Find and Cite Three-to-Five Sources: Applying the Sociological Imagination to Critical Information Literacy

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### Sociological Information Literacy Framework (Draft)

**Framework for Information Literacy Concepts**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Authority Is Constructed and Contextual</th>
<th>Information Creation as a Process</th>
<th>Information Has Value</th>
<th>Research as Inquiry</th>
<th>Scholarship as Conversation</th>
<th>Searching as Strategic Exploration</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Evaluate based on information need and context, different types of authorities.</td>
<td>Different formats reflect varying messages and delivery methods.</td>
<td>As commodity, education, influence, understanding; role of legal and socio-economic interests</td>
<td>Iterative question asking, methods, analysis</td>
<td>Sustained discourse, varied perspectives</td>
<td>Iterative evaluation of range of sources, mental flexibility</td>
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</table>

**Sociological Eye**

- Sociology as a distinctive discipline
  - Social basis and construction of knowledge
  - "Truth is political"
  - Scientific knowledge vs. other ways of knowing
  - "the medium is the message"

- Commodity: economic/financial structures support/constrain info production
- Means for education: varying access, promotion of “correct” information
- Means to influence: role and impact of propaganda

- Ask questions like a sociologist
- Social assumptions vs. scientific evidence
- Verification process

- Social context of scholarly discourse;
  - (a) who is an expert in a field, (b) where the boundaries of a field lie, and (c) what can be said within these boundaries

- Scholarly conversations are shaped by institutional structures: higher education, research firms, publishers, libraries, archives, and the WWW

- Participate in scholarly discourse relies on membership in communities of practice
- Citation practices, plagiarism

- Search engines as gatekeepers to information
- Algorithms reflect the interests of their creators

- Social roles may privilege some as authorities
- Social institutions exert influence over what is considered valid or factual
- Ownership of information systems impacts the processes of information creation and what information is made available

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- Scholarly conversations are shaped by institutional structures; higher education, research firms, publishers, libraries, archives, and the WWW

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- Ideologies impact accepted authorities
- "Fake news"
- Social media as performative work
- Trusted formats and sources vary by culture

- Cultural contexts shapes perceptions of legitimate knowledge and questions
- Participation in scholarly discourse relies on membership in communities of practice
- Citation practices, plagiarism

- Search engines as gatekeepers to information
- Algorithms reflect the interests of their creators

- Institutions with authority to produce knowledge recreate social inequalities
- Certain forms of knowledge production are valued over others; e.g., low income students as lacking cultural capital, rather the institutional de-valuing of different cultures

- "Profitable" research outputs receive more value and resources
- Corporate control and limits on information distribution and participation
- Commodification of personal information (i.e., surveillance capitalism) and privacy ramifications

- Access mythological knowledge: societal knowledge is constructed and many are excluded
- Historical exclusion of subordinated social groups from scholarship
- Unequal access to literacy education
- Development of expert search strategies is a skill that takes education and experience

**Socialization**

- The relationship between the self and society
- Ideologies impact accepted authorities
- "Fake news"
- Social media as performative work
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**Stratification**

- The patterns and effects of social inequality
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**Social Change and Social Reproduction**

- How social phenomena replicate and change
- Scientific authority comes from acceptance of certain "truths" about the social and natural world; Through young scholars, these "truths" persist

- Certain kinds of knowledge are reproduced; because scientists use existing theories for hypothesis building, methodological design, and interpretation, they will often fail to see what does not fit into these theories

- Social movements may be aided by social media, but the terms of use and algorithms that impact what information is seen are set by private ownership

- Every day, scientists encounter phenomena that cannot be explained by existing theories: often, these anomalies are ignored or avoided through a focus on certain methodologies over others

- Students are trained in certain disciplines; While these disciplines may address similar problems, they remain distinct and the conversations within them siloed

- The terms scholars use in search depend on the conventions of their discipline; It is more difficult to find and read scholarship outside the discipline in which one is trained