USING FAKE NEWS TO ENGAGE STUDENTS IN CRITICAL SOURCE EVALUATION

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MOTIVATORS & CONTEXT

Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education

Learning, Teaching, Assessment Strategy
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Academic Skills Programme
https://www.gold.ac.uk/asc/workshops/

This is Not a Fake Conference
https://libguides.lsbu.ac.uk/lrlblog/thisisnotafakeconference
PGCERT STUDY: ENGAGING STUDENTS WITH CRITICAL EVALUATION OF SOURCES

Process:
• Analysed student feedback from previous ASC sessions, looking for terms relating to evaluation
• Background research into teaching theory, resource evaluation, critical information literacy
• Developed short activity to incorporate into Dissertation Search Strategies
• Analysed student feedback, this time with questions specifically related to resource evaluation
• Used this to feed into Fake News, Filter Bubbles and Academic Quality Session
What was the main purpose of today’s session?

- How to find relevant resources to use in my dissertation
- Use of Search Engines and portals for academic purpose
- How to use the libraries search features to find relevant work
- To understand how I can conduct my research of the subject matter in an effective way.
- Using the online search on Gold library website more efficiently

What was most useful about today’s session?

- Learning about different databases and how to refine research
- Research terms and platforms to use.

Was anything unclear in the workshop and if so what?

- What is the peer review? Why is it useful?
EVALUATION IN INFORMATION LITERACY TEACHING

ACRL Framework:

Authority Is Constructed and Contextual

‘Experts view authority with an attitude of informed skepticism and an openness to new perspectives, additional voices, and changes in schools of thought.’
http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework#authority

Evaluation criteria
• CRAAP Test
• RADAR
Imagine you are writing a dissertation on the impact of fake news on politics since the 2016 US election.

How would you evaluate this paper before including it in your dissertation?

Discuss in pairs

Article example taken from Carol Hollier from presentation ‘Critical Approaches to Sourcing Information on the Web and Fake News’
https://libguides.lsbu.ac.uk/id.php?content_id=31778135
# RADAR TEST

| Relevance | • Is the information too technical or too simplified for you to use?  
| • Does the information answer or contribute to your research question? |

| Authority | • What are the author’s credentials, experience or qualifications?  
| • Is the author affiliated with an educational institution or a prominent organization?  
| • Do other books or articles on the same research topic cite the author? |

| Date | • When was the information published or last updated?  
| • Is your topic in an area that changes rapidly, like technology or science?  
| • Have newer articles been published on your topic? Historical sources may need to be used to provide context. |

| Accuracy | • Are there statements you know to be false?  
| • Was the information reviewed by editors or subject experts before it was published?  
| • Do the citations and references support the author’s claim? Are the references correctly cited? |

| Rationale | • Why did the author or publisher make this information available?  
| • Is there a sponsor or advertising?  
| • Is there obvious and/or extreme bias or prejudice? |

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After today’s session, I will be more critical when considering resources found online.

I found the RADAR guidance useful and applicable to my study.

I found it useful to critique the RADAR guidance.

I found it useful to evaluate a sample resource.

I feel confident in applying these techniques to other resources I find.

(12 attendees)
8. Will you do anything differently when selecting and evaluating resources?
   • I will use the advanced search facility, subject guide, and databases
   • Make sure they have been peer reviewed
   • Be more vigilant
   • I will be more skeptical and critical
   • Validity
   • I will be more critical and wary of what sources I use in my essay
   • Yes make sure it's been peer reviewed and cited
   • Yes, no idea about peer review before
   • still a little confused

9. How could we improve our evaluating resources activity?
   • By be critical and ask for help/suggestions
   • perhaps a few more handouts with relevant information/guides?
   • another example
   • Include more handouts and more information
   • Great, really helpful :)
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Continue to include the short activity in Dissertation Search Strategies in it’s current format, however redesign the worksheet to structure their response into their own evaluation criteria, so that students feel they have written their own ‘handout’ which they can take away with them.

2. Design a longer session on fake news, filter bubbles, and academic quality. This session will give more space to allow students to explore the resource evaluation critically, with a particular emphasis on understanding authority is constructed and contextual, and a focus on their own subject knowledge.
FAKE NEWS AND EVALUATING ACADEMIC QUALITY

Eve Jamieson, Subject Librarian
Michelle Newman, Subject Librarian
By the end of this session you should be able to:

• Utilise online tools and information sources to debunk fake news

• Independently evaluate sources for quality and accuracy
ACTIVITY: WHAT IS FAKE NEWS?

What does the term mean to you?

Can you define Fake News?
WHAT IS FAKE NEWS?

News articles that are intentionally and verifiably false, and could mislead readers
(Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017)

• Why is it so important?
• A short history of fake news
• Fake news now
• Motivators (money, ideology)
• How to spot fake news
HOW TO SPOT FAKE NEWS

Check the original webpage (not just the social media share)

- Is it covered in adverts? – indicates it’s click bait (and we just fell for it!)
- Check the URL – what’s the domain? Is it pretending to be a more reputable source (com.co)
- Does it cite sources? What are the sources?
- Is there an author listed? Have they written anything else?
- Check the about pages of the website. What is the remit of the site?

Be careful of your own confirmation bias – don’t assume something is truthful if it adheres to your own ideologies and fake if it opposes them.

- Check a fact checking website or search for the article title and ‘fake’
- Check if the news has been reported in other mainstream media outlets
- Use reverse image searches to find the origin or reused or falsely captioned images
FACT CHECKING TOOLS

Fact checking websites:

• FactCheck.org [http://www.factcheck.org/askscicheck/]

• Behind the Headlines - NHS.UK [https://www.nhs.uk/news/]

• Sense about Science – Because evidence matters [http://senseaboutscience.org/]

• Snopes.com [https://www.snopes.com/]

Academic Retraction:

• Retraction watch [https://retractionwatch.com/]
FACK CHECKING TOOLS

Image analysis websites:

• TinEye Reverse Image Search [https://www.tineye.com/] - image history
  • Finds previous times this article has been shared, good for tracing origin

• FotoForensics [http://fotoforensics.com/] - image analysis
  • Attempts to check if an image has been altered
  • Tricky to interpret, try the tutorials first [http://fotoforensics.com/tutorial.php]

Web Archives:

• Internet Archive: Wayback Machine [http://archive.org/web/]
REAL OR FAKE?

• Wayback Machine
• Fact checking websites
• TinEye

gold.libwizard.com/fake
ACADEMIC QUALITY
ACTIVITY: WHAT IS ACADEMIC QUALITY?

When you find a source, what criteria do you use to assess it?

How would you decide to include it in an assignment?
Imagine you are writing a dissertation on the impact of fake news on politics since the 2016 US election.

How would you evaluate this paper before including it in your dissertation?

Discuss in pairs
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As a result of this session, what new strategies will you use?

- look much better at the motivation and the time of a research
- Utilise Online tools to evaluate news/argue the validity of news
- Google advanced search / RADAR method
- How to evaluate the fake news or the quality of the academic article online
CHALLENGES & TIPS

• Out of comfort zone/expertise
  • Useful literature on fake news and information literacy
  • London South Bank University - This is not a fake conference LibGuide and Reading list

• Finding broad range of fake news examples (not US specific)
  • Use current examples from BBC news etc.
  • Ask students to give examples – more interesting

• Temporary and offensive nature of fake news to use for examples or activities
  • Use Wayback Machine to track down original website
  • Do not fall into a fake news black hole!

• Relying on RADAR for structure and speed
  • Interested to use Penn State’s IF I APPLY in future sessions for personal questioning ‘What is my bias’?
    https://guideslibraries.psu.edu/WC/HPA210


SOURCES: EVALUATION & TEACHING


Meriam Library, California State University (2010) *Is this source or information good?: The CRAAP Test*. Available at: [https://library.csuchico.edu/help/source-or-information-good](https://library.csuchico.edu/help/source-or-information-good) (Accessed: 24 June 2019).