

Trailheads

For Lecture 8: Truth and Verification: What Is Journalistic Truth? How Do Journalists Verify Information?

On the Web

What is Epistemology? (Yale University Professor Keith DeRose)
<http://pantheon.yale.edu/~kd47/What-Is-Epistemology.htm>

Problematizing Truth in Fiction – Jorge Luis Borges – The Book of Sand
<http://anagrammatically.com/2010/03/08/the-book-of-sand-el-libro-de-arena-by-borges-translated/>

Innocence Project – See how these investigations overturn death row convictions
<http://www.innocenceproject.org/>

Of note, check out Eyewitness Misidentification (the greatest cause of wrongful convictions nationwide)

<http://www.innocenceproject.org/understand/Eyewitness-Misidentification.php>

Recent Article about Eyewitness Testimony
<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/216187.php>

Opinion Article about state of Journalism in Indonesia (look at what is said about verification)
<http://www.thejakartaglobe.com/lifeandtimes/jakarta-journo-spin-journalism/425433>

Scott Rosenberg's Blog Post about how News Organization can build trust in the Verification Process
<http://www.pbs.org/idealab/2011/02/see-an-error-at-the-washington-post-now-you-can-easily-report-it039.html>

Advice for Investigative Journalists (A journalism of verification)
<http://www.mediahelpingmedia.org/training-resources/investigative-journalism/265-10-tips-for-investigative-journalism>
<http://www.mediahelpingmedia.org/content/view/275/234/>

Movies/TV: About or exemplifying...

• Rashomon (1950) Dir. Akira Kurosawa (Japan) □ “A heinous crime and its aftermath are recalled from differing points of view.” (imdb.com)

All the President's Men (1976) Dir. Alan J. Pakula (USA) □ “Reporters Woodward and Bernstein uncover the details of the Watergate scandal that leads to President Nixon's resignation.” (imdb.com)

The Insider (1999) Dir. Michael Mann (USA) □ “A research chemist comes under personal and professional attack when he decides to appear in a "60 Minutes" expose on Big Tobacco.” (imdb.com)

Shattered Glass (2003) Dir. Billy Ray (USA) □ “The true story of a young journalist who

fell from grace when it was found he had fabricated over half of his articles.” (imdb.com)
• The Matrix (1999) Dir. Andy Wachowski, Lana Wachowski (USA) □ “A computer hacker learns from mysterious rebels about the true nature of his reality and his role in the war against its controllers.” (imdb.com)

Books: About or exemplifying...

• *Journalism and Truth: Strange bedfellows* by Tom Goldstein □

Amazon.com Product Description: □ “The complaint is all too common: I know something about that, and the news got it wrong. Why this should be, and what it says about the relationship between journalism and truth, is exactly the question that is at the core of Tom Goldstein’s very timely book.

*Other disciplines, Goldstein tells us, have clear protocols for gathering evidence and searching for truth. Journalism, however, has some curious conventions that may actually work against such a goal. Looking at how journalism has changed over time—and with it, notions about accuracy and truth in reporting—Goldstein explores how these long-standing and ultimately untrustworthy conventions developed. He also examines why reliable standards of objectivity and accuracy are critical not just to a free press but to the democratic society it informs and serves. From a historical overview to a reconsideration of a misunderstood book about journalism (*The Journalist and the Murderer*) to a reflection on the coverage of the war in Iraq, his book offers a remarkably wide-ranging and thought-provoking account of how journalism and truth work—or fail to work—together, and why it matters.”*

Sherlock Holmes series (any good mystery is going to show how Verification and Investigation are intertwined)

Another good series are the crime novels by Swedish author and journalist Stieg Larsson (*The Girl with Dragon Tattoo*, *The Girl Who Played with Fire*, and *The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet’s Nest*)

SBU Courses:

JRN 110: News I: Basic News Reporting and Writing

An introduction to reporting and writing the news, including defining what is newsworthy. This is a foundation for all other courses in the journalism program. Through weekly assignments students will develop a mastery of the basic elements of writing a news story that conforms to standards of clarity, accuracy and fairness. An emphasis is placed on gaining practical experience through reporting on classroom, campus and community events. The development of basic skills is accompanied by the exploration of the role of the press in a free society. The course includes a six-week immersion lab in grammar, punctuation and sentence structure. Students who pass a proficiency test will be exempt from the lab. All other students must take the lab and pass the test to advance in the journalism program. Previously offered as JRN 287. Not for credit in addition to JRN 287.

Prerequisite: Completion of D.E.C. category A

Pre/Co-Requisite: JRN 101 (formerly offered as EGL 390 Fall 2005-Spring 2006) or JRN 103

3 credits

PHI 108-B Logical and Critical Reasoning (II)

The principal aim of this course is to help a student acquire the skill of thinking, reading,

and writing critically. The student develops a sensitivity to language and argumentation that is applicable to a wide range of situations and subject matters.

Fall and Spring, 3 credits

PHI 220 - C: Introduction to Symbolic Logic (II)

This first course in symbolic logic emphasizes the development of systematic techniques for assessing the validity of arguments: truth tables and truth values analysis, Venn diagrams, elementary quantification theory, and deduction in both the propositional calculus and quantification theory.

Prerequisite: Satisfaction of entry skill in mathematics requirement

Advisory Prerequisite: U2 standing or one course in philosophy

3 credits

PHI 332 - G: Theories of Knowledge (II)

A study of a variety of conceptions of the structure and content of knowledge as found in classical and contemporary epistemologies. Fundamental methods and principles of philosophical inquiry are applied to questions about the ways in which concepts and theories are generated in the physical and social sciences and to questions about knowledge of what is of value, knowledge in philosophy, and knowledge in the arts.

Prerequisites: Two courses in philosophy

Advisory Prerequisite: PSY 103

3 credits

AMS 102 - C: Elements of Statistics

The use and misuse of statistics in real life situations; basic statistical measures of central tendency and of dispersion, frequency distributions, elements of probability, binomial and normal distributions, small and large sample hypothesis testing, confidence intervals, chi square test, and regression. May not be taken by students with credit for AMS 110, 310, 311, 312; ECO 320; POL 201; PSY 201; or SOC 202.

Prerequisite: Satisfaction of entry skill in mathematics requirement (Skill 1) or satisfactory completion of D.E.C. C

3 credits

POL 201 - C: Introduction to Statistical Methods in Political Science

Elementary statistical methods in empirical political science, focusing on the analysis of public opinion, survey research designs, sampling, and probability. The course considers the application of descriptive and inferential statistics to testing hypotheses on various political issues. May not be taken for credit after AMS 102, ECO 320, PSY 201, or SOC 202.

Prerequisite: Satisfaction of entry skill in mathematics requirement; Advisory

Prerequisite: POL 101 or 102 or 103 or 105

3 credits

PSY 201 - C: Statistical Methods in Psychology

The use and interpretation of elementary statistical techniques in research, emphasizing descriptive statistics, correlational analysis, and inferential statistics, including chi-

square, t-tests, and an introduction to the Analysis of Variance. May not be taken for credit after AMS 102, ECO 320, POL 201, or SOC 202.

Prerequisites: PSY 103; satisfaction of entry skill in mathematics requirement

3 credits

SOC 330 - F: Media and Society

The course examines changes in the use of mass communications media, such as newspapers, radio, television, and the Internet, over time, and assesses the implications of these changes for society. Consideration of the commercial use of mass media and the media's role in providing news for democratic societies. Emphasis on the global dimensions of the mass media, including how they shape Americans' understandings of other countries and peoples, and vice versa.

Prerequisites: U3 or U4 standing; SOC 105 or POL 101 or 102 or 103

3 credits