Transcripts - Module 2: Video 1 - Intro to verification as process

Welcome to unit two.

In this unit we're going to focus on this idea of verification as process. As a first draft checklist show there are a number of different investigations you need to carry out on a photo or video related to its provenance, the source, the date, the location and the motivation of the person who captured the contents. As discussed you must always start by investigating the provenance of the photo or the video. If you're not working with the original all of the metadata will be completely useless. One of the most significant challenges we face when trying to do this type of work is that footage jumps from platform to platform. It's very easy to download an image or video from Facebook, Twitter or Instagram and then to upload it again either on the same platform under a different user name or on a different platform.

We call these scrapes and it's a real problem, especially during big breaking news events. And the popularity of closed messaging app such as WhatsApp, Snapchat, WeChat, Telegram, Kik, Viber, Line means that footage might be first shared amongst small groups of people in these closed networks.

Sometimes one person in that small group then takes the footage and uploads it to a public site like Twitter or Instagram, but the person sharing it publicly is not the person who originally captured the footage.

Here's an example where it has been posted on Facebook but the upload actually says in the description (Source: WhatsApp). An example we use throughout this course is the video that was shared by Anna Oren Haim during the Brussels airport attack back in March 2016. Because of her tweet, many news organizations actually used her name despite the fact that she'd posted out that correction to her original tweet.

So whenever you find an image or video, never assume you're looking at the original. Look at things like the quality of the image or video. Look at the size of the image or video. The quality of scrapes tends to be lower.

Or a scrape might appear on an account which often shares images from breaking news events. Amazingly there are actually people who do this. They curate this type of footage. But no one can be an eyewitness at every use event. So if you see that, obviously be suspicious.

And while this isn't always true. If you find an image or video being posted on an organizational Web site is often not the case that they originally captured it. They will often reshare footage from an individual eyewitness.

In this unit you'll learn some techniques for identifying scrapes but before you run any tests check your gut. Does it seem likely that this person was at the event and is sharing the original. Work your way through the lesson. And don't forget to take a look at the reading list.