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Digital Vigilantism and the Crisis of Formal Legal Legitimacy: A Socio-Legal Analysis of the Influence of Social Media on Law Enforcement in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The rise of social media has given rise to the phenomenon of digital vigilantism—a form of social punishment through naming, shaming, and online campaigns that occurs before formal judicial proceedings are concluded. This phenomenon not only reflects an expression of collective anger but also indicates a transformation in the relationship between society and the formal legal system. This study aims to analyze digital vigilantism as a response to the crisis of legal legitimacy and its implications for the independence of law enforcement and the rule of law through a normative legal method using a qualitative approach based on literature review and case analysis in Indonesia. Research findings indicate that digital vigilantism is a form of public participation influenced by shifts in social structure and legal awareness, with social media serving as a new arena for the establishment of legal legitimacy that can expedite official responses, enhance transparency, and create opportunities for victim advocacy; however, it also gives rise to ambivalence due to its potential to foster selective justice based on virality, legal populism, and the erosion of the presumption of innocence through trial by social media. Philosophically, this phenomenon risks fueling moral panic, the tyranny of the majority, cancel culture, and digital authoritarianism—trends that shift the legitimacy of the law from procedural rationality toward collective emotion. Therefore, a balance is needed between digital public participation and the protection of due process of law through enhanced government responsiveness and transparency, as well as the strengthening of the public's legal literacy and digital ethics, to support substantive justice within Indonesia's legal system.

KEYWORDS

Digital Vigilantism; Legal Legitimacy; Social Media; Rule of Law; Due Process of Law

INTRODUCTION

Today, social media serves not only as a means of communication but also as a space for the public to express their opinions, offer criticism, and even pressure law enforcement agencies to respond to a case promptly.[1] In the context of the sociology of law, social media serves as a space for the reproduction of public legal consciousness, where perceptions of justice, violations, and sanctions are shaped not solely by state law but by social narratives constructed by the public.[2]

Vigilantism is a violent expression of collective power aimed at establishing or restoring order through direct punishment, as opposed to rules established by official institutions.[3] The term "vigilantism" was subsequently adopted in the online sphere as "digital vigilantism," referring to direct online actions taken in response to violations, crimes, injustices, acts of revenge, or hatred.[4] The phenomenon of "digital vigilantism" illustrates how online communities often assume the roles of judge and prosecutor, passing social judgment on perpetrators before the formal legal process has concluded.[5]

In a social context, acts of vigilantism are often seen as a form of solidarity with crime victims, or as an expression of anger over the slow response of law enforcement authorities.[6] However, in the long run, these actions have serious consequences because they can exacerbate legal uncertainty, instill fear, and undermine trust in state institutions.[7] Punitive measures outside these legal mechanisms are contrary to the fundamental principles of criminal law, such as the principle of legality *(nullum crimen sine lege, nulla poena sine lege)*[8] principle of *due process of law*,[9] and the presumption of innocence.

The main irony of digital vigilantism lies in the paradox of the actions taken by the public itself. On the one hand, they see themselves as moral heroes fighting to uphold justice; on the other hand, the methods they employ often violate the very principles of justice. People who blindly defend acts of digital violence or online mob justice frequently disregard the human rights of the individuals they are condemning. Consequently, this practice not only has the potential to worsen the situation and create new injustices, but it can also foster an atmosphere of fear, hatred, and sharp polarization within society. Therefore, although there are ethical

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1 Fathul Hamdani et al, "Media Vs. Law: Which Acts as a Tool of Social Engineering?" (2023) 2:2 Indones Media Law Rev.

2 Satjipto Rahardjo, *Hukum dan Masyarakat* (Bandung: Angkasa, 1981).

3 B Loveluck, "The Many Shades of Digital Vigilantism: A Typology of Online Self-Justice" (2019) Glob Crime.

4 Muhamad Isnaini et al, "Praktik vigilantisme digital di media sosial dalam konflik antarkelompok" 4:3 J Stud Komun (Indonesian J Commun Stud.

5 Taufik Rahman, "Trial by Netizen: Dinamika Penghakiman Publik di Era Digital" (2020) 5:2 J Sosiol Huk.

6 Didik Purwadi, Amiruddin & Rina Khairani Pancaningrum, "Konsep Tindakan Main Hakim Sendiri dalam Hukum Pidana" (2022) 10:3 Kertha Semaya J Ilmu Huk.

7 Kasmanto Rinaldi, "Strategi Pencegahan Eigenrechting di Lingkungan Masyarakat" (2022) 24:1 J Kaji Ilmu Sos dan Budaya.

8 Dedi Iskandar et al, "Perkembangan Teori dan Penerapan Asas Legalitas dalam Hukum Pidana Indonesia" (2024) 1:3 JIMMI J Ilm Mhs Multidisiplin 293–305, online: <https://jurnal.fanshurinstitute.org/index.php/jimmi/article/view/147>.

9 Faisal Matogu & Elis Rusmiati, "Prinsip Due Process of Law dalam Ketentuan Pasal 29 UU No 46 Tahun 2009" (2023) 16:2 Mercat J.

reasons underlying the emergence of vigilantism, such actions cannot be justified if carried out through "taking the law into one's own hands" without due process and fair dialogue.[10]

This study serves as a response to previous research, which has largely focused on digital vigilantism in the context of social movements or horizontal conflicts. Ningrum & Aminulloh (2024) highlight the boycott of Israeli products on social media (TikTok and X/Twitter).[11] On the other hand, Wardani & Kusuma highlight the practice of cybervigilantism among K-Pop fans, particularly the idol protection account (@PROTECT_RIIZE),[12] and Isnaini et al., examined digital vigilantism in intergroup conflicts in Johar Baru. This study is unique in that it positions social media not merely as a platform for social expression, but as an actor that influences public legal awareness and behavior toward formal law enforcement institutions.[13]

METHOD

This study employs a normative legal methodology with a qualitative approach, as it focuses on analyzing legal norms, concepts, and principles related to the phenomenon of digital vigilantism from the perspectives of the rule of law and the independence of law enforcement. The approaches utilized include the statutory approach, the conceptual approach, and the case approach. The statutory approach involves examining regulations related to freedom of expression, the protection of human rights, the presumption of innocence, and the principle of due process of law. The conceptual approach is used to examine theories of legal legitimacy, public participation, and philosophical critiques of digital vigilantism. Meanwhile, the case approach is conducted through an analysis of phenomena in Indonesia, such as the Baiq Nuril case and various other viral cases, to examine the influence of public opinion on social media on the response of law enforcement officials. The legal materials used include primary legal sources such as legislation and court decisions, secondary legal sources such as books and academic journals, and tertiary legal sources such as reports and news articles. The analysis is conducted qualitatively using descriptive-analytical and argumentative methods to assess the implications of digital vigilantism on judicial independence and the protection of human rights.

RESULT & DISCUSSION

I. Digital Vigilantism as a Response to the Crisis of Formal Legal Legitimacy

Isnaini and Sarwoprasodjo define digital vigilantism as direct online action taken in response to violations, crimes, injustices, acts of revenge, or hate.[14] This definition

[10] Gilles Favarel-Garrigues, Samuel Tanner & Daniel Trottier, "Introducing Digital Vigilantism" (2016) 17:3–4 Glob Crime.

[11] A J Ningrum & Aminulloh, "Vigilantisme Digital dalam Aksi Boikot Produk Israel di Media Sosial" (2024) 6:1 J Komun Nusant.

[12] Azzara Mustika Wardani & Rina Sari Kusuma, *Budaya Partisipatoris Online Pada Fenomena Cybervigilantism Fans K-Pop (Studi Kasus Pada Akun @Protect_Riize)* Universitas Muhammadiyah Surakarta, 2023) [unpublished].

[13] Isnaini et al, *supra* note 4.

[14] *Ibid*.

indicates that digital vigilantism is not merely an emotional response, but a form of social participation that arises from a crisis of confidence in the effectiveness of formal law. From the perspective of Lawrence Friedman's legal systems theory, it is clear that law does not exist in isolation, but is influenced by social structures, culture, and public opinion.[15] Social media, in this context, has become part of a new social structure that interferes with the course of formal law.

Furthermore, Patricia Ewick and Susan Silbey, through their theory of legal consciousness, explain that a society's legal consciousness is shaped by social experiences and perceptions of justice.[16] When the law is perceived as unfair, people tend to turn to forms of resistance, namely by creating alternative justice mechanisms outside of official institutions. Public reactions through naming, shaming, and calling out then become a means for groups marginalized from formal power to pressure and expose interests they believe are being protected by the formal system.

Satjipto Rahardjo also pointed out that the law consists not only of statutory provisions but is also a social institution that must be viewed within the context of its society.[17] Therefore, the role of social media as a platform for public opinion can be understood as a mechanism of social control that strengthens oversight of law enforcement agencies while simultaneously potentially undermining the independence of those agencies. In the context of the sociology of law, this phenomenon underscores that law is an interactive social process. Satjipto Rahardjo emphasizes that law must be viewed as a living social institution within society.[18] This phenomenon is reinforced by Eugen Ehrlich's concept of "living law," which asserts that living law is not merely enshrined in statutes, but is embedded in the values and social practices of the community itself.[19] Thus, digital public opinion can serve as a form of social control over law enforcement agencies and state institutions.

According to a 2021 study, 65% of high-profile criminal cases faced significant public pressure through social media hashtag campaigns before the court handed down its verdict.[20] For example, the case of Baiq Nuril provides a concrete example of how social media can influence the course of law enforcement. Viral public support on Twitter and through online petitions urged the President to grant amnesty, ultimately leading to a shift in the formal legal decision due to public pressure.[21] The 2023 case of abuse by the child of a government official also followed the same pattern. Public outrage after a video of the abuse went viral on social media prompted police to immediately arrest the perpetrator, even though

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15 Lawrence M Friedman, *The Legal System: A Social Science Perspective* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1975).

16 Patricia Ewick & Susan S Silbey, *The Common Place of Law* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

17 Rahardjo, *supra* note 2.

18 Satjipto Rahardjo, *Hukum dan Masyarakat* (Bandung: Angkasa, 1986).

19 Eugen Ehrlich, *Fundamental Principles of the Sociology of Law* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936).

20 S Valenzuela, T Correa & H Gil de Zúñiga, "Social media campaigns and public attention to legal cases: A longitudinal analysis" (2021) 26:3 J Comput Commun 135–155.

21 Tempo, "Presiden Didesak Berikan Amnesti untuk Baiq Nuril", (2019), online: <https://www.tempo.co/politik/presiden-didesak-berikan-amnesti-untuk-baiq-nuril-877523>.

such legal proceedings typically take longer.[22] A similar pattern can also be observed in various high-profile cases of domestic violence or sexual harassment, where law enforcement acts more swiftly once the issue gains public attention, even though formal evidence has not yet been fully gathered.[23] These examples demonstrate how digital public pressure can shift the course of law enforcement or accelerate authorities' response.

II. Digital Vigilantism as a Battleground

The phenomenon of digital vigilantism can be analyzed in depth through Social Conflict Theory, which is based on the fundamental assumption that social life is not characterized by harmony, but rather by tension, conflict, and competition between strong and weak groups, as well as between the rulers and the ruled. Social Conflict Theory views the law merely as a political product and an object of contention. The law contains provisions that serve as instruments for the winners of the power struggle to protect the interests of their group. This aligns with Karl Marx's assertion that the law is part of the political and legal superstructure that functions as an instrument to suppress and exploit the interests of other groups. Therefore, rather than being a neutral tool for controlling interests, the law itself is seen as an expression of specific interests arising from the struggle of interests within society.[24]

The concept of the "juridical field" developed by Pierre Bourdieu reinforces this analysis. According to Bourdieu, the law is an arena of struggle for symbolic power—that is, the legitimacy to define what is right, wrong, just, and unjust.[25] Social media, in this context, has transformed into a new battleground outside the formal system. Digital vigilantism is a struggle for symbolic power over justice, in which the public uses social capital, viral digital reach, collective solidarity, and narrative power to challenge the state's formal legal authority. This phenomenon creates what is known as "media logic," which shifts the focus from formal legal processes toward public narratives that are often based on partial or emotional information, rather than on evidence and strict legal procedures.[26]

Although the legal arena has its own internal logic and semi-autonomous rules—such as the principle of due process of law and the presumption of innocence—the battles within it are still determined by power relations and the distribution of capital among social actors. In the context of digital vigilantism, the public mobilizes social and digital capital—such as virality, collective support, and the power of narrative—to challenge the formal legal capital hierarchically held by

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[22] Tirto, "Rangkuman Kasus Mario Dandy, Kronologi David hingga Ayah Dipecat", (2023), online: <https://tirto.id/rangkuman-kasus-mario-dandy-kronologi-david-hingga-ayah-dipecat-gCQd>.

[23] Tv One, "Kasus KDRT yang Viral di Media Sosial Sudah Masuk Tahap Penyidikan", (2022), online: <https://www.tvonenews.com/channel/news/96613-kasus-kdrt-yang-viral-di-media-sosial-sudah-masuk-tahap-penyidikan>.

[24] Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels, *Manifesto Partai Komunis*, Ted Sprague, ed (Marxists Internet Archive, 2023).

[25] Pierre Bourdieu, "The Force of Law: Toward a Sociology of the Juridical Field" (1987) 38 Hastings Law J.

[26] Mario Randy Lengkong et al, "Media Sosial dan Pembentukan Opini Publik: Implikasi Hukum terhadap Proses Peradilan yang Adil" (2025) 6:1 J Paradig J Sociol Res Educ 179–191, online: <https://ejurnal.unima.ac.id/index.php/paradigma/article/view/11857>.

state institutions. Thus, digital vigilantism can be interpreted as a form of symbolic conflict between two arenas: the formal legal system, which monopolizes legal authority, and the digital sphere, which vies for moral legitimacy.

The phenomenon of digital vigilantism highlights the ambivalence of social media's influence. On the one hand, digital public opinion serves as a driver of transparency and accountability and accelerates legal responses. On the other hand, it encourages officials to act in a more populist manner, where public emotional sentiment overrides rational and principled legal action. This can also trigger the phenomenon of a "trial by the press," which undermines the presumption of innocence and the neutrality of the legal process.[27] In addition, it can lead to the spread of misinformation and an erosion of trust in institutions.[28]

In addition to the legal context, the phenomenon of digital vigilantism can also be explained through the lens of communication and cultural theory, such as the theory of hyperreality, which conceptualizes digital vigilantism. Hyperreality refers to a state in which simulations and models replace the real world, thereby blurring the line between what is real and what is not.[29]

In the context of digital law, public perceptions of "justice" are shaped not by legal facts but by viral narratives, hashtags, and media framing. This leads to digital vigilantism, often transforming into symbolic acts aimed more at garnering public attention than at upholding substantive justice. If public pressure undermines the objectivity of law enforcement, what emerges is not substantive justice, but populist justice. Law enforcement officials are then faced with a dilemma between maintaining independence and yielding to public opinion that demands swift action.

However, it is important to note that both conventional and digital vigilantism can have negative consequences for the sustainability of collective action built by social movement networks. Blurring the line between reality and simulation can lead to the spread of misinformation and an erosion of trust in institutions.[30] Furthermore, the repeated use of the hashtag (#) by other accounts is intended solely to mobilize the movement and to gain greater digital presence and attention on social media.[31] Furthermore, the use of digital platforms to enforce moral standards may silence marginalized voices and perpetuate harmful stereotypes, imposing their own order and morality in the digital space through their online activities.[32]

Therefore, although there are ethical reasons underlying the rise of vigilantism, such actions cannot be justified because the objectivity of law

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27 Rustamaji Muhammad et al, "The Reduction of Criminal Justice Policy in Indonesia: Justice versus Virality" (2025) 5:2 J Hum Rights, Cult Leg Syst, online: <https://www.jhcls.org/index.php/JHCLS/article/view/637>.

28 Jasmine Alya Pramesthi, "Parasocial Relationships and the Formation of Hyperreality in the BTS World Game" (2021) 14:1 Mediat J Komun, online: <https://library.kab.ac.ug/Record/doaj-art-792676cfc3ba46a2b29600510f8318b4?sid=1494504>.

29 Arianna Lazzini et al, "Emotions, Moods and Hyperreality: Social Media and the Stock Market during the First Phase of COVID-19 Pandemic" (2022) 35:1 Accounting, Audit Account J, online: <https://www.emerald.com/aaaj/article/35/1/199/2217/Emotions-moods-and-hyperreality-social-media-and>.

30 Pramesthi, *supra* note 28.

31 Ghozian Aulia Pradhana & Syaifa Tania, "Hyperreality of #BlackLivesMatter Movement on Social Media" (2021) 37:3 J Komun Malaysian J Commun.

32 Ningrum & Aminulloh, *supra* note 11.

enforcement is compromised when social media fuels polarization and intense pressure from certain segments of society. Law enforcement officials face a dilemma between maintaining their independence and responding to significant public demands.[33] Therefore, a prudent communication strategy and rigorous digital literacy are essential to ensure that public oversight does not violate the principle of formal justice.[34]

III. A Philosophical Critique of Digital Vigilantism

The phenomenon of digital vigilantism not only raises legal and social issues but also gives rise to philosophical critiques of social punishment practices based on public opinion. One of the main critiques concerns the concept of moral panic—that is, an emotional and excessive collective response by society to an event perceived as threatening social values. In the digital realm, moral panic often spreads rapidly through social media algorithms, thereby accelerating the process of judgment without verification and without a fair legal process.[35]

Furthermore, the practice of digital vigilantism has the potential to create a "tyranny of the majority"—that is, the dominance of majority opinion that suppresses certain individuals or groups. In this situation, legitimacy no longer stems from the law, but from popularity and public pressure. This aligns with Hannah Arendt's thinking, which emphasizes that a public sphere dominated by collective emotions can erode rationality, deliberation, and justice, and open the door to undemocratic practices of power.[36]

Furthermore, digital vigilantism is closely linked to the phenomenon of cancel culture—the practice of socially excluding individuals through boycotts, labeling, and ostracism in the digital sphere. In many cases, cancel culture leaves no room for defense, thereby contradicting the principles of the presumption of innocence and due process of law.[37] If left unchecked, this situation has the potential to lead to digital authoritarianism—that is, social control stemming from public pressure, algorithms, and majority opinion, rather than from legitimate legal institutions.[38]

Thus, digital vigilantism can be viewed as a threat to the rule of law because it has the potential to shift the supremacy of law toward legitimacy based on collective emotion. Therefore, an approach is needed that balances public participation with the protection of human rights, judicial independence, and the principles of procedural justice.

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33 Tanya Mayal, "Presumption of Innocence and Dilution of Facts by Media Trials" (2021) 3:3 Int J Leg Sci Innov.

34 M Ilham Tanzilulloh, "Virality, Justice and the Principle of Blocking the Means to Evil" (2024) 16:2 Jure J Huk dan Syar'iah.

35 Stanley Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers*, 3rd ed (London: Routledge, 2002).

36 Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, 1951).

37 Sarah Sobieraj, *Credible Threat: Attacks Against Women Online and the Future of Democracy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).

38 Shoshana Zuboff, *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism* (New York: Public Affairs, 2019).

IV. A Case Study of Digital Vigilantism in Law Enforcement in Indonesia

a. The Baiq Nuril Case as a Transformation of Digital Public Opinion

The Baiq Nuril case is one of the most relevant examples for understanding how digital vigilantism shapes the direction of law enforcement in Indonesia. Baiq Nuril, a contract worker in Lombok, was convicted under the Electronic Information and Transactions Law for recording a conversation containing allegations of sexual harassment by her supervisor. The court's decision to convict her sparked a widespread public outcry on social media.[39]

Advances in digital technology have enabled the public to actively participate in advocating for justice through various platforms. Digital campaigns using hashtags, online petitions, and support from civil society groups have grown exponentially. Social media serves as a space for mobilizing solidarity, where the stories of victims and instances of legal injustice are rapidly disseminated.[40]

This public pressure subsequently led to a shift in the government's response. The president ultimately granted amnesty to Baiq Nuril following widespread public support and recommendations from state institutions. This phenomenon demonstrates that digital public opinion can serve as a form of social control over the formal legal system.[41] From a sociological perspective on law, this case illustrates how the law is influenced not only by formal procedures but also by the dynamics of social legitimacy.

However, this phenomenon also raises critical questions about the line between public participation and interference with judicial independence. If digital public pressure becomes a dominant factor in changes to legal policy, there is a risk that the legal process will be influenced more by the popularity of a narrative than by legal objectivity.

b. Cases of Abuse by Officials' Children in 2023 and the Logic of Virality

A 2023 abuse case involving the child of a high-ranking government official demonstrated how the viral spread of content on social media can accelerate the law enforcement process. Videos of the abuse, which were widely shared across various platforms, sparked public outrage and pressure on law enforcement authorities.[42] Within a short time, the case went viral and garnered national attention. The public not only demanded that the law be enforced but also highlighted issues of privilege, social inequality, and equality before the law. The video's virality served as a catalyst that accelerated the legal process, from the designation of a suspect to the arrest.[43]

This phenomenon demonstrates that social media serves as an informal oversight mechanism for law enforcement agencies. However, it also raises a normative dilemma. The agencies' swift response is often perceived as a form of justice, but it also risks creating a double standard. Cases that do not go viral often

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39 Supreme Court of the Republic of Indonesia, Decision No. 574 K/Pid.Sus/2018.
40 S E Nugroho, "Digital Activism and Public Pressure in Indonesia" (2020) J Legal Stud.
41 M McLoughlin, *Social Movements and Legal Change* (London: Routledge, 2018).
42 National media reports on the abuse case (2023).
43 H Lim, "Viral Justice and Social Media" (2021) Asian J Law Soc.

do not receive the same level of attention.[44] Thus, digital vigilantism can enhance transparency, but it can also create inequalities in access to justice. In this context, justice becomes heavily dependent on digital visibility, rather than solely on the principle of equality before the law.

c. Cases of Sexual Violence and the Digital Movement

The phenomenon of digital vigilantism is also evident in various cases of sexual violence that have gone viral on social media. Many victims choose to share their experiences through digital platforms due to a lack of trust in law enforcement and concerns about social stigma.[45] Movements like #MeToo demonstrate how social media can serve as a safe space for victims to share their experiences and build global solidarity. Although this movement originated in an international context, its impact is also felt in Indonesia, where victims are increasingly finding the courage to speak out publicly about their experiences.[46]

However, the practice of naming and shaming perpetrators also raises legal issues. Unproven allegations can permanently damage a person's reputation. In some cases, individuals' identities are disclosed without a clear legal process, leading to a conflict between protecting victims and the presumption of innocence.[47] This phenomenon highlights the ambivalence of digital vigilantism. On the one hand, it empowers victims and opens up space for public discourse. On the other hand, it has the potential to violate individual rights and foster emotional mob justice.

d. Critical Analysis of the Case Study

The three case studies above demonstrate that digital vigilantism functions as a powerful form of social control over legal institutions. Social media has become a new arena where legal legitimacy is contested through public narratives, digital solidarity, and collective pressure. However, there are several important implications. First, there is a phenomenon of selective digital justice, where cases that go viral are more likely to receive legal attention than those that do not garner public attention. Second, there is a risk of legal populism, namely the tendency for authorities to make decisions based on public pressure. Third, there is an erosion of the presumption of innocence through the practice of trial by social media. Fourth, there is a shift in the dynamics of legal power, where the digital public has become a new actor in shaping the direction of law enforcement.

Thus, digital vigilantism cannot be viewed in black-and-white terms as either a threat or a solution. It is an ambivalent phenomenon that reflects both a crisis of legal legitimacy and a transformation of public participation in the digital age.

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44 T R Tyler, *Why People Obey the Law* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

45 R Banet-Weiser, *Empowered: Popular Feminism and Popular Misogyny* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018).

46 Kaitlynn Mendes, Jessica Ringrose & Jessalynn Keller, "#MeToo and the Promise of Digital Feminism" (2019) Fem Media Stud, online: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1350506818765318>.

47 D Citron, *Hate Crimes in Cyberspace* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014).

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that digital vigilantism is a socio-legal phenomenon arising from a crisis of legitimacy in the formal legal system in the digital age, where social media is no longer merely a space for communication but also an arena for the formation of legal consciousness and the legitimization of justice. From the perspective of Lawrence M. Friedman's legal system theory and the concept of legal consciousness by Patricia Ewick and Susan S. Silbey, this phenomenon reflects society's response to perceived injustice, the slowness of legal processes, and low trust in formal institutions. From the perspective of social conflict and Pierre Bourdieu's concept of the juridical field, digital vigilantism also reveals a struggle for legitimacy between the state and the digital public, where virality and collective solidarity have become new sources of power in challenging legal authority. Case studies in Indonesia, including the Baiq Nuril case, reveal the ambivalence of this phenomenon, as it can drive transparency and state responsiveness while simultaneously risking the creation of selective justice based on digital visibility. Philosophically, digital vigilantism poses a challenge to the principle of the rule of law, as moral panic, the tyranny of the majority, cancel culture, and trial by social media have the potential to erode the presumption of innocence, due process of law, and the protection of human rights, as warned by Hannah Arendt. Therefore, a balance is needed between digital public participation and the rule of law through increased transparency, responsiveness, and the public's legal literacy and digital ethics, so that public oversight continues to support substantive justice within Indonesia's legal system.

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