Abstract

In a turbulent era for journalism, America's overall trust in the news media has been declining for decades. While that trust has recently returned (and even grown) among some groups, opinions about the press have become another issue polarizing the nation. But beyond the debates about "fake news" and the Twitter posts celebrating mass newsroom layoffs, there are real journalists--real people--fighting to keep their jobs and show how much they care about telling important stories. In this project, I analyze some of the main factors causing public opinions about journalism to shift (including new technologies, divided politics, and changing newsrooms), then reference conversations with media experts to explain why the drop in trust could be dangerous to democracy. And as the primary purpose for this project was to discover what it might take for journalists to regain trust, I conclude with a guide about focusing on transparency, diversity, and community in the newsroom.