News Literacy: Teaching Students to Be Informed Citizens

Stuit, Martha

http://hdl.handle.net/2027.42/146729
News Literacy

Teaching Students to Be Informed Citizens

Martha Stuit, Librarian
Washtenaw Community College
Quasicon • Saturday, March 11, 2017, 9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
Today

1. Background
2. 15-minute instruction session
3. LibGuide tour
4. Future plans
5. Discussion

Link to slides: http://bit.ly/2ngfVLv
“Many assume that because young people are fluent in social media they are equally savvy about what they find there. Our work shows the opposite.”
(p. 7, Stanford Study, Executive Summary)

“Our ‘digital natives’ may be able to flit between Facebook and Twitter while simultaneously uploading a selfie to Instagram and texting a friend. But when it comes to evaluating information that flows through social media channels, they are easily duped.”
(p. 4, Stanford Study Executive Summary)
Project timeline

November/December 2016
- Identify need
- Identify LibGuide to revise

January 2017
- Create new guide
- Create tabs
- Create content

February 2017
- Launch LibGuide
- Launch 15-min. class sessions

March 2017
- Make evaluation infographics
Books, magazines, journals, and newspapers - whether in print or electronic form - have been the backbone of research papers for decades. Now, however, the Internet has opened up many sources of information that fall outside those basics. Explore this research guide to discover some different ways of finding information for your papers and projects.
15-Minute Instruction Session for Classes

http://libguides.wccnet.edu/newsliteracy

http://graphics.wsj.com/blue-feed-red-feed/
Tour of the Guide

● “Get News” tab
● “Recognize Bias” tab
● “Spot Fake News” tab
● “Teach News Literacy” tab
● Forthcoming: “Evaluate News” tab

http://libguides.wccnet.edu/newsliteracy
It's Official - Smoking Doesn't Cause Lung Cancer...

The following article was written by James P. Siepmann, MD. It first appeared on the Journal of Theoretics website at this location: http://www.journaloftheoretics.com/Editorials/1/1-1-1.htm

I have added emphasis to key points he makes, the emphasis as bold red, the bold regular font is in the original article.

Smoking *Does Not* Cause Lung Cancer

(According to WHO/CDC Data)

By: James P. Siepmann, MD

Yes, it is true, smoking does not cause lung cancer. It is only one of many risk factors for lung cancer. Initially I was going to write an article on how the professional literature and publications misuse the language by saying "smoking causes lung cancer"... but the more that I looked into how biased the literature, professional organizations, and the media are, I modified this article to one on trying to put the relationship between smoking and cancer into perspective. (No, I did not get paid off by the tobacco companies, or anything else like that.)

When the tobacco executives testified to Congress that they did not believe that smoking caused cancer, their answers were probably truthful and I agree with that statement. Now, if they were asked if smoking increases the risk of getting lung cancer, then their answer based upon current evidence should have been "yes." But even so, the risk of a smoker getting lung cancer is much less than anyone would suspect. Based upon what the media and anti-tobacco organizations say, one would think that if you smoke, you get lung cancer (a 100% correlation) or at least expect a 50% occurrence before someone uses the word "cause."

The domain is .org, which indicates a nonprofit. Just because it's a nonprofit doesn't mean you don't need to do your research on what it is and who they are.

The author's name and medical degree are listed, but no other information about his credentials is provided. A Google search showed that he is a general practitioner, not a specialist or researcher.

The text has footnotes, and there are references at the end. It is up to the reader to verify the information.

Bolding, underlining, and different colors of text influence objectivity. It plays on emotions. A credible article would have plain text. The only color would be from hyperlinks, which help back up claims.

Correlation and causation are not the same. However, this article is inflammatory and contains questionable evidence.

It doesn't cost anything to read this article by going to the website.

What is the purpose of this article? It's not stated here, but this article is an editorial or opinion piece.

Old! This article shows a copyright date of 2009 on the Smoke Screens website. The original article was published in a journal in 1999.
Questions?

Comments?

Martha Stuit
Librarian, WCC Bailey Library
User Information Services Assistant, U-M Library
mstuit@wccnet.edu  ◆  stuitm@umich.edu

HOW TO SPOT FAKE NEWS

CONSIDER THE SOURCE
Click away from the story to investigate the site, its mission and its contact info.

READ BEYOND
Headlines can be outrageous in an effort to get clicks. What’s the whole story?

CHECK THE AUTHOR
Do a quick search on the author. Are they credible? Are they real?

SUPPORTING SOURCES?
Click on those links. Determine if the info given actually supports the story.

CHECK THE DATE
Reposting old news stories doesn’t mean they’re relevant to current events.

IS IT A JOKE?
If it is too outlandish, it might be satire. Research the site and author to be sure.

CHECK YOUR BIASES
Consider if your own beliefs could affect your judgement.

ASK THE EXPERTS
Ask a librarian, or consult a fact-checking site.
References
