**Group Analysis: Paris Attacks**

*Directions: Read the background information about the terrorist attacks in Paris in November. Then, discuss and complete the response questions.*

**Scenario:** According to news reports by CNN, accessed at <http://www.cnn.com/2015/11/13/europe/paris-attacks-at-a-glance/> on December 21, 2015, more than 120 people were killed and more than 300 wounded in Paris in November after “gun-wielding suicide bombers” conducted seemingly-coordinated attacks on November 13, 2015. The alleged terrorists shot and killed individuals at several restaurants, a concert hall and a soccer stadium. After the attacks, French police conducted more than one hundred raids to track down those associated with them, and France remained under a state of emergency with tightened border control. The Islamic State (ISIS) has claimed responsibility for the attacks.

Like in other emergency situations, news organizations were unable to report from the inside while the attacks were being conducted. However, using social media, many organizations were able to follow the progress of the attacks as individuals tweeted and posted pictures of what was happening inside the concert hall, restaurants, and stadium. Simultaneously, these organizations made sure to note what they knew from official sources (police) and unofficial sources (citizen journalists).

**Scenario questions:**

1. What happened in Paris on November 13, 2015?

2. What else do you know about this event that was not mentioned in the scenario above?

3. Did you read or watch any news coverage of this event? What do you remember seeing, if anything?

**Ethical questions**:

Though there is no evidence that the attackers in this case targeted individuals posting to social media, it is possible that, given a different scenario, they could have.

1. Do you think this is likely? Why or why not?
2. Does this represent a level of harm that would keep you, as a journalist, from encouraging individuals in a tragic situation from posting to social media? Why or why not?
3. How can you minimize harm to sources in this type of situation?

During a tragedy like this, information that is released by citizen journalists in the moment is often not vetted by anyone before it is published to social media. Sometimes, this information is proven false later. Journalists must balance information from official sources with information from citizen sources.

1. What is the best way to balance information in this scenario?
2. Is it important to publish citizen journalists’ views without waiting for confirmation from police or other law enforcement? Why or why not?