

Evaluating Electronic Resources



Objectives

- ◆ Understanding what sources are and how to use them.
 - ◆ Considering the importance of source criticism both in academia and in life.
 - ◆ Learning how to fact check.
 - ◆ Recognising and evaluating if it is a good source.
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What is a source?

- ◆ Any thing or place from which something comes, arises, or is obtained; origin.
- ◆ Examples of sources
 - ◆ Academic sources
 - ◆ News sources

Where do we get information from?



Academic Sources

- ◆ Books
 - ◆ Journal Articles
 - ◆ Magazines
 - ◆ Reports
 - ◆ Dissertations
 - ◆ Conference Papers
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What is the first thing you think about when you see Donald Trump?



What is fake news?

- ◆ Fake news is a type of journalism or propaganda that consists of deliberate misinformation or hoaxes spread via traditional print and broadcast news media or online social media.
 - ◆ Fake news is written and published with the intent to mislead in order to damage an agency, entity, or person, and/or gain financially or politically, often using sensationalist, dishonest, or outright fabricated headlines to increase readership, online sharing, and Internet click revenue.
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DON'T TRUST
EVERYTHING YOU READ
ON THE INTERNET

- ◆ The vast quantities of information on the Web often make it difficult to discern value.
- ◆ No one controls, checks or filters most web information.



Why does the quality vary?

- ◆ Think about it.....
 - ◆ Anyone can put something on the Internet-an idiot or an expert.
 - ◆ From anywhere in the world-----be it the United Kingdom or Uruguay
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- ◆ They can say anything they like----
be it true or false
 - ◆ Leave it as long as they like.....even
if it goes out of date.
 - ◆ Change it without warning----
perhaps remove it completely
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◆ Think about the internet compares with the library.



- ◆ The author has checked their work.
 - ◆ The editor may have double checked it.
 - ◆ The publisher decided it was good enough to publish.
 - ◆ Perhaps a reviewer commented on it.
 - ◆ Then the librarian thought it was good enough to select for the library.
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- ◆ On the internet no quality checks are required.
- ◆ ANYONE CAN PUBLISH WHAT THEY LIKE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
- ◆ (Wikipedia) Wiki – means site that any visitor can add to or edit).



WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia

- ◆ This information is not suitable for assignments or research.

Be Suspicious



- ◆ It is important to remember that often even pages that seem trustworthy, actually are not.
- ◆ It is important not to trust everything you read on the internet and to be careful about which information you use.
- ◆ It is often best to be suspicious of everything initially in order to be sure that it can be trusted.

Fact Checking, Why?

- ◆ In general things that give you new information, that make you think “that doesn’t sound right”
- ◆ What is fact checking?
- ◆ How can you fact check?

Video



What to look for when fact checking

- ◆ Consider the source
- ◆ Does it sound real?
- ◆ Check the author
- ◆ Check the date
- ◆ Read beyond
- ◆ Are there supporting sources?
- ◆ Is it a joke?
- ◆ Ask someone



In academia

- ◆ Not all sources are credible
- ◆ You need to fact check here as well
- ◆ Ask yourself the same questions:
 - Does it sound real?
 - Where is it coming from?
 - Is this a good source?
 - Who is/are the author(s)?
 - Are there supporting sources?
- ◆ If it comes from a scientific journal, it is probably true.
- ◆ However, that is not always the case...

CRAAP Test it

C	Currency: <i>The timeliness of the information.</i> • When was the information published or posted? Revised or updated? • Does your topic require current information, or will older sources work as well?
R	Relevance: <i>The importance of the information for your needs.</i> • Does the information relate to your topic or answer your question? • Who is the intended audience? / an appropriate level?
A	Authority: <i>The source of the information.</i> • Who is the author/publisher/source/sponsor? • What are the author's credentials or organizational affiliations? • Is the author qualified to write on the topic? / contact information?
A	Accuracy: <i>The reliability, truthfulness and correctness of the content.</i> • Where does the information come from? / supported by evidence? • Has the information been reviewed or refereed? • Does the language or tone seem unbiased and free of emotion?
P	Purpose: <i>The reason the information exists.</i> • What is the purpose of the information? Is it to inform, teach, sell, entertain or persuade? • Does the point of view appear objective and impartial? • Are there political, religious, institutional or personal biases?

Fake “scientific” reports



- ◆ Andrew Wakefield
- ◆ In 1998 Andrew Wakefield and 12 of his colleagues published an article in the medical journal The Lancet, stating that there was a link between MMR vaccines and autism.

Fake “Scientific” Reports

- ◆ “Confidential medical documents and interviews with witnesses have established that Andrew Wakefield manipulated patients’ data, which triggered fears that the MMR triple vaccine to protect against measles, mumps and rubella was linked to the condition.” – The Sunday Times, 2009
- ◆ “Following the judgment of the UK General Medical Council's Fitness to Practise Panel on Jan 28, 2010, it has become clear that several elements of the 1998 paper by Wakefield *et al* are incorrect, contrary to the findings of an earlier investigation. In particular, the claims in the original paper that children were “consecutively referred” and that investigations were “approved” by the local ethics committee have been proven to be false. Therefore we fully retract this paper from the published record” – The Lancet, 2010

- ◆ The internet is deceptively easy, you can log on and find information without much trouble.
 - ◆ The Internet has become a very popular way of accessing information and can be very useful in literature searching.
 - ◆ However, this can produce so much information that it can be daunting in terms of looking for specific information.
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- ◆ Think about buying a new electrical product where would you start?
 - ◆ Is it important to plan questions before you start researching?
 - ◆ What questions would be important?
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- ◆ People with little experience of searching might look on the internet and not elsewhere and then assume that the only information available is that which is shown.
 - ◆ For example, if you put the words 'research methodology' into the World Wide Web the information provided is that generally about research and research methodology.
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- ◆ Specific information on areas of research methodology are available if the search is more specific e.g. 'sampling strategies'.
 - ◆ Advice and guidance is available on which search engines and databases to use.
 - ◆ Library staff can offer advice on this.
 - ◆ It is important to note that you need to put time and effort into researching.
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Literature Searching

- ◆ Literature searching can be time consuming.
- ◆ It is not possible to do a quick search at lunchtime or spend 10 mins in front of the computer.
- ◆ Searching thoroughly takes time.



Sources to avoid

- ◆ psychology.about.com
 - ◆ simplypsychology.org
 - ◆ www.ehow.com
 - ◆ Wikipedia
 - ◆ [Ask Jeeves/ask.com](http://AskJeeves/ask.com)
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Reading the Literature

- ◆ Once literature has been obtained, the first step is to check it for relevance to the subject area and what you particularly want to know.

To summarise

- ◆ Ask yourself “does this seem right?”
- ◆ Be critical
- ◆ Fact check – just google it!



Additional Resources

- ◆ There are a resources available on Moodle in today's session to help you to evaluate Web pages and to decide if they contain suitable material.