

Trust and verification in an age of misinformation (Final Thoughts)

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Okay, we've come to the end of our course now. I hope it's been really bad will for you. It's been a tremendous experience for me and I want to thank all of you for participating and being so enthusiastic and adding so much valuable material and valuable commentary in the forms in the questions. It's really been wonderful and we have people in this course from over a hundred different countries. I'm just so excited to think about how you might be able to apply some of the stuff we've gone through to your work whether you were journalists are working some other area. So that's the first thing is thank you very much for your participation.

I just want recap a few things that I think are really important for everyone to take away from this. The first thing I tried to emphasize again and again is the human element in all this. We are talking about complicated things like algorithms and platforms and talking about ethics and trust and at the end of the day it's human to humans and it's also human to institution. Human to that news organization and so much of our work is about finding people to tell us, finding you know talk to us finding stories that we can represent two other people. But also when it comes to this elements of trust and transparency when it come to why misinformation spread so much. So much of it is about human nature, human psychology, human interaction, and just keep that human centered thinking and approach and everything you do. That's the first important thing.

The next is our new media environment. There's so many more voices now which is great more sources and of course there are also some challenges in it. I hope that at the end of this course you feel like you're better able to take advantage of the opportunities around sources and verification and tracking and all those things now. So that when you look at this media environment you don't feel helpless, you feel like you're someone who can actually help guide people you feel like you're someone who can sift through and figure out what's going on. Because we need more of those people. It's really important.

The other thing that I want to emphasize along with the human piece is that one of the themes I think is looking really on it some of the principles that were established in developed a journalism and how they still apply to today. Even in this much more complicated environment. Things like you know doing doing your work and talking to people and dealing with them honestly. Representing where your information came from and how you went about that process. Being ethical according to the standards that were established along time ago this stuff doesn't change. In some ways needs to be reinterpreted and some ways reapplied. I think we talked about that a little bit in terms of things like

Corrections. In terms of how they've been weaponized but at the end of the day admitting our mistakes is still a really important powerful thing.

The last thing I want to say is that at the end of this course you're now equipped to be somebody who can help others in this new information environment. You now have some skills that a lot of people don't. You have an understanding of the context of what we're all operate again. I want you to apply that. One in terms of how you will go about your daily work of gathering and verifying information and is you as a consumer of information realizing that you have a responsibility and a power now that everything that you engage with, specially in social networks, you are sending signals to the system's. When you retweet something, when you like, when you share something. There are often algorithms looking at that and determining that signal and saying well maybe I need to show this to more people. So use your power and your responsibility to help good stuff spread. Use your power and your responsibility to knock down false information.

The last thing I want to say is just for the journalist to realize that one of the things that's really changed is we do have to engage with information that is false more often and we have engage with information that is in between true and false. So you need to help guide people and say to them “this is currently and verified and we're looking into it” you need to say this is spreading and it's false. In the past, we ignore things that were false. We worked on things that were in that gray zone to trying figure out if we could publish it. But now because it isn't often cases by default public and spreading we need to engage with unverified and false information. We need to help people navigate this universe and we need to do our work in a basic ethical manner in order to give people quality information and I do believe that is meant as much as there are challenges in this environment right now and I'm realistic about them. I believe that fundamentally doing good journalism being accountable being human and accessible and collaborative on social media and elsewhere are all strong paths to building trust in a world full of a lot of disinformation and misinformation,

So thanks again for your participation and I hope will be in touch.

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