

DIGITAL MEDIA ETHICS

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Lecture 9

جامعة الجميع الذكية

تسعى لتكون الكيان الأول الذي يتبنى مبدأ المجتمع التعليمي
التعاوني ويقدم العلم مقابل العمل لتنمية وبناء المجتمعات.

DGM723

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Digital Media Ethics: Overview, Frameworks, Resources

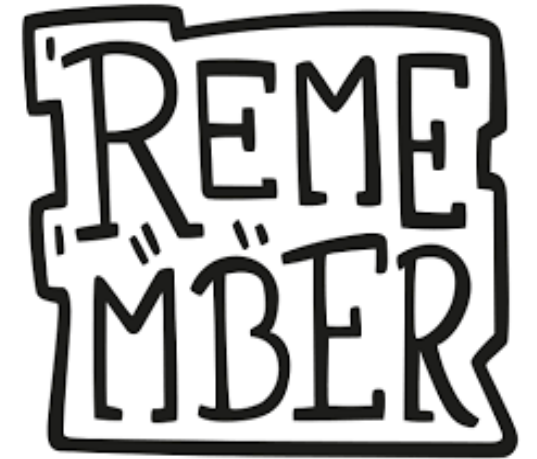
Remember

**** Fake news on Social Media: the Impact on Society:**

- What is Fake News?
- Fake News Spread, and Social Media
- Contributors of fake news.

**** Five types of misinformation:**

- 1- Satire. 2- False context. 3- Imposter content.
- 4- Fabricated content. 5- Manipulated content.
- Examples of Fake news from Arabic Websites



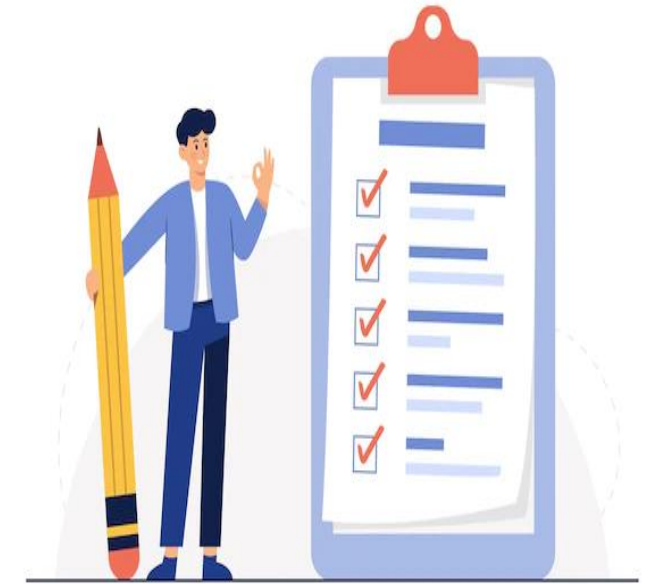
**** Digital media ethics: an overview**

- A revolution in ethics.
- Tensions on two levels.
- What would an integrated ethics look like?

**** Difficult questions for digital media ethics**

- Who is a journalist?
- What is journalism?

**** Ethical guidelines for online journalism**



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Digital media ethics: an overview

A revolution in ethics

Digital media ethics deals with the distinct ethical problems, practices and norms of digital news media.

Digital news media includes ¹online journalism, ²blogging, ³digital photojournalism, ⁴citizen journalism and ⁵social media. It includes questions about how professional journalism should use this 'new media' to research and publish stories, as well as how to use text or images provided by citizens.



A revolution in ethics

A media revolution is transforming, fundamentally and irrevocably, the nature of journalism and its ethics.

The means to publish is NOW in the hands of citizens, while the internet encourages new forms of journalism that are interactive and immediate.



MEDIA REVOLUTION

A revolution in ethics



Our media ecology is a chaotic landscape evolving at a furious pace. Professional journalists share the journalistic sphere with tweeters, bloggers, citizen journalists, and social media users.

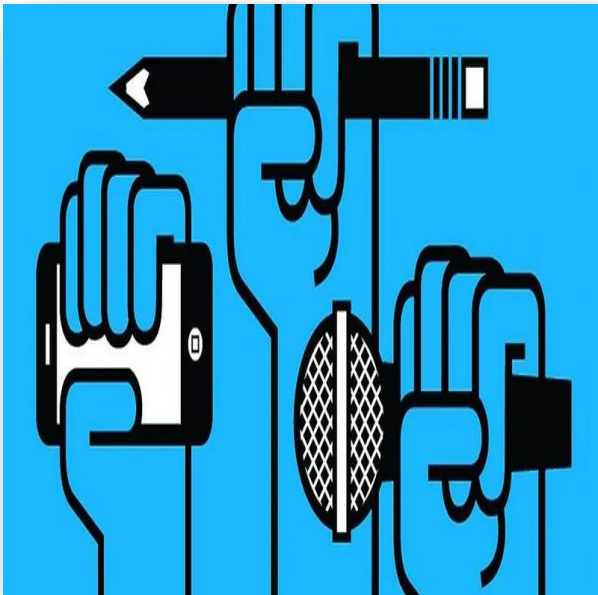
A revolution in ethics

Amid every revolution, **new possibilities** emerge while **old practices** are threatened. Today is no exception. The **economics** of **professional journalism** **struggles** as audiences migrate online.

Shrinkage of **newsrooms** creates concern for the future of journalism. Yet these fears also prompt experiments in journalism, such as non-profit centers of investigative journalism.



A revolution in ethics



A central question is to what extent existing media ethics is suitable for today's and tomorrow's news media that is immediate, interactive and "always on" – a journalism of amateurs and professionals.

Most of the principles were developed over the past century, originating in the construction of professional, objective ethics for mass commercial newspapers in the late 19th century.

A revolution in ethics

We are moving towards a **mixed news media** – a **news media citizen** and **professional journalism** across many media platforms. **This new mixed news media requires a new mixed media ethics** – **guidelines that apply to **amateur** and **professional** whether they blog, Tweet, broadcast or write for newspapers.**

Media ethics needs to be rethought and reinvented for the media of today, not of yesterday.



Tensions on two levels



The **changes challenge** the foundations of media ethics. The challenge runs deeper than debates about one or another principle, such as objectivity.

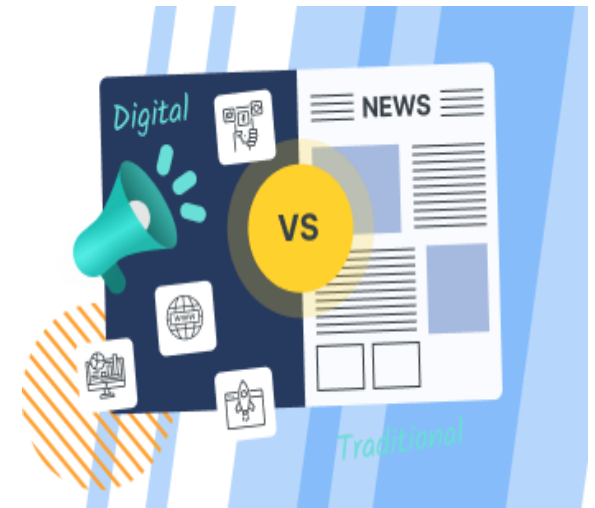
The **challenge is greater than specific problems**, such as how newsrooms can verify content from citizens. The revolution requires us to **rethink assumptions**. What can ethics mean for a profession that must provide instant news and analysis; where everyone with a modem is a publisher?

Tensions on two levels

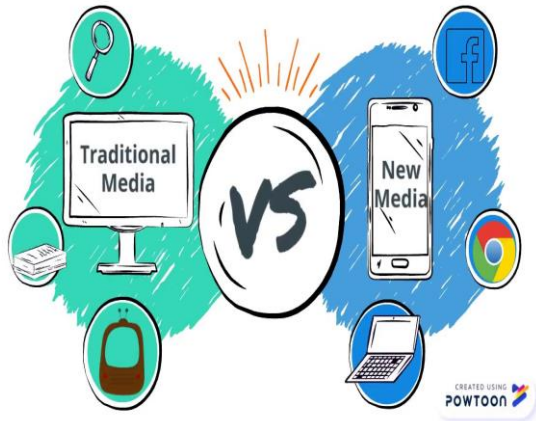
The media revolution has created ethical tensions on two levels:

On the first level, there is a tension between traditional journalism and online journalism.

The culture of traditional journalism, with its values of accuracy, pre-publication verification, balance, impartiality, and gate-keeping, **RUBS UP** against the culture of online journalism which emphasizes immediacy, transparency, partiality, non-professional journalists and post-publication correction.



Tensions on two levels



On the second level, there is a tension between **parochial** and **global journalism**.

If journalism has global impact, what are its global responsibilities?
Should media ethics reformulate its aims and norms so as to guide a **journalism** that is **now global in reach and impact**? What would that look like?

Tensions on two levels

The challenge for today's media ethics can be summarized by the question: **Whither ethics in a world of multi-media, global journalism?**

Media ethics must do more than point out these tensions.
Theoretically, it must untangle the conflicts between values. It must decide which principles should be preserved or invented. Practically, it should provide new standards to guide online or offline journalism.



What would an integrated ethics look like?

It will be the ethics of the integrated newsroom, a newsroom that practices layered journalism. Layered journalism brings together different forms of journalism and different types of journalists to produce a multi-media offering of professional-styled news and analysis combined with citizen journalism and interactive chat.



What would an integrated ethics look like?

The newsroom will be layered vertically and horizontally.

Vertically, there will be many layers of editorial positions. There will be citizen journalists and bloggers IN the newsroom, or closely associated with the newsroom.

Many contributors will work from countries around the world.

Some will write for free, some will be equivalent to paid freelancers, others will be regular commentators.



What would an integrated ethics look like?

In addition, there will be different types of Editors. Some editors will work with these new journalists, while other editors will deal with unsolicited images and text sent by citizens via email, web sites, and twitter.

There will be editors or “community producers” charged with going out to neighborhoods to help citizens use media to produce their own stories.



What would an integrated ethics look like?

Horizontally, the future newsroom will be layered in terms of the kinds of journalism it produces, from print and broadcast sections to online production centers.

Newsrooms in the past have had vertical and horizontal layers. Newspaper newsrooms have ranged vertically from the editor in-chief at the top to the cub reporter on the bottom.



What would an integrated ethics look like?

Layered journalism will confront two types of problems. **First**, there will be 'vertical' ethical questions about how the different layers of the newsroom, from professional editors to citizen freelancers, should interact to produce responsible journalism. For example, by what standards will professional editors evaluate the contributions of citizen journalists? **Second**, there will be 'horizontal' questions about the norms for the various newsroom sections.



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Difficult questions for digital media ethics

Who is a journalist?

The 'democratization' of media – technology that allows citizens to engage in journalism and publication of many kinds – blurs the identity of journalists and the idea of what constitutes journalism.

In the previous century, journalists were a clearly defined group. For the most part, they were professionals who wrote for major mainstream newspapers and broadcasters. The public had no great difficulty in identifying members of the “press.”



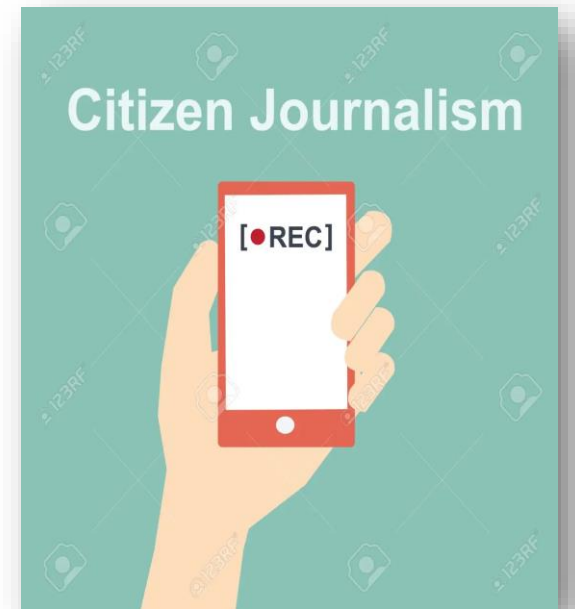
Who is a journalist?



Today, citizens without journalistic training and who do not work for mainstream media calls themselves journalists, or write in ways that fall under the general description of a journalists as someone who regularly writes on public issues for a public or audience.

Who is a journalist?

Citizen journalists are "the people formerly known as the audience," who were on the receiving end of a media system that ran one way, in a broadcasting pattern, with high entry fees and a few firms competing to speak very loudly while the rest of the population listened in isolation from one another— and who today are not in a situation like that at all. ... The people formerly known as the audience are simply the public made realer, less fictional, more able, less predictable.



Who is a journalist?



Social media platforms such as blogs, YouTube, and Twitter encourage and facilitate engagement with other citizens who participate in creating content through commenting, liking, linking, and sharing. The majority of the content produced by these amateur news bloggers was **NOT** original content, but curated information monitored and edited by these various bloggers. There has been a decline in the amateur news blogger due to social media platforms that are much easier to run and maintain, allowing individuals to easily share and create and content.

What is journalism?

A lack of clarity over who is a **journalist** leads to **definitional disputes** over **who is doing journalism**. That leads to the question: **What is journalism?**

Many people believe, “What is journalism?” or “Is he or she doing journalism?” is a more important question than whether who can call themselves a journalist.



What is journalism?

At least **three approaches** to this question are possible – **skeptical, empirical, and normative.**



Skeptically, one dismisses the question itself as unimportant.

For example, one might say that anyone can be a journalist, and it is not worth arguing over who gets to call themselves a journalist. One is **skeptical** about attempts to define journalism.

What is journalism?

Empirically, there is a more systematic and careful approach to the question. We can look at clear examples of journalism over history and note the types of activities in which journalists engaged, e.g. **gathering information**, **editing stories**, **publishing news** and **opinion**. Then we use these features to provide a definition of journalism that separates it from novel writing, storytelling, or editing information for a government database.



What is journalism?

The normative approach insists that writers should not be called journalists unless they have highly developed skills, acquired usually through training or formal education, and unless they honor certain ethical norms.



The skills include investigative capabilities, research skills, facility with media, technology of media, knowledge of how institutions work, and highly developed communication skills. The ethical norms include a commitment to accuracy, verification, truth, and so on.

What is journalism?



The **normative approach** is based on an **ideal view** of **journalism** as **accurately** and **responsibly** informing the public.
One defines journalism by considering the best examples of journalism and the practices of the best journalists.

What is journalism?

A **writer** who has these **skills** and these **ethical commitments** is **capable** of **publishing good** (well-crafted, well-researched) and **ethically responsible journalism**.

Persons who do not meet these normative requirements may call themselves journalists **BUT** they are not considered journalists from this normative perspective. They are at irresponsible, second-rate, or incompetent writers seeking to be journalists, or pretending to be journalists.



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Ethical guidelines for online journalism

1- As a **general principle**, online journalism must **respect all professional ethics** and **core values of journalism**, information published by online media must be:

- Accurate and fact-based.
- Verified and published without sensationalism.
- Published without intent to do harm to others.
- Inclusive of all relevant points of view and impartial.
- Verified its veracity, Integrity and Credibility.
- Keeping watch of the Intellectual property rights.





2- Journalists and media should always respect the dignity, reputation and privacy of individuals.

3- The editors or operators of websites should not publish any material online, written or visual, that incites hatred or violence, or causes direct or indirect discrimination on the basis of gender, age, marital status, language, political conviction, religion, or ethnic or social status.

- 4- Forums dedicated primarily to children and young adults should be monitored with special care and attention.
- 5- There should be a clear distinction between editorial content and forums reserved for user generated content.





6- Care should be **exercised** to **ensure** that **hyperlinks** used in website content do not **direct users** to **other sites** that contain deliberately harmful and false information or that do not respect the Journalism Code of Ethics.

7- Editors or website operators should take measures to prevent or stop publication of content that is unlawful, or violates human dignity or privacy, or constitutes hate speech.

8- Editors and website operators should adopt and prominently publish on their websites their third-party content management policies.





9- Editors or website operators should make available to users a simple mechanism to report third-party content that users consider unlawful or in violation of website policies.

10- Establishing a system of prior or expedited moderation for specific topics that may generate a significant amount of extreme or inappropriate commentary.

- 11- Those guidelines are also valid, to the **extent** they may be **applicable**, for the **media outlets' social media pages**.
- 12- **Editors or website operators** should **adopt** effective **mechanisms** for **reviewing** public complaints or reports about material that may be **unlawful** or in **violation** of website policies.





Ethics

13- As a rule, **editors** or **operators** should take **action** on **complaints** as soon as possible and no later than within 48 hours.

14- **Editors** may **temporarily** disable **contested content** in cases that require further consideration. Whenever possible and provided the relevant third-party content is not manifestly illegal, editors should make efforts to contact the author of such content, inviting them to provide their views on the received complaint. Editors may reinstate any disabled content if they are satisfied that it is accurate and lawful.

15- Personal photographs, videos or written material published on social media are also considered to be in the public domain, and their use by the mass media exposes them to a potentially wider audience. Photographs and video taken from social media should be carefully scrutinized and verified to establish their authenticity.





- 16- The facility of obtaining images from social networks or personal pages does not exempt media from their duty of care.
- 17- Media should always be alert to the dangers of publishing images showing unlawful or anti-social behavior.

18- Online media should, to **the fullest extent possible**, maintain **online archives** of their published content. Permanent archive materials contribute to the preservation of the historical record and should be redacted or taken down only in exceptional circumstances.



Morals



19- The principles of the Code of Ethics on compliance with copyright apply fully to online publications. The repeated republication of content and other material produced by other media, without their permission or appropriate attribution is a violation of copyright and considered a serious infringement of journalistic ethics.

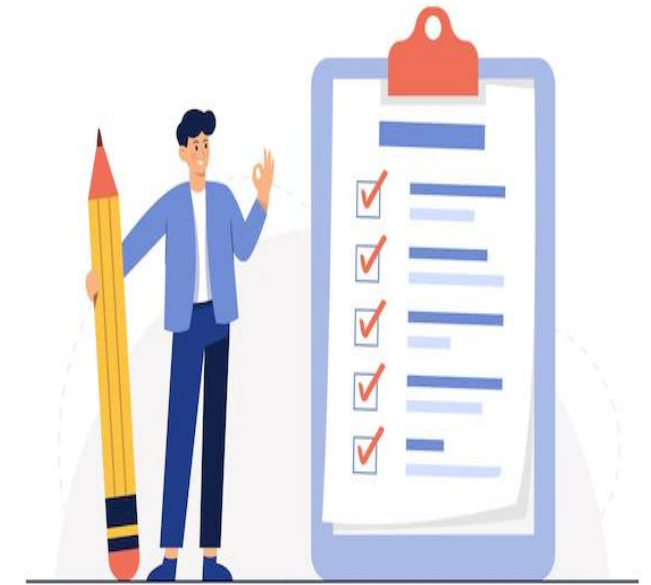
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*Thank you
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