THE CONSTRUCTION OF EDWARD SNOWDEN AS A
WHISTLEBLOWER IN THE NEW YORK TIMES AND THE
WASHINGTON POST ONLINE PUBLICATIONS

THESIS
Submitted as Partial Fulfillment of Requirement
for the Sarjana Sastra Degree of the English Department
Faculty of Cultural Studies
Sebelas Maret University

By:
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ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF CULTURAL STUDIES
SEBELAS MARET UNIVERSITY
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2016
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The thesis entitled The Construction of Edward Snowden as a Whistleblower in The New York Times and The Washington Post Online Publications is neither plagiarism nor written by others. All theories and materials taken from other sources are put in direct quotation and paraphrased citation. I am fully responsible for the pronouncement and if this is proven to be wrong, I am willing to take any responsible actions given by the Faculty of Cultural Studies, Sebelas Maret University, including the withdrawal of the degree.

Surakarta, June 8th, 2016

The researcher,

Cahyo Adi Nugroho
MOTTO

"Progress equals happiness."

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to everyone who seeks for knowledge.

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Surakarta, June 8th, 2016

The Researcher

Cahyo Adi Nugroho

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THE CONSTRUCTION OF EDWARD SNOWDEN AS A WHISTLEBLOWER IN THE NEW YORK TIMES AND THE WASHINGTON POST ONLINE PUBLICATIONS

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ABSTRACT

This study specifically focuses on examining the identity construction of Edward Snowden, a former NSA employee, as a whistleblower after he exposed to public about U.S. government massive internet surveillance programs. It has two major purposes: (1) to explain the image construction of Snowden as an NSA whistleblower in the Times and the Post online publications and (2) to find out the representation of American ideals of freedom of speech through the media coverage of him.
This research is a descriptive qualitative research that uses four online articles from the Times and the Post as the primary sources of data. The primary data are in the form of words, phrases, sentences, and expressions as the elements of the narrative and tones. This research also uses secondary sources: articles from the other online newspapers, related books and thesis, journal articles, and online documents to provide the supportive data.
This study was conducted under American Studies framework. It employed interdisciplinary study by applying some theories and approaches to answer the research questions, which are media narrative theory, semiotics theory, and socio-political perspective.
The analysis shows that the Times and the Post successfully construct Snowden as a new kind of leaker, as a hero in the sense that he brings back the importance of freedom of speech as living myth in the U.S, and still view him as a hero despite his moving to Russia. The analysis also shows that U.S. media perpetuate the myth of free speech. They construct Snowden’s action positively as a new method to give people courage to criticize the government.

Keywords: Edward Snowden, Whistleblower, New York Times, Washington Post, Freedom of Speech

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