Restoring trust in news: A design thinking exercise

DUE FOR THURSDAY'S CLASS

Reading

First, [you should know the place I'm coming from](#).

Now read this:

- [Americans' Trust in Mass Media Sinks to New Low](#)
- [Rosen's Trust Puzzler: What Explains Falling Confidence in the Press?](#)
- [Pew: The Modern News Consumer: Trust and Accuracy](#)
- [Public Trust in the News A Constructivist Study of the Social Life of the News](#)

A note about design thinking

Using the [Stanford Design Schools Bootleg](#), you can break down design thinking into a series of steps that are purpose built to focus problem solving on human beings. Some people call design thinking human-centered design. The steps are:

- Empathize: From the Bootleg, "empathy is the foundation of a human-centered design process." In this step you observe users in their daily lives, engage with them through interviews and immerse yourself in what your user experiences.
- Define: From the Bootleg, "the define mode is when you unpack and synthesize your empathy findings into compelling needs and insights, and scope a specific and meaningful challenge." You narrow what you find to an actionable challenge.
- Ideate: From the Bootleg, "ideate is the mode of your design process in which you aim to generate radical design alternatives." Here is where you are going to try out a wide variety of solutions for your project, going past obvious steps to try new things.
- Prototype: From the Bootleg, "prototyping is getting ideas and explorations out of your head and into the physical world. A prototype can be anything that takes a physical form." Here is where you turn your previous steps into something you can show people.
- Test: From the Bootleg, "testing is the chance to get feedback on your solutions, refine solutions to make them better, and continue to learn about your users." Here is where you take your prototypes back to your users to get feedback, refine your solutions, and test again.

We are on a compressed timescale, so we're going to make a few nips and tucks here and there.

IN CLASS THURSDAY

The story as a unit of journalism is has largely been unaltered for generations of journalists. The styles of writing may have evolved to become more nuanced and complex, but the headline, byline, series of paragraphs of quotations and attributions is nearly the same now as it ever was. Throughout the decline of trust in news, about the only funamental change in the journalism that people are seeing is the volume of it -- there is much more choice today than ever before. But at its core, the choices on the menu are no different than their predecessors.

And yet, the internet has given us the chance to rebuild the story in new ways. The internet frees us of the restrictions of the printed story or the broadcast package. Yet, we've done little to change the story. And fewer still have done anything to change the equation when it comes to trust in news.

Until now.

Your charge: Redesign the story page to restore trust in news.

PART 1:

Using a piece of paper and pencil, design the ideal story page for news trust.

You have three minutes.

PART 2:

Interview your partner about what they think would improve trust in news.

You have eight minutes to interview each other: Four minutes each.

PART 3:

Dig deeper: Follow up on what your first interview found. Ask why often. Look for stories, feelings, emotions.

You have six minutes to interview each other: Three minutes each.

PART 4:

Capture findings: Record what your partner told you. What do they want to see? What do you see in their words that they themselves may not see?

You have three minutes.

PART 5:

Take a stand with a point of view: Define what your partner is looking for in news trust.

You have three minutes.

PART 6:

Sketch five radical solutions to the problem you defined in Part 5.

You have five minutes.

PART 7:

Share your solutions with your partner and capture their feedback.

You have 10 minutes to share with each other: Five minutes each.

PART 8:

Reflect on the feedback on your solutions and generate a new solution.

You have three minutes.

PART 9:

Build your solution (in a sketch). Something your partner can react to.

You have seven minutes.

PART 10:

Share your solution and get feedback.

You have eight minutes to share with each other: Four minutes each.

Your assignment for the weekend

Empathize with people. Interview five people each about their news consumption habits, their trust in news and what would make them trust a news story more if it was a part of the story.

The rules:

- They cannot be journalists, journalism majors, journalism professors, or anyone involved in the business of journalism in any way.
- No family.

- We will define and start ideating on Tuesday.