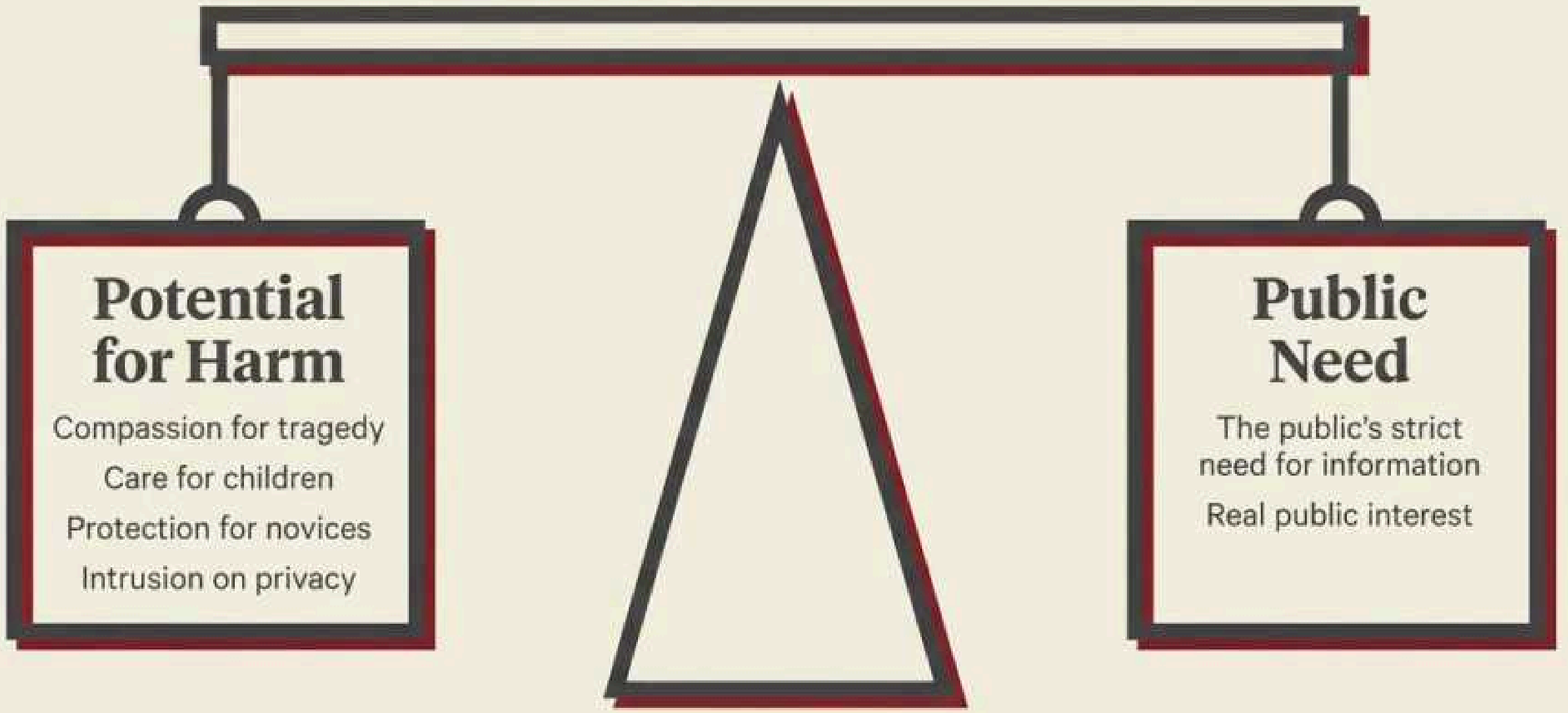
[Praised & Trusted] + [Intense Pressure] + [Unchecked by Editors] → [**Systemic Failure**]

Insight: Trust alone is not a safeguard.

Requirement: Verification, fact-checking, and editing must exist as mandatory operational systems, not optional overlays.

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4.6



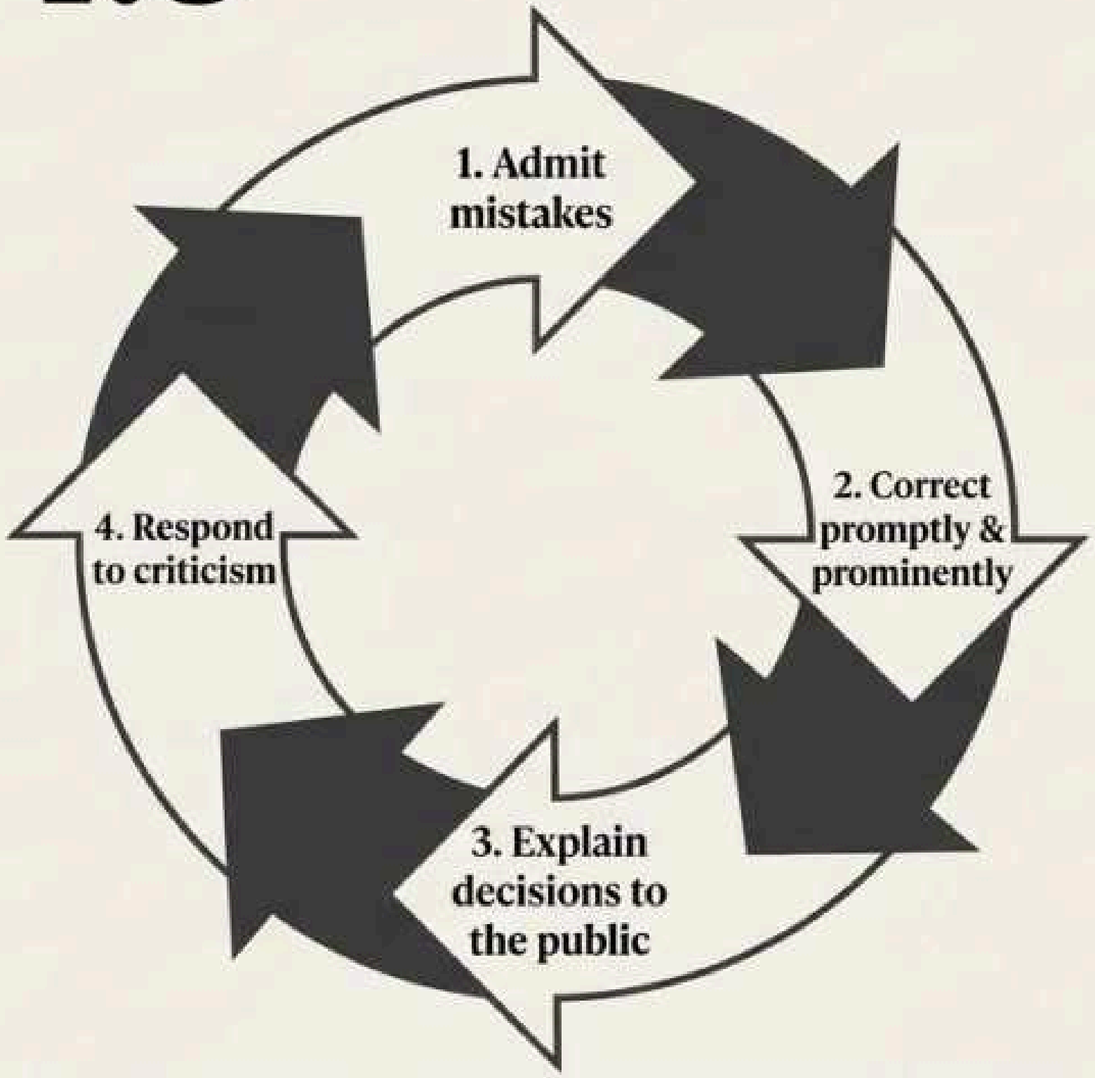
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4.7



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4.8



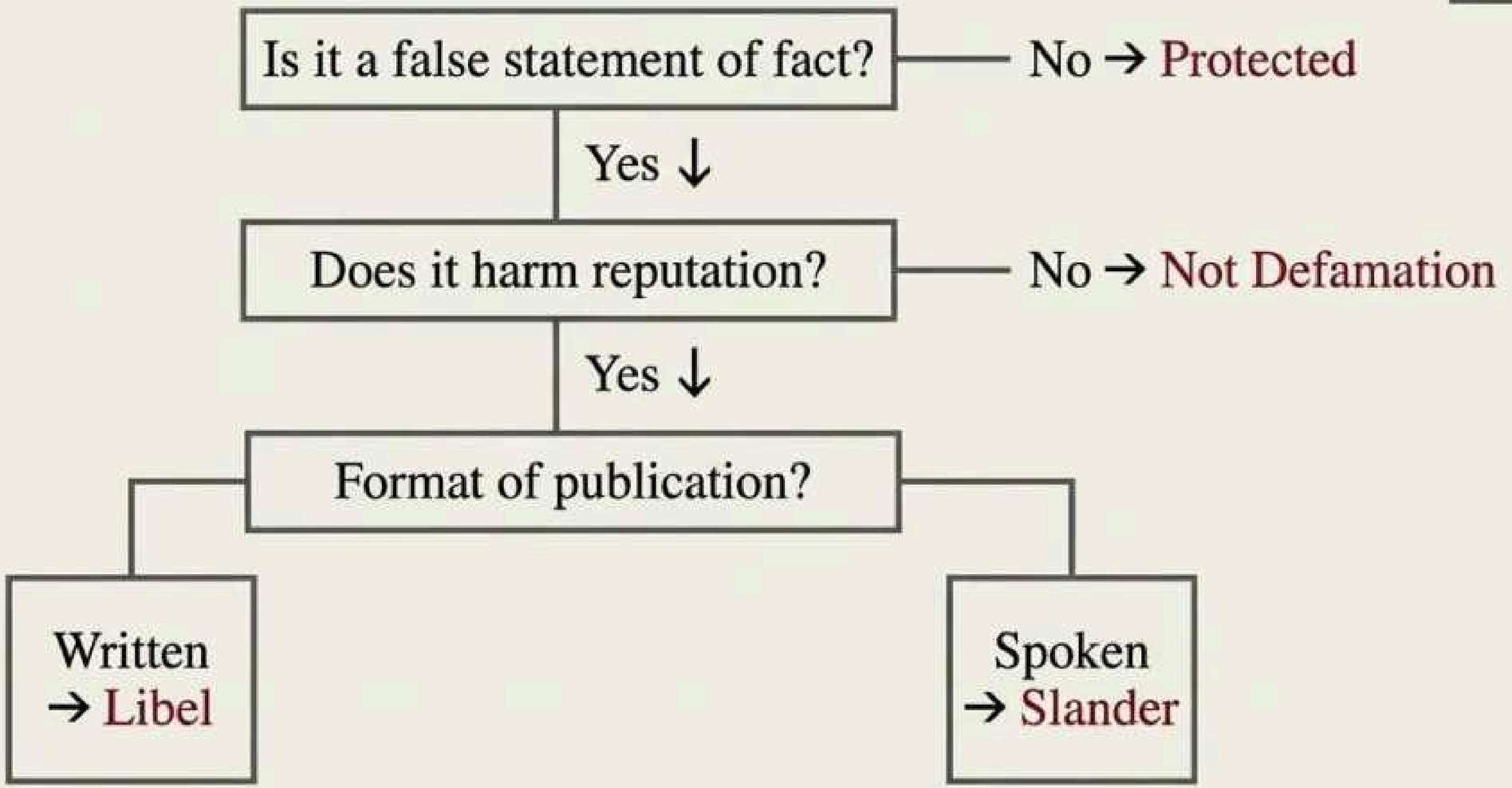
Key Metric:

A visible corrections policy is the ultimate indicator of a serious, functioning news outlet.

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4.9

Defenses:
- Truth
- Unprovable Opinion



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4.10

Result: This high standard provides wide latitude to criticize public officials and public figures.

Knowing falsity OR reckless disregard for truth

Actual Malice (*New York Times v. Sullivan*, 1964)

Normal Reporting Errors / Negligence

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4.11

Status of Individual	Burden of Proof Required	Best Practice
Public Official / Figure	Actual Malice	Wide latitude for press.
Private Individual	Negligence (in most states)	Careful verification is paramount; offering a chance to respond protects both subject and publisher.

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4.12

Moment of Publication

Before Publication

Prior Restraint

Government order stopping publication in advance.

Status: **Presumed Unconstitutional**
(e.g., Pentagon Papers, 1971)

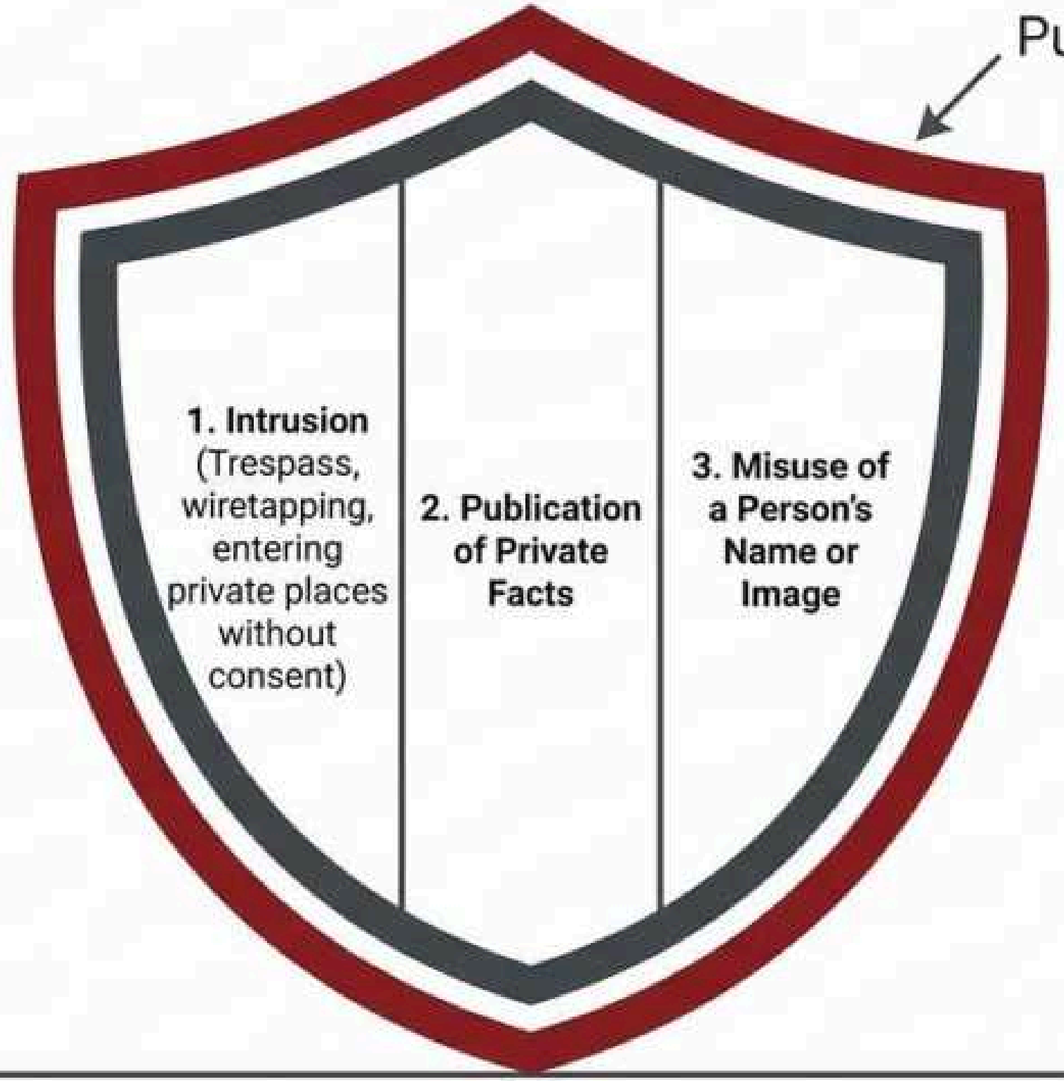
After Publication

Post-Publication Consequences

The press may still face legal consequences for certain disclosures after the fact.

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Caveat: Public interest is a strong defense, but not absolute.
Recording laws and scene access must be strictly navigated.

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4.14

Federal Level

Branzburg v. Hayes (1972)

First Amendment does NOT excuse reporters from testifying before a grand jury. Federal position is mixed.

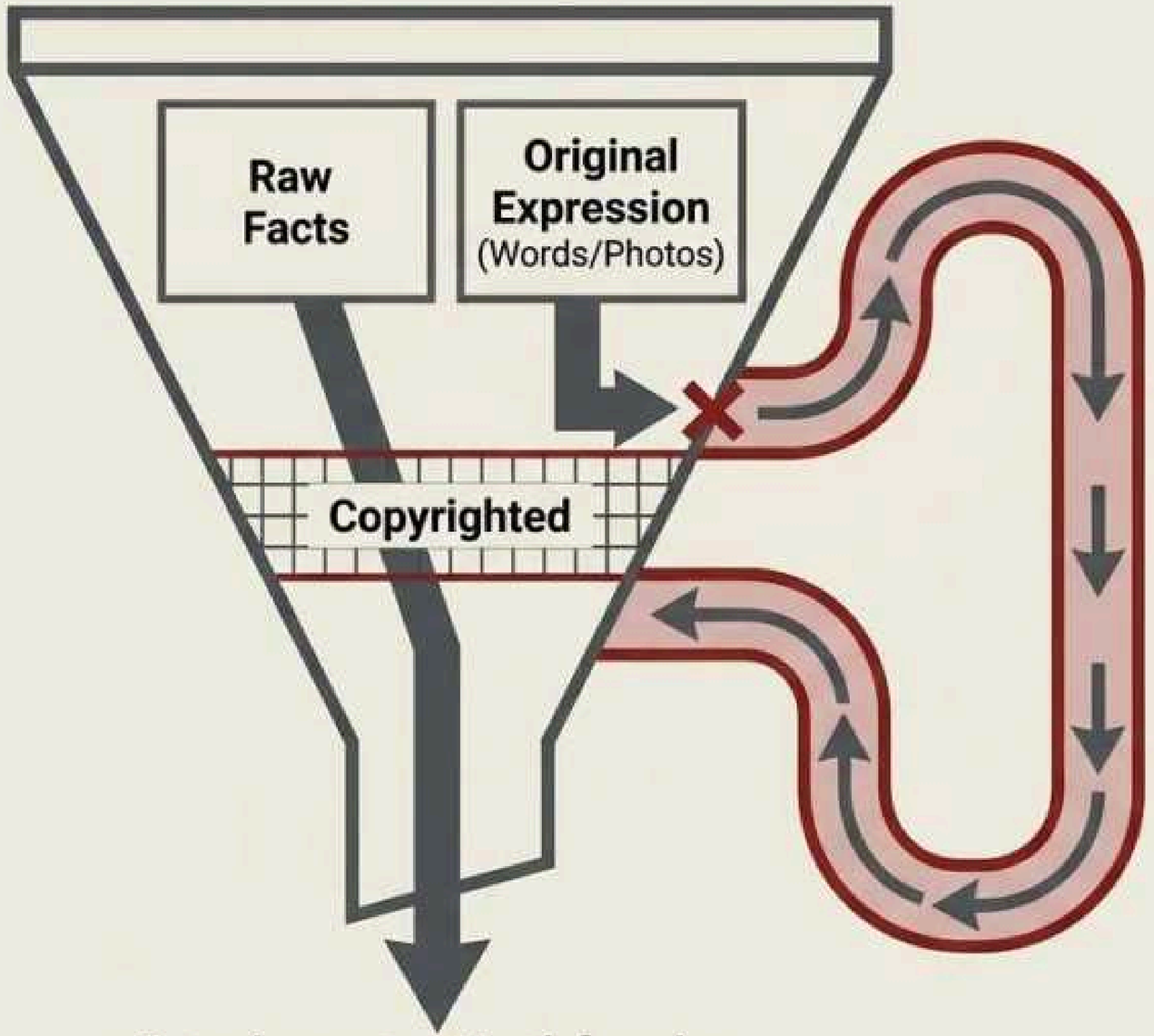
State Level

State shield laws provide variable, limited protection.

A reporter who promises confidentiality must knoality must the jurisdictional limits first.

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Fair Use Test

1. **Purpose** (e.g., news reporting, criticism)
2. **Amount** used
3. **Effect** on the market for the original

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The Assumed Environment

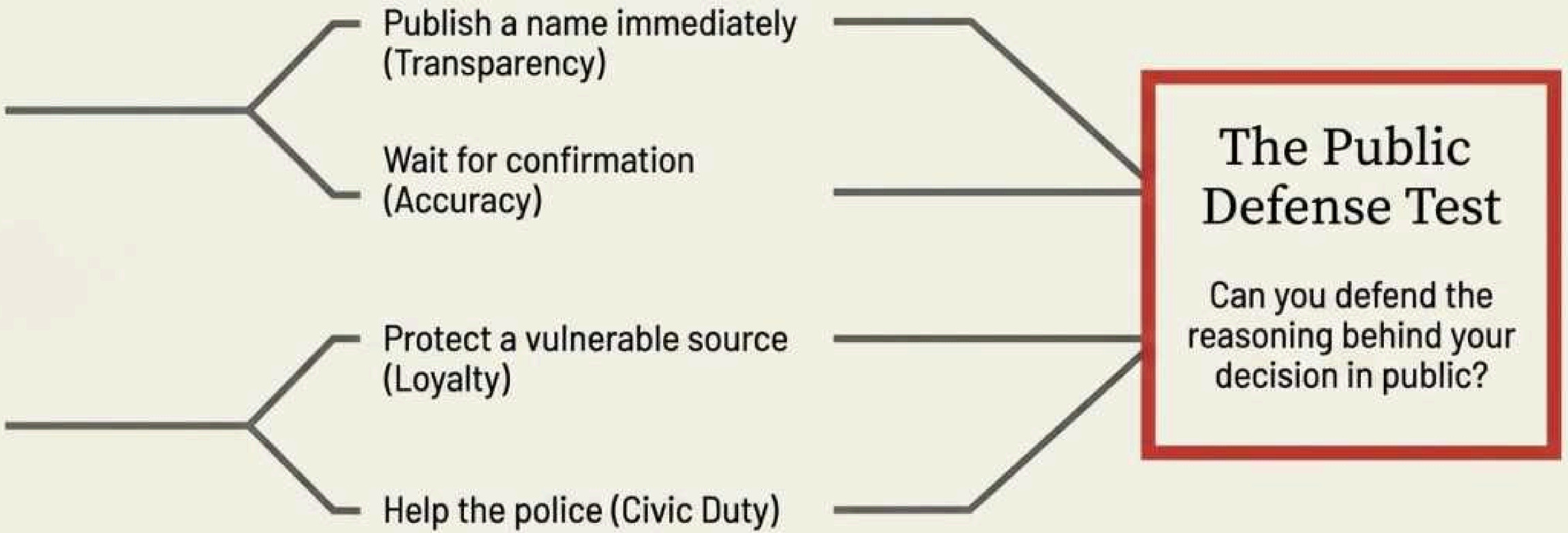
Western ethical frameworks operate on an unstated baseline of physical safety and legal due process.

The Global Reality

Tracked by press freedom groups, reporters abroad routinely face violence, spyware, legal harassment, censorship, and imprisonment.

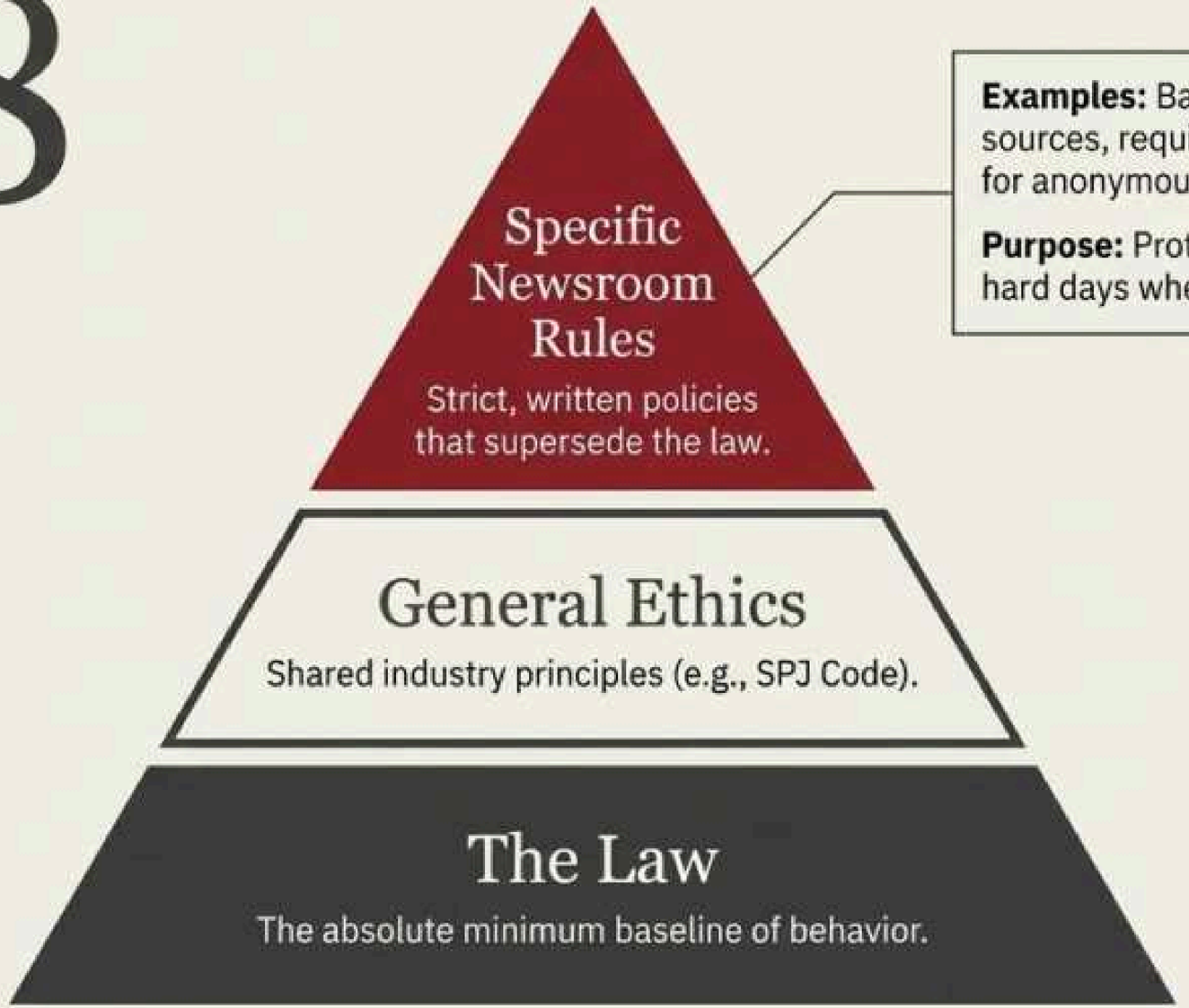
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4.17



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4.18

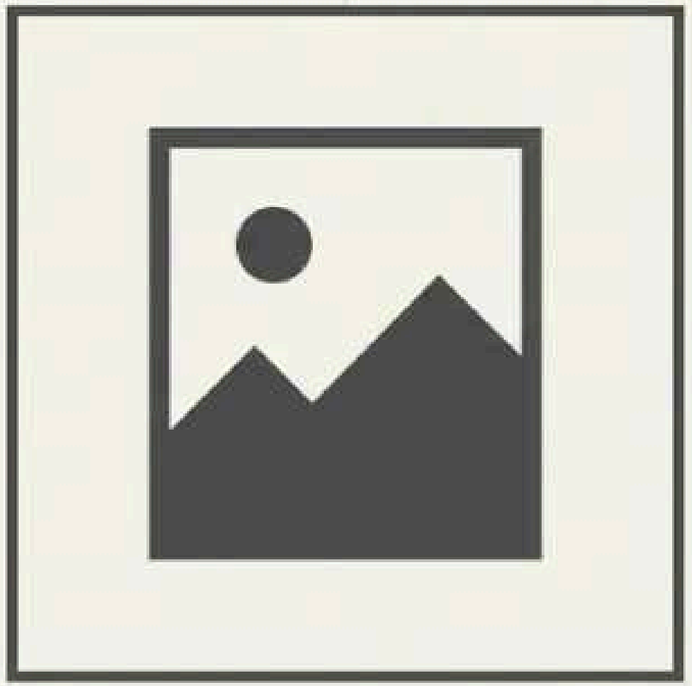


Examples: Banning payment to sources, requiring editor approval for anonymous sources.

Purpose: Protects integrity on hard days when shortcuts tempt.

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4.19



Original Data (Acceptable)



Cropped / Adjusted

Caution: Even cropping can alter meaning.



Altered / Staged (Deception)

Editing to add or remove objects breaks reader trust. Staging a scene as real is deception.

NPPA Code: Present subjects fairly; do not manipulate to mislead.

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Scenario: A source provides a document proving company wrongdoing but asks for complete secrecy on how it was obtained.

Ethical Considerations

What to check first? (Verification/Accuracy)

What to tell the editor? (Internal transparency, editor approval for anonymity)

Legal Considerations

What to promise? (Understanding limits of source protection/shield laws)

Assessing risk of intrusion/trespass based on acquisition method

Prior restraint protections regarding the document itself

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