

Informed and Engaged Ep. 18 - English

[00:02:51] Hello, thanks for making time for us. I'm Karen Rundlet, Knight Foundation journalism director. I am so excited about today's program. Every year, the leaders at the Nieman Journalism Lab ask a question about the coming year. It's simple.

[00:03:07] They ask, what do you think the New Year will bring for the future of news and journalism? Except this year we are going through twenty twenty. The twenty twenty year journalists covered a global pandemic and a turbulent economy the year we saw massive protests for racial justice around the world and newsrooms examining their own records of racism, a year of hurricanes and fires, and a national election with the highest turnout in U.S. history, one that's still being contested. To talk about 2020 and the future of an informed nation are Nieman Lab editor Laura Hazard Owen and senior writer Josh Benton joining us. So, Laura, why don't we start with you. Let's just set the stage. Journalism as an industry has really been ravaged by the pandemic, specifically advertising. So why don't you just tell us what does digital media, news journalism look like right now?

[00:04:14] Sure. Yeah. So it's been a crazy year. There have been, sadly, thousands of thousands of newsroom layoffs and furloughs, partly due to the pandemic and partly just due to sort of the continuing trends that we see as a lot of news organizations can't make it in the transition to digital.

[00:04:36] We see people have less free money for you to pay for the subscriptions that so many news organizations are counting on.

[00:04:47] Now we have newspapers consolidating hedge funds that are not the best owners buying them up. We have a racial reckoning going on in newsrooms and across the country.

[00:05:01] It's been a big year. And then, of course, there's the election, which I mean probably one of the most consequential elections of our lifetimes. News organizations trying to figure out how to cover a president who refuses to concede and who has done more to spread false information than probably any, you know, any other source in the country right now.

[00:05:31] It's coming from the top. So it's been it's been a busy and weird year.

[00:05:38] So obviously, that's really heavy. Are there some promising new entrants to the field at this point?

[00:05:47] Yeah, so I see a couple of bright spots. One of those is that there are news oriented news organizations that are doing super well.

[00:05:58] The Atlantic would be one success story with just it's really fabulous and interesting reporting around covid and tracking that data. The New York Times has more digital subscribers than ever.

[00:06:13] We've seen some new newsroom, new digital newsrooms launch like the 19th, which focuses on women and politics in the United States. So there's definitely been bright spots amid all the bad news this year.

[00:06:30] Thanks, Josh, so Nieman Lab has been collecting predictions since 2011. You coming up on a 10 year anniversary? So let's just start with who makes these predictions and how do you select them?

[00:06:43] Well, it started out with a very small package of maybe 20 or 30 people who I sent an email to and said, hey, you got any thoughts for the New Year? Over time, it grew and expanded into the megalith. And it has sort of become we now publish over a hundred predictions a year. I have a massive spreadsheet of a few hundred names that that get an invite every year throughout the year. We do our best to try and notice new people. We have a channel in our slack where we are constantly noting this is an interesting person. Let's let's invite so-and-so to give a prediction this year. And as you said, it's a pretty open request. I will acknowledge that many of the many of them are less predictions than sort of wish ideations there. They're describing where we think we should go as opposed to where we are going. But I think that's probably more useful as an industry exercise than just saying advertising's probably going to drop again next year.

[00:07:40] Yes, absolutely, I know there's no right or wrong with these, you both emphasized that, Laura, are there one or two trends that you think leaders have been focused on in recent years?

[00:07:50] And then I want to hear from Josh on that. But, Laura, what are your thoughts?

[00:07:53] Yeah, I think a couple of trends that came up last year that we have definitely seen just so much around this year.

[00:08:00] So one of them was about these changing notions of objectivity in newsrooms, in this reckoning around race. How can we expect reporters of color to report on these issues in a so-called beautiful way like that is something that we saw sort of get into that a lot in the predictions last year.

[00:08:25] And I think it was such an important issue this year with the Black Lives Matter protests across the country in newsrooms, just trying to figure out, like, how to cover them.

[00:08:36] Another trend, I think that we saw a bit of, you know, Laura, we actually have one of the predictions. Why don't we just pop that up from Tonya Mosley, since you just basically shared that with everyone is really important.

[00:08:53] Do we have that?

[00:08:56] From NPR, yes, just as USLAW was saying, this is from 20-20 Tonya saying, Trust me, every person of color in your newsroom has a story about how a manager questioned either their news, judgment, their diction, or whether they could be neutral or objective. Laura, please continue. I just want to make sure we saw that.

[00:09:15] Sure. Yeah.

[00:09:16] So I think one of the things that we've been forced to do this year that I hope more newsrooms are doing, too, is thinking about what is objectivity really do mean who defines it? And it is if there's no there's sort of like you can't think of the best way to talk about this. I don't think you can ask people to be, quote unquote, neutral about things that affect their own lives so directly. So maybe if you're a white man, you feel as if you can report on protests on a very racist president and his supporters. Maybe you'd feel as if you

can report on that in a neutral way because it doesn't affect your own life very much at all for the people who are actually dealing with these issues every day who are shaped by them. I think that we just really need to change sort of the idea of the kind of experiences that we that we want reporters to bring into their reporting. We always aren't reporting, to be fair, but I think this idea of being objective is something that really needs to be examined on something that probably needs to be less emphasized. Everybody has everybody has a view. Everybody comes from somewhere. And I think just acknowledging that would help us go a long way.

[00:10:41] OK, I think, though, that Tony Tony was sort of expressing to that don't necessarily.

[00:10:49] Her words are very much about don't necessarily.

[00:10:55] You know, don't necessarily pigeonhole me around, don't necessarily question my news judgment.

[00:11:00] That's one thing she pointed out, Josh.

[00:11:05] I'd really like to hear sort of one of the surprising trends that you've got. I mean, you've been with this for so long. What are the surprising trends that you're sort of noticing?

[00:11:12] And I would I would note that the the we saw an increase in the number of predictions that were related to diversity issues, two, to discrimination in the workplace, issues and diversity and coverage issues several years ago was sort of an early warning for what really blossomed more broadly this this year. And a lot they sort of split between or they contain both the micro level, the interactions of an individual employee and the interaction sort of along the lines of what Tony Mosley wrote about, as well as the broader implications of what it means to be informing a public with a blinkered set of of informers. I suppose. You know, I think we've seen trends go up and down over the years. Some of them have matched along with technologies as they become hot or cold. We certainly saw a wave of interest in VR a few years ago that has tapered off, but we don't see very many of those anymore. We've had quite a few block chain predictions a few years ago, and those didn't didn't go very far.

[00:12:12] I think that there's a lot of there are lots of debates around business model issues. I think you're getting you can map the growth in the interest of paid models, you know, digital subscriptions being important. And I think you've also seen some back and forth around the issues of journalists going independent. This was the sort of thing that would have been discussed in a blogging context 10 years ago, more this year. It's more in the context of newsletters and substance, which in some ways is repeating a lot of the same journeys that we've been through. So it's we try our best to draw from a very wide range of people, from journalists and academics and technologists and researchers. And we hope that we're getting something like a high level, 30000 foot view of the field.

[00:13:04] Great. Thank you. I just want to point to a couple of other really interesting predictions that came from last year. You know, there was a very different kind of election this year.

[00:13:17] Many of us were home. There was much more early voting. There was mail in voting. And there is a prediction that came from Madeleine Sanfilippo and Yaphet love threats from companies, Kinney's Bard College and Princeton.

[00:13:34] And that really talked about coverage of twenty twenty and gerrymandered news coverage as hyper personalization and geo targeting are applied at scale and news apps and mobile push notifications. I thought there was some really interesting tensions between the local conversation, the state conversation, the national conversation about how we received information from different leaders and how that played out in the election. So what can you tell me from your reporting, Josh, about this particular prediction?

[00:14:08] Sure. I don't think that we saw a huge rise in the specific technological context of that prediction was addressing the use of news apps and push notifications, primarily because most people don't use any news apps and most people don't rely on new push notifications to get their news. Last statistic I saw was only 19 percent of Americans said that they had gotten it learned about a news story through a push notification in the past week. And a lot of those people tend to be more engaged voters who probably have no idea what they're what they're trying to do, whether they want to vote for. I do think you saw a version of that, though, with the rise of text messaging. I think lots of us received lots and lots of text notifications, text messages from campaigns, from volunteers were text banking and cell phone banking. As we've seen the polling industry respond to the shift to mobile phones over the last two decades. And we've seen the difficulties that is created in their methodologies. I think you've seen campaigns wanting to make a similar sort of move into it, into texting where phones would have been the method before. You know, and I think that you're right that we saw that the experience of being a candidate in Atlanta is different from for being a voter excuse me, and in Atlanta is different from being in Cambridge, Massachusetts. You know, the best thing that gets sent to you is still is very, very tailored. I think campaigns did find, though, that is still a lot easier to tailor those messages on Facebook or on Twitter or on YouTube, where the enormous amount of customer of customer data to those platforms have has for good and for ill. And they had a lot of very direct targeting.

[00:15:50] Great, so let's turn now to some of our twenty twenty one predictions, you know, at night we're very concerned and focused on local journalism and local news and repairing that and strengthening that and the future of it.

[00:16:09] Let's just talk about some of the predictions. I mean, one that I'm familiar with, and it comes from Rachel Shulem at the deputy editor for Digital at Fortune, the rise of nonprofit journalism. You see what she says here is anyone who has attempted to be a change maker in a storied workplace knows it's easier to build what you want from the ground up than attempt to change the processes, priorities and personnel in an existing structure. Now, there's real tension going on in the field between the idea of whether a nonprofit is the way to go versus a for profit. You can some we talked about digital transition transformation right at the top of this hour. Are the organizations that exist or are they able to do enough fast enough to be competitive? So, Laura, can you talk a little bit about more nonprofit news and what's going on with for profit organizations, the black press legacy newspapers?

[00:17:14] Sure.

[00:17:14] So I think it's definitely easier, as Rachael points out in her prediction, to to to sort of think about these issues when you're starting from the ground up and when you're

trying to turn a massive news organization around. It can be done both in both ways. And I think we're seeing news organizations grapple with that large and small ones. But it's easier if you're sort of building it from the beginning to talk about it, I think, and to sort of work out solutions for it. I think something that I think that's been interesting with nonprofit news organizations that we've seen launched this year is that they have been focused more on audiences that maybe haven't been targeted as much in the past. So the 19th focusing specifically on women and politics, Capital B, which is launching in twenty twenty one, focusing on specifically on black audiences. These are some you know, I think I think some nonprofit news organizations.

[00:18:24] In the past have been focused sort of more on that demands in the past have focused on sort of individual topics, things like criminal justice and education and things like that.

[00:18:34] And I think it's interesting to see these new ones come up that are attempting to reach new audiences in different ways.

[00:18:44] We have a question we have a question from Trista Thurston about maybe what you're seeing for smaller newsrooms and local newsrooms, I think that small and local newsrooms have definitely struggled this year.

[00:18:57] I think, like in a lot of ways, small local newsrooms have been hit the hardest by some of the advertising losses around covid just because they had you know, they have less of a cushion. They have less less of a safety net. And so some smaller news organizations have closed. Some local news outlets have closed just because of lack of funding.

[00:19:22] And it's you know, it's it's tough out there.

[00:19:27] I think we've seen a few sort of interesting start ups in this area. One of them is Vote Beat, which was launched by the founder of Vote B is focusing on sort of granular reporting around local elections, being very nimble and putting reporters.

[00:19:52] In communities around the country to vote on sort of like the election and its aftermath, maybe replacing some of the kinds of reporting that larger news publications have, I've just had to cut out. And so I think it's interesting to see sort of ways to be creative about that and local reporters and places where maybe they hadn't been able to be tied to funding issues previously.

[00:20:19] OK, we are taking questions from the audience, so we've already gotten one from Trista's, so Trista Thurston.

[00:20:25] So if anybody else wants to join in, please do OK. Josh, let's look at another. You've got you have about 18 posted at the moment, somewhere around there. Yeah.

[00:20:41] OK, so some of the goes over the next week and a half.

[00:20:45] Of course they you post them as they come out.

[00:20:49] So Mark Steinberg, a reporter for Business Insider, we have a prediction from him and he basically says, I'd notice that the difference between influencers, creators and journalists seem to shrink every time I check on it. Reporting on not just sub stock, but

Patreon, Cameo, Twitch and only fans, I find myself struck more by the similarities than the distinctions between entertainers, artists, journalists. So, Josh, if you could talk a little bit about the reporting and there's been a lot of conversation about independence, as you said, and Substory. How is your reporting, sort of what does your reporting have to say about this trend?

[00:21:32] You know, it's interesting. I thought that was an interesting prediction by Mark. And I think it's true on one level and maybe not as true on another, in the same way that an individual celebrity might be making money on the side by doing cameos for 30 bucks a pop or 50 bucks a pop or whatever it may be. Those celebrities still work in movies or work in a TV show or work within the context of a larger organization that has a corporate entity that has licensing deals. The independent part of the entertainment business and the sort that Mark is talking about is significant, but it's still much smaller than the institutionalized business that these folks are being a part of as well. And I think what he's identifying correctly is that the balance between those two is forever shifting. You know, if you wanted to be an independent actor as a journalist 40 years ago, even a freelancer then was still reliant on publications to take their articles and to pay them every once in a while. This year, I have students starting our own newsletter, something like that. The path to true independence was a very, very logistically difficult one. Now it's available. And that means for certain people, those who have an existing following that they can bring with them, those who have a specific type of reporting and or commentary they do that is attractive to the marketplace. And that is the sort of work that can be readily monetized. Great, but still only a share of the tens of thousands of people who do important journalistic work in this country. And I think for those folks, the institutional model is still going to be the main way to go for some time.

[00:23:23] OK, I also wanted to mention another prediction that we have here from Aaron Foley, which we talked about.

[00:23:35] We've talked about race, we've talked about the conversation in newsrooms, some of it very heated, very angry, and Aaron is actually talking about a solution that could really help young, diverse journalists.

[00:23:55] And he talks about joint ventures and reporting collaborations, not operating agreements between general market publications and community weeklies in metro dailies. Would you talk a little, Laura? Would you talk a little bit about.

[00:24:14] Those trends and how they're playing out.

[00:24:16] Absolutely, I think partnerships are an amazing way, both for larger news organizations to. Publish some coverage that they may not have reporters covering to get just to broaden and broaden the scope of what they publish, and it's a great way for the smaller news organizations that are reporting these stories to get more eyeballs on their work. I mean, I think we've seen all kinds of news organizations doing this. So it's not just those, you know, community weeklies. It's, you know, places like ProPublica that are doing these joint publishing collaborations with other news organizations, things like that.

[00:24:59] I think partnerships are just a great way to get more work in front of more readers, partly because, you know, it's not that not as if people really go to homepages very much anymore and people are not even probably getting like most people are not going to the New York Times homepage, even, for example, every day. But they're definitely not going to the home page of these small nonprofits and local news sites

and things like that. So getting these work, this work in front of more people, I think is a great thing. I think something that you want to be careful of in these partnerships and we've seen this in our reporting on sort of like the logistics of just how this works and sort of what some of the pitfalls can be. What's the sort of pain points can be, is to just have the partners be very communicative about sort of what they both are wanting to get out of this and to sort of be talking about what this what these partnerships are going to look like so that one side or the other, you know, doesn't come away feeling resentful or that the smaller organization doesn't come away feeling as if its content is being used without any real benefit.

[00:26:20] Yeah, definitely in the research and the that we've done, we've definitely seen the stronger partnerships, they really have a memorandum of understanding up front to really make sure that there is equity there. And the I would like to go to another prediction that we have here.

[00:26:42] And again, this is from Ben or Muehler, product developer and open web advocate in place of the monolithic super platforms that were the hallmark of using the Internet over the last decade.

[00:26:59] We see as we see smaller independent publications and websites that address the needs of their communities more closely across our devices. We will have a single place to read all our newsletters, subscriptions powered by feeds and email.

[00:27:13] Again, we talked about the theme of independents, Josh, and what this sort of looks like. This sort of points to that as well. Would you share some of that again? Would you share some of the reporting around this trend?

[00:27:31] Sure, yeah. It's in some ways it's a it's an attempt to revive what we had with RSS readers and Google Reader about a 10 or 15 years ago. You know, I think it is I'm perhaps not as optimistic as has been is about the idea that people will flee Facebook and Twitter and YouTube and all of the giant platforms that have established so much cultural power and financial power over the past 10 or 15 years. It would certainly be an improvement, I think, if people did move towards smaller communities, smaller platforms, more dedicated to specific tasks or specific cultures, whatever it may be. I just don't know if that is a trend that can be that is easily stopped, is easily prevented from being eaten by one of those giant tech companies. I mean, what is the closest equivalent to that right now? Probably Facebook groups, which is part of the megalith, but is nonetheless to offer this smaller social experience within it. There's still a lot of forces trending towards aggregating power in those few companies in Northern California. You know, one thing that I think will be very interesting for twenty twenty one, I see the prediction about it yet, but is what will happen with antitrust enforcement, Google and Facebook if there's anything that is going to reverse those? But the giant sucking sound, as Ross Perot might have put it, going towards Silicon Valley, I would think it would have to be something coming out of DC and coming out of Brussels.

[00:29:07] I would love to just jump in quickly with one more thing about that, mentioning the markup, which is another very success story, a newsroom that launched this year, that sort of looking at algorithms and the kind of things that tech companies don't show us how those are impacting our daily lives. I think it's interesting to think about how people are still reading and subscribing to these newsletters, which is through Gmail. And you can subscribe all you want. I have a bunch of newsletters that I subscribe to on some stock that I would that I would like to have in front of me every day. And you still see that Gmail

filters things out. It hides things. It doesn't necessarily put the things that you subscribe to right in front of you. And I think it's sort of a reminder of how you can sort of seek the stuff out to an extent and you can grab and you can support it. And even then, there are going to be sort of tech companies kind of in the way. I don't know that we've really completely achieved this vision of having content just come directly to you. There's still sort of an intermediary. And so that's something I'm thinking about with this prediction is like, how do I make sure even if I want to subscribe to all these newsletters and get them how to like what is the best way for me actually to be reading them?

[00:30:30] We have a couple of questions from the audience, Laura, specifically, do you were talking about not the best owners and there is a question just around, not the best owners buying newspapers and newspaper chains. So how do you do that? A little bit more clarity on how do you define a bad owner?

[00:30:50] Oh, sure. I mean, I guess I should probably just say that I think hedge funds are bad owners for four newspapers. That's the trend that we're seeing, is that hedge funds are buying them up, consolidating them, trying to make the most money off of them. And I don't think that when owners are trying to maximize profit, that's a good thing for news.

[00:31:13] So one thing we've seen is local newsrooms shuttering.

[00:31:18] Even if they still have employees, they don't no longer have a physical presence. But something that's happened, especially this year with covid just offices shutting down and not coming back. You know, I think it also means if you're trying to maximize content, you're like sort of revenue from content. You're going to publish certain stories that audiences to sort of get a lot of clicks. And you're going to get you're going to see less sort of nitty gritty, like local type reporting that these publications might have been able to do in the past and with these new owners can no longer do so. I think it's really tricky.

[00:32:03] Josh, thank you. Thank you, Laura. Josh, there's a an appreciation for your observation about sort of V.R. and block chain. And this is a question asking for a bit of an observational trend on these kinds of forecasts over the years. Sort of. Is there sort of a bit of a forecast, maybe the trends that you're reporting on? Because, again, you're not making your own predictions. Exactly, but on just the work, the process.

[00:32:35] Yeah, I would say that when we started doing this a decade ago, there was it was relatively fresh out of the financial crisis. Things were still very difficult in the business. And there was a huge focus on the business model question that was core to what everyone was thinking as a result. The predictions, I think, matched that as well, I think over time. It's not as if the business model has been solved. It's as if we figured it all out. We can all go home. It's more that I think there is a sense that the problems are a bit baked in at this point. There are there isn't some giant money truck coming around the corner. So on the business side, there has been a shift towards more strategy within the large buckets of advertising and more specifically around subscription, seeing a lot more thinking about the customer relationship in predictions in recent years. I also think you've seen a increase in people talking about working within news organizations. I mean, we mentioned that in the case of the Tony Mosley prediction and issues around discrimination, but a larger attention being paid to from the mental health of journalists to working conditions, the rise in unionization and a lot of digital newsrooms, things in that front. And we've also seen more predictions that are around the consumer end of journalism. This was really sparked by 2016 and the rise of fake news and misinformation

and disinformation. I think our readers care more now about how their news is reaching the end customer more more than would have been the case a decade ago. Or at least that's how it looks from what you our predictions. I think in general, it's a healthy trend that in all of these cases you're seeing a shift away from. We need to find something that will fix our problem as a business more towards. We need to figure out how to get better in a host of ways.

[00:34:39] And I think it's a useful, useful shift.

[00:34:45] Yeah, absolutely, I just sat in a grand meeting yesterday where we talked about mental health of journalists, but we also talked about mental health of audiences. We talked about the fact that if you look at any kind of self care article, it will say, stop reading so much news, stop listening to so much news. And what does that mean for the consumer and how are they interacting with something that we think is so important for democracy? So that question came to us from Andrew Abigale. We have one of the go ahead.

[00:35:12] We published I published a prediction today from Chris Evans, who's at the Minneapolis Star Tribune. And hers was all about the degree to which newsrooms are going to have to be much more comprehensive in how they deal with reporting on the trauma that Americans have felt to be 20. And she made the observation, which I thought was a smart one. That is when we have thought about trauma, informed reporting in newsrooms. It is typically been around victims of sexual assault, the survivors of the victims of mass shootings, things that are, you know, criminal in nature. Whereas many of the traumas that Americans have experienced in 20, 20 have been around unemployment, have been around, you know, stress for the election, have been around obviously enormous public health issues, things that are much more systemic, that don't have the news hook of a shooting, for example, to hang your coverage on. And she had a line there along the lines of it's going to take us years to figure out, to really be able to address the amount of trauma that is that the American public has suffered in the past year or so. And that's going to have to change the way that newsrooms cover those issues.

[00:36:28] Absolutely, I have a question I'm not sure which of you guys wants to take it, it's from Jenna Spinell. How should journalism students, particularly those graduating this spring, were already walking into a tricky economy, be thinking about the industry and their place within it? And what can journalism school faculty be doing to help them?

[00:36:52] And I can I could talk about that. The I mean, I whenever I talk to college students, I always try to emphasize the degree to which all of the digital technologies that we've that have arrived in the past decade plus have enabled individual journalists to take much more initiative than was the case when they had everything had to be approved by an editor and worked through a newsroom chain of command twenty 15 years ago that the answer would have been, hey, start a blog. Now it is probably figure out a niche that you're interested in covering and start a podcast and start a sub stack about it. But I think it's really important for for journalists who have gone through journalism school and may be ready, may be well-prepared for a institutionalized form of journalism to be very aggressive and ambitious around doing independent work and showing that initiative. I think both A that's very appealing to the editors who will be hiring in news organizations. They want that same spirit in their in their news operations. But even if it's not, you know, there there are you open yourself up to a whole world of of more options if you can try and play the journalism game on several different levels. At the same time.

[00:38:06] I also think that one sort of possible bright spot of the pandemic, if I can say that, is that in-person events are not really happening right now. And so a lot of the education, the panels, the classes that you might have had to be in person in New York taking in the past have moved online. And so for people who want to take advantage of those and there's so much, there is greater access to that.

[00:38:36] So that's you know, that's one way that this that some. You know, more people may be able to participate than have in past.

[00:38:47] I want to thank you both for joining us.

[00:38:51] I do want to give you sort of final a final word or a final thought, just really on something like 20, 20 actually started, you know, started out. Nobody exactly understood what was to come. And we walk away at least with knowledge of a vaccine coming. So I'd love to leave on a little bit of something to look forward to. And twenty twenty one, something that you reported on that you think is especially anything you might mention about local journalism or local news.

[00:39:23] But other examples as well, I'm not sure.

[00:39:31] Yes, so, you know, one thing I might say, and this is not specifically only about local news organizations, but it's certainly something we can do, I think, at the beginning of the year, especially when people are thinking about the election coming and sort of how news organizations had covered Trump over the past four years. I think that there was a lot of fear that news organizations would not be able to rise to the task and cover some of these issues, things like Trump lying, just being sort of Trump saying just things that are just not true, that the news organizations would continue to have trouble sort of reporting on that. And I think we have seen a lot of them find their way in terms of the way that they are reporting on what he says, the way that they're reporting on what other sort of right wing figures say. I think that the reporting has gotten better and more nuanced and that reporters have gotten more practice. That sort of thinking about how to convey these things to audiences convey that just because someone said it doesn't mean that that's true and providing context and things like that. I think that any news organization can get better at doing that. And it's it's I feel optimistic, having seen them get better at it. I think it's going to be especially important as the vaccine, as you mentioned, rules out that we think about the rooms, think about the types of misinformation that can be spread around health and medicine in the vaccine and coronavirus, sort of moving away from election related misinformation. We had a piece on our site this week from first draft about that and thinking more about health misinformation and how are we going to be thinking about that issue and conveying. Information about the vaccine and its rollout and side effects and things like that to our audiences in a way that is true and doesn't scare them and takes into account the fact that there is still a lot of misinformation out there.

[00:41:42] I also agree that I think that with I don't know if we can say that the areas in the rearview mirror yet, it certainly isn't officially recorded in the calendar. But I think that the media can definitely look back at the last four years and realize that the Trump era has been quite good for American journalism. And I don't mean that in the Les Moonves, like, you know, he might be better for the country, but he's good for CBS in a sense. I don't mean that purely financially. I mean that this administration has been an opportunity for journalists to rethink a lot of their workflows, how they think about important issues, how they think about the needs to address parts of the country that they weren't doing as well as they might have. I think it's also been an experience that has really trained a lot of

people to be willing to be willing to pay for digital journalism in a way that just wasn't the case four years ago. And I think that's something that can be taken forward into twenty, twenty one.

[00:42:42] I'm very curious to see what a what a buy the administration does to the tenor of news consumption and of news production in the country. So much of our news world has been so focused on one man. I'm I'm not sure how the environment we've built up to cover that one man will transition to a very different sort of man who will not be hogging as much of the stage and human attention.

[00:43:10] I also think if on an optimistic note, I do think that we are seeing a a set of recipes for local digital start ups become a little bit more clear. I think that the new startups are not having to reinvent the wheel to the same degree they might have a few years ago. There are sort of established patterns and I think there's an established audience waiting for digital news at the local level. I wouldn't have said was there a few years ago, I would be shocked if they were more American journalists employed at the end of twenty twenty one than there are at the end of twenty twenty. But I do think that there are and we have a host of challenges around polarization and, you know, people sort of checking out of the news. I do think there are reasons to think that things are getting a little bit more stable in some important ways to.

[00:44:03] OK, thank you so much. Thank you, Josh Benton. Thank you, Laura. Thank you so much for joining us today. And thank you for everybody for listening.