**Lesson Title:** Fighting Rumors – What’s the role of newsrooms?

**Description of the lesson:** There’s no doubt the power behind a rumor and false news. Even after it’s debunked, one could argue that its original audience has already been impacted. What can news agencies -- or individual journalists --- do to counteract real-time false information that spreads during breaking news coverage? Is it up to the newsrooms or the consumers?

**Objectives*by the end of this lessons, students will be able to ..***

* Understand the impact of rumors and false news in journalism
* Brainstorm ideas to help fight against the spreading of false news.

**Procedures:**

Before beginning, read the following:

* + - [Too little too late: The horror of Paris proves the media need to debunk rumours in real time](https://medium.com/1st-draft/too-little-too-late-the-horror-of-paris-proves-the-media-need-to-debunk-rumours-in-real-time-2d52da2a6eb0)
		- [What Social Media Got Wrong About the Paris Attacks](https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/11/paris-attacks-hoaxes-false-rumors-images/416043/)

**ACTIVITY**

* In small groups, identify the problems based on your readings and discussion on the issues associated with leaving a rumor unattended.
	+ How do rumors start or spread?
	+ Who is impacted by the rumor?
	+ Is the damage done immediately?
* In the same groups, identify what newsrooms can do to fight against or tackle real-time rumors. Address the following questions:
	+ When should a rumor be addressed? How should newsrooms react?
		- Should newsrooms retweet the information with a note about its unconfirmed status?
		- Should newsrooms dedicate a “breaking news” team to address rumors and tackle the messages before it spreads further?
* Create a list of advantages and disadvantages associated with whether newsrooms hold the responsibility to address the rumors? Why or why not? If it’s not their responsibility, is it part of their social role to help citizens identify what’s true and false?