



When it comes to judging the credibility and reliability of news reports, you the news consumer have two main concerns: Evidence and Sources. Last week we talked about the accumulation of evidence, the verification process that's essential to V.I.A. and the qualitative difference between Direct and Indirect evidence.

Today we think about the **people** who are quoted in a news report. We call them SOURCES, Not to be confused with OUTLETS, which produce the news.

We start with this excerpt from a report by CBS News' "60 Minutes." Scott Pelley spent more than a week in Japan, reporting on the aftermath of the Sendai earthquake and Tsunami. To warm up, let's focus on one person they talked to, a young American who teaches English in a resort town named Matsushima. As you watch, think about these questions.

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY School of Journalism • News Literacy "News Literacy and Why It's Important"

Smart Questions About Sources:

- ✓ What is her/his self-interest?
- ✓ Does anyone else say so?
- ✓ Is it verified fact, or assertion?
- ✓ How would this source know?
- ✓ Who, exactly, is this source?

(Don't copy these. Wait for the mnemonic device)

ANIMATION: EACH QUESTION COMES UP WITH A CLICK

Don't write these down...just think about what they mean, because in a few minutes we'll give you a much easier way to remember the ideas.

Self interest.

Corroboration

Verification

Basis of Knowledge

Identity, not just name



Quake.wmv

(NEWS FELLOW: LINK VIDEO HERE)



(LECTURER: THIS ANIMATION IS COMPLEX:

SLIDE OPENS WITH HIS FACE.

NEXT CLICK BRINGS UP FIRST QUESTION.

NEXT CLICK BRINGS BACK HIS FACE.

AND SO ON UNTIL ALL FIVE QUESTIONS ARE ON THE SCREEN)

ASK STUDENTS:

What is this source's self interest? Does the source have Financial, Familial or Reputational interests in what happened? (reputation)

Does anyone corroborate his story? (The child seems to describe same events. Note Pelle's transparency)

Is it verifiable fact or assertion? (We know the school is demolished. We know he taught there.)

How would this source know? (Chumreonlert was among the teachers and students at school the day of the Tsunami.)

Who exactly is this source? (David Chumreonlert, a native of Texas, who has been teaching English in Matsushima schools for a couple of years, most recently at Nobiru Elementary)

How would you evaluate him as a source of information?

What does he add to your understanding?

This is the process we'll learn today: **EVALUATE SOURCES** for yourself. Just because a journalist quotes them doesn't mean you should accept that person as an oracle of truth.

News Matters





(LECTURERS NEED TO MOVE SWIFTLY THROUGH THIS WMD MATERIAL TO LEAVE TIME FOR THE REST)

After 9/11/2001 and then in the months leading up to the invasion of Iraq by U.S. forces, the New York Times had scoop after scoop by star reporter Judith Miller, whose long work in the region gave her sources no one else had.

The picture she painted was that Saddam Hussein had nuclear weapons and was ready to use them. For all the accusations that the Times is a Democratic Party organ, it's interesting to note she was delivering the same message as the Bush White House, which may be why few questioned the reports.



On February 5, 2003, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell addressed the United Nations Security Council with evidence, he said, that Saddam Hussein had Weapons of Mass Destruction and that the invasion of Iraq would be the only way to stop Hussein from using them on the U.S. or other enemies. He is what you'd call a top-notch source and he was saying what the Times was reporting: Look Out. Iraq has WMD and will use them. By March The Times and CBS News reported their joint polling showed 55% of Americans supported an invasion of Iraq.

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What Are the Consequences When The Press Gets it Wrong?



U.S. Invades Iraq to Capture WMD

More than 100,000 Iraqis have died in the conflict that begun with the “Shock and Awe” bombings on March 19, 2003. Over the last 8 years, more than 4,400 U.S. soldiers were killed and 31,827 were wounded in action.

Why Critical Thinking About Sources Matters



The screenshot shows a news article from MSNBC. The main headline is "CIA's final report: No WMD found in Iraq" with a sub-headline "Recommends freeing detainees held for weapons knowledge". The article is attributed to Associated Press and is dated 4/25/2005. The text of the article states: "WASHINGTON — In his final word, the CIA's top weapons inspector in Iraq said Monday that the hunt for weapons of mass destruction has "gone as far as feasible" and has found nothing, closing an investigation into the purported programs of Saddam Hussein that were used to justify the 2003 invasion." To the right of the text is a photograph of a person in a white protective suit and helmet, likely a weapons inspector, working in a dimly lit area with stacks of boxes.

Conflict in Iraq on [msnbc.com](#)

CIA's final report: No WMD found in Iraq

Recommends freeing detainees held for weapons knowledge

Discussion Related

Ap Associated Press
updated 4/25/2005 9:24:44 PM ET

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WASHINGTON — In his final word, the CIA's top weapons inspector in Iraq said Monday that the hunt for weapons of mass destruction has "gone as far as feasible" and has found nothing, closing an investigation into the purported programs of Saddam Hussein that were used to justify the 2003 invasion.

No WMD were found.



ANIMATION: Each Click Brings Up Another Quote

To be fair, President George W Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney and Secretary of State Colin Powell were not the only ones who gave the American public information that turned out to be false.

Leaders in both parties had been getting it wrong for more than five years before we invaded Iraq.

Click to Clinton, Albright, Biden and Berger Quotes



What, people began to ask, were we doing in Iraq?
How did the Times get it so wrong?
On May 26, 2004, the New York Times published a lengthy description of what the paper got wrong and how that happened.

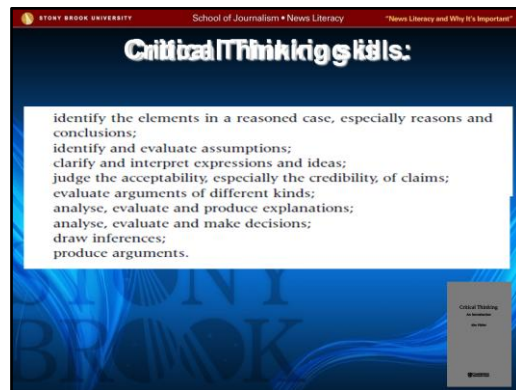
It boiled down to sources, as New York Magazine pointed out. Anonymous sources, whose personal interests, it turns out, made them poor partners in a “disinterested search for the truth,”

[CLICK TO BRING UP TIMES APOLOGY](#)

There were people in our government and elsewhere who had set out to hoodwink the press. But a careful news consumer armed with the ability to evaluate sources for themselves...might not have trusted the New York Times’ reporting because so much of it was based on un-named sources providing unverified, uncorroborated material.

Easy to say in hindsight.

To improve your foresight we introduce today an advanced vocabulary that brings clarity and nuance to your critical analysis of the sources who are the basis for so many news reports.



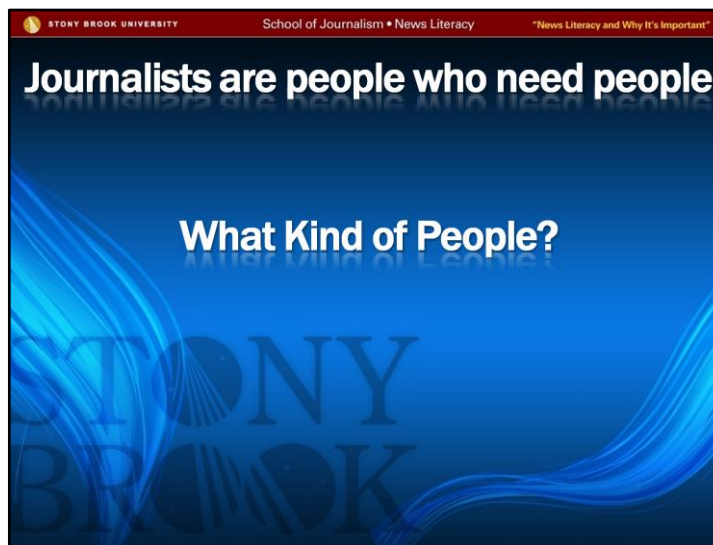
Animation: One Click, removes Thomas Dewey quote, brings up list of critical thinking skills and citation to Alec Fisher book

One of the reasons you're in this course is because Stony Brook, and any other school worth its salt, makes a big deal about training you to think critically. The phrase gets slung around a lot, so as we plunge into this part of the course, let's remind ourselves what our goal is.

The American Educator, Scholar and Psychologist John Dewey coined the phrase, Critical Thinking.

Here's what he meant...As you can see, he defines it IN OPPOSITION to the kind of thinking in which you just passively receive ideas and information from someone else. Critical Thinking is an ACTIVE process by which you methodically test a statement or argument and go search for relevant information, think for yourself about the grounds supporting and the implications flowing from ideas and statements.

AFTER CLICK: The reason powerful people fear information is that it allows a critical thinker to do what Dewey described. (read the list)



(News Fellow: Link the Streisand song here It's just 20 seconds worth. (optional))

Most of what you'll read, watch and listen to, as a news consumer, is based on what people tell a journalist. The journalist evaluates who is talking and makes judgment calls. But you, too, should evaluate sources.

As a warm-up, let's take another look at the car wreck that was on your front pages in the Stony Brook World front page exercise. First, another reminder of these skillful critical questions about **SOURCES...**

Today: Five Smart Questions About Sources:

What is her/his self-interest?

Does anyone else say so?

Is it fact, or assertion?

How would this source know?

Who, exactly, is this source?

ANIMATION. EACH QUESTION COMES UP WITH A CLICK



(ANIMATION: Same as last week. Image, headline and “Direct Evidence” “Indirect Evidence” all come up automatically. Each successive click brings up a new bullet point, starting with the direct evidence column.)

ASK: Some people can provide direct evidence, but does that automatically mean they are trustworthy? (click to bring up comprehensive list)

DIRECT: Driver of car; Eyewitnesses

ASK: What might interfere with their willingness, or even their ability, to accurately or comprehensively tell what happened?

ASK: What should a news consumer look for when weighing the information provided by people with direct involvement in the events. Just because they have something at stake, should we discount them?

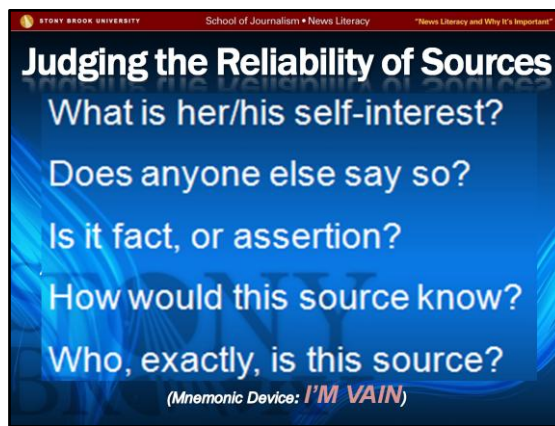
What might strengthen what they say?

Now let’s look at people without direct experience, but with useful or interesting indirect knowledge related to this wreck.

INDIRECT: Campus police; University officials; Driver’s lawyer; Friends and relatives of victims; Family of driver; Students on campus.

Which ones provide reliable information?

It’s a lot to think about, so you won’t be surprised to learn we’ve got a Mnemonic device to help you remember.



(ANIMATION: On Click the general questions fade and the Mnemonic, IMVAIN fades in.

This is the vocabulary you will use from here on to describe the sources who show up in news stories.

Independent vs. Self-interested

Multiple vs. Lone or Sole source

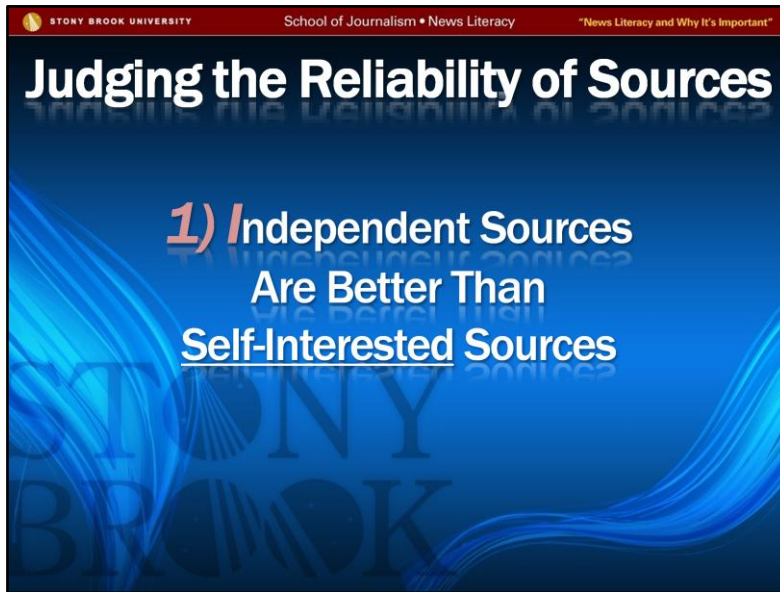
Verifies vs. Asserts

Authoritative/Informed vs. Uninformed

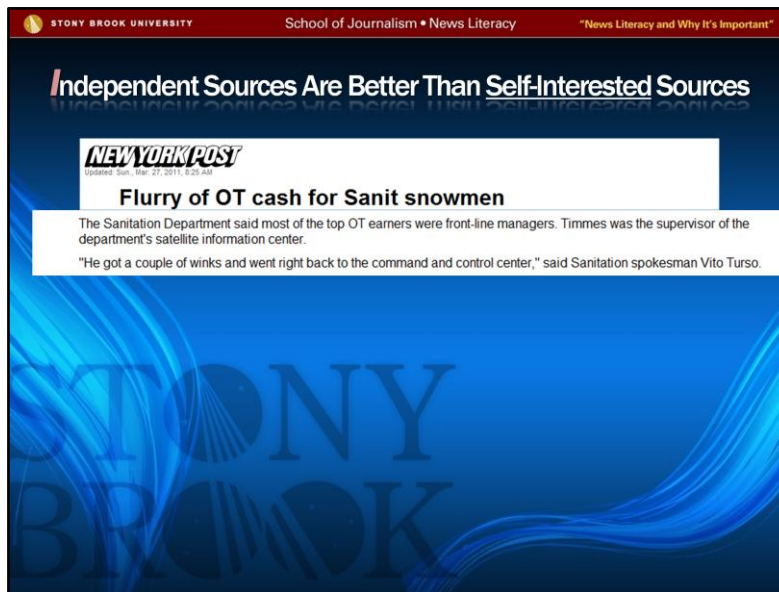
Named vs. Unnamed

In past semesters, students have memorized the 5 strongest characteristics with this mnemonic device: I'M VAIN

These are straightforward ideas. Let's see what happens out in the messy real world.



Okay, rule 1...



So, when the Post looked up the overtime payments made to New York Sanitation workers during the Christmas Blizzard of 2010, it turned out that some earning more than \$5,000 in extra pay, according to city records obtained by The Post. Supervisor David Timmes was the top OT earner, raking in \$5,948.17 for 84 hours of overtime in seven days. Superintendent John Dwyer put in 64 additional hours, earning an extra \$5,568.54. Ten employees made at least \$4,842 in OT from Dec. 26 to 31, according to city payroll records. But none of these workers were out digging the snow -- all were supervisors or superintendents. Timmes was the supervisor of the department's satellite information center. Now, Vito Turso IS in a position to know about the Department, as he is their official spokesman. But if Mr. Timmes spent the week snoozing in his office, would you expect to learn that from Turso?



(NEWS FELLOW LINK VIDEO HERE)

(This is 3:05 minutes, but can be stopped as soon as the PBA guy makes his first remarks.)

On March 13, Police arrived at Massapequa Park and came upon 21-year-old Anthony Digeronimo, who had knives strapped to his body and in his hands, according to Detective Lt. Kevin Smith. Digeronimo allegedly ran into his parents' home, and barricaded himself inside a bedroom before charging police with a knife. Police shot and killed him. About 10 minutes later, during the confusion, an MTA officer shot and killed a fellow police officer at the house.

Here is a follow-up report on that friendly fire death.



The Policeman's Benevolent President Jim Carver wasn't at the scene, but he has been told by officers that this retired sergeant is a pest and as the PBA President, is well-versed in police procedures and may even be privy to investigative reports.

Here's part of the PBA's mission statement: *"The PBA is committed to advancing the professional interests of its members. The preservation of the health safety and welfare of its members is of paramount importance to the PBA. The PBA shall act to protect and advance the rights of its members."*

ASK: In the Disinterested search for the truth, what does he offer?

ASK: IS HE AUTHORITATIVE?

IS HE INFORMED?

How much weight do you give him?

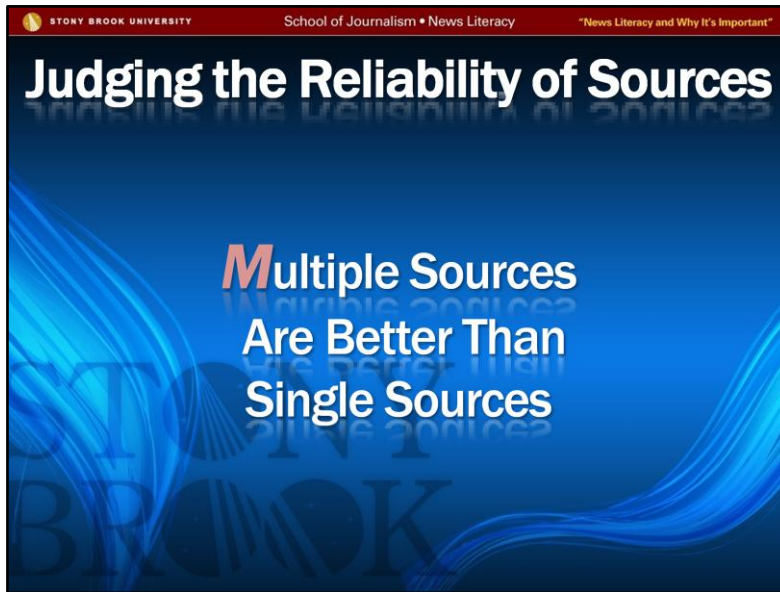


Seems kind of snarky doesn't it? The woman's being dragged away by Libyan security forces and the Associated Press writes: *"Her story could not be independently verified..."*

Journalists have a saying: "If your mother says she loves you, check it out"

The idea is that any source who is not independent is to be doubted. Your mother is supposed to love you, so of course she'd say that. Journalists are this way because, like police, they get lied to a lot.

Remember Twain's comment that the printing press gave untruth a double set of wings? Grifters gravitate to newsrooms. If they can get their story picked up by a news outlet, they'll get a lot farther, whatever their goal is. Hence the preference for independent sources, a preference you should adopt.



In the courtroom, we call it corroboration. In scientific circles, we say data is stronger if multiple researchers conducting the same experiment generate the same findings.

It’s more than just strength in numbers. If several people, especially people independent of one another, are saying the same thing...you can trust it more.

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Multiple Sources Trump a Lone Source?

James Dean Molested By Minister, Elizabeth Taylor Revealed

First Posted: 03/25/11 01:49 PM | Updated: 03/25/11 02:31 PM

Inspiring | Funny | Hot | Scary | Outrageous | Amazing | Weird | Crazy


Read More: Elizabeth Taylor, Elizabeth Taylor Dead, Elizabeth Taylor James Dean, James Dean, James Dean Elizabeth Taylor, James Dean Giant, James Dean Molested, Movies, Rebel Without a Cause, Entertainment News

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Like Dislike Comment



James Dean's short life is now known perhaps more in legend and lore than solid fact, but even he had a secret no one knew. Except for Elizabeth Taylor.

Kevin Sessums, writing for *The Daily Beast*, reveals that in a wide ranging interview with the just passed Taylor, the famed actress let him in on a secret about Dean that she had promised she'd keep forever. Sworn to secrecy until Taylor's death, Sessums revealed the hidden past of the *Rebel Without a Cause*:

"When Jimmy was 11 and his mother passed away, he began to be molested by his minister," Taylor said. "I think that haunted him the rest of his life. In fact, I know it did. We talked about it a lot. During *Giant* we'd stay up nights and talk and talk, and that was one of the things he confessed to me."


Taylor and Dean co-starred in *Giant*, a 1956 film for which Dean was posthumously nominated for an Academy Award.

Get Entertainment Alerts

There are loads of problems with this story, but for the sake of this lecture, let's focus on the fact that there's only one source. Immediately after Elizabeth Taylor died, a journalist named Kevin Sessums rushed to print with this story, in which he claims in his last interview with Liz Taylor, she confided various secrets to him, in particular this one about film star James Dean's supposed molestation by a preacher. If some other person who was in the position to know this were quoted in the story, it might be solid. But James Dean died in 1955. What kind of source is Elizabeth Taylor, now that she's dead? ASK: Do you believe it?

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Reconstructing the Blackwater Incident in Nusoor Square



Blacwater.wmv

(NEWS FELLOW LINK VIDEO HERE)

(Lecturer: This is a long piece, 6:27, but an excellent demonstration of the power of multiple sources, many of whom are also independent and/or Interested in very important ways)

Now let's watch this story and think about corroboration.



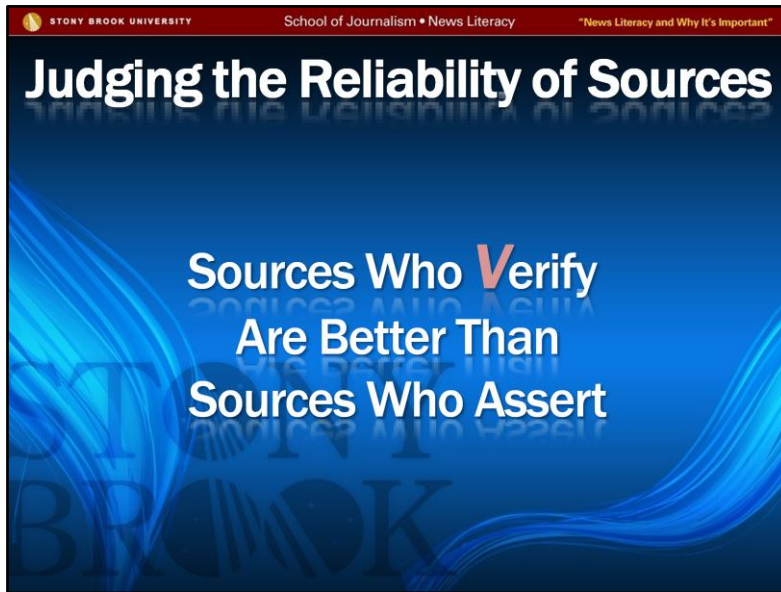
ASK: Do you evaluate these sources differently as a group than you evaluate them one-by one?

Why is that?

ASK: Break these sources down for me.

How do you evaluate each one?

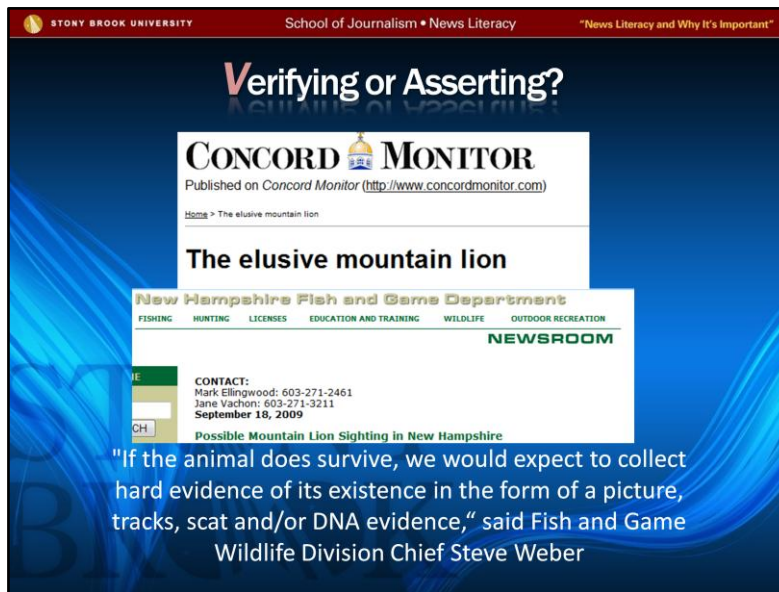
- **Omar Wasso**, the rooftop witness, who is a pro-American supporter of Kurdistan
- **Erik Prince**, the President of Blackwater Security
- **The two police officers**, Ali Khalaf Salman and his partner
- An investigation by **the U.S. Army**
- A statement from **the State Department**, which had hired Blackwater
- **Wounded Taxi driver** (phonetic) Baras Hadoun



Where are we now?

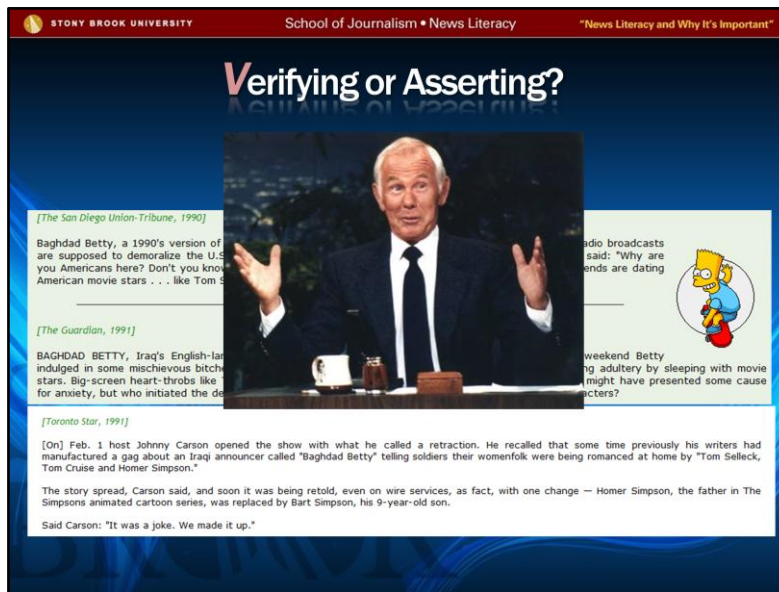
I.M..... V

ASK: What is the difference between Verify and Assert?



ASK: What do you think of this source, Steve Weber, who is asked to confirm an apocryphal story about the spotting of a long-extinct creature in New Hampshire, the cougar...and responds by noting that a living creature leaves physical evidence: tracks, scat (poo) or hairs that can be DNA tested.

He is a source who is pushing the journalist to do her job, basically, saying the person who spotted a "cougar" ought to be able to verify...



(ANIMATION: First click: two stories about Bart Simpson and Baghdad Betty. Second, Johnny Carson

The San Diego Union Tribune and Guardian of London report, with no verification, about a psychological warfare radio announcer named “Baghdad Betty” trying to hurt morale by telling American GIs that Hollywood stars like Bart Simpson are back home in America making love to their wives and girlfriends.

Hilarious, right? Now how did those two newspapers verify that? With a recording? A transcript? A witness?

NEXT CLICK: It turns out Johnny Carson’s writers made it up, he read it on air, it circulated and ended up as “news.”

(Source of this research is Snopes.com)

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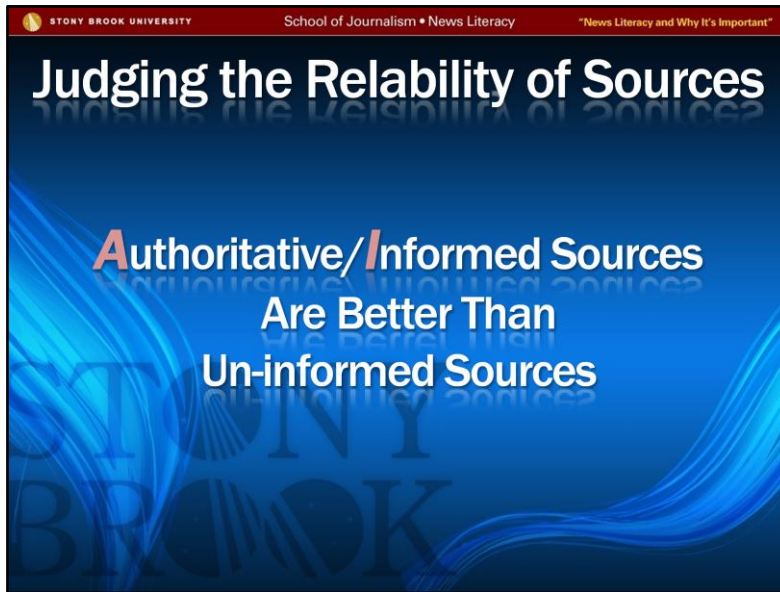
A Corollary to Last Week's Lesson:



Just Like We Always ask:
"Did the Reporter Open the Freezer?"

You can also ask
"Did the Source Open the Freezer?"

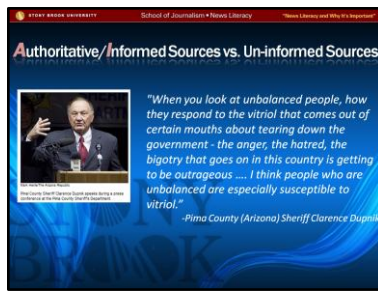
The



Now we are at A/I...a reliable source is authoritative or at least informed about the events they describe.



Clovis-style arrow and spear-points (first found in Clovis, New Mexico) have long been identified as the signs of the first humans in North America. They are theorized to have crossed the long-gone ice shelf from Northeast Asia to North America about 13,000 years ago. The similarity in flint-knapping marks on these tools is what the theory was built on. Tools of the same age 5,600 miles apart look almost identically the same, while other regions produced different styles of tools. Now, scientists have identified stone tools in Texas from deeper soil sediments that pre-date Clovis technology. Point is, the scientists debating this point all have experience and education that qualifies them to debate the point. You wouldn't rely on your Uncle Murray...unless he were an archaeologist.



Representative Gabrielle Giffords, an Arizona Democrat, was shot in the head at point-blank range and critically wounded in a shooting rampage on Jan. 8 that left 12 other people wounded and six people dead outside a Tucson supermarket where the congresswoman was meeting with constituents. Pima County Sheriff Clarence Dupnik says nasty political rhetoric got his friend Gabrielle shot.

On the slide is one of his first comments, made shortly after he got back into town from a business trip.

Ask: Is he Authoritative and/or Informed?

Here's what we know: Sheriff Dupnik, age 75, was reared in Bisbee, Arizona, a mining town. He was president of his graduating class at Bisbee High School and seriously considered the priesthood, but instead, in 1955, enrolled at the University of Arizona. He majored in criminal justice, but left before graduating. He joined the Tucson Police Department as a patrol officer in 1958 and by 1976, was a major in the Tucson department when the Pima County Sheriff hired him as chief deputy. Dupnik, a registered Democrat, has won every election since his first in 1980. In 2008, he won with nearly 65 percent of the vote. His longevity as well as his political skill have made him a de facto leader among Pima County Democrats. (—Arizona Republic)

Is he a psychologist? Is he a psychiatrist? Has he examined the defendant at length (no)

This is the thing about Authority...Just because you are AN authority, doesn't mean you are Authoritative about everything.

Because he is privy to the investigation and has talked to officers who were at the shooting scene, he can verify numerous pieces of information and facts about the shooting.

But as to Loughner's mental health and mental state and the effects of political rhetoric, his assertions carry about as much weight as yours, which is to say very little weight.



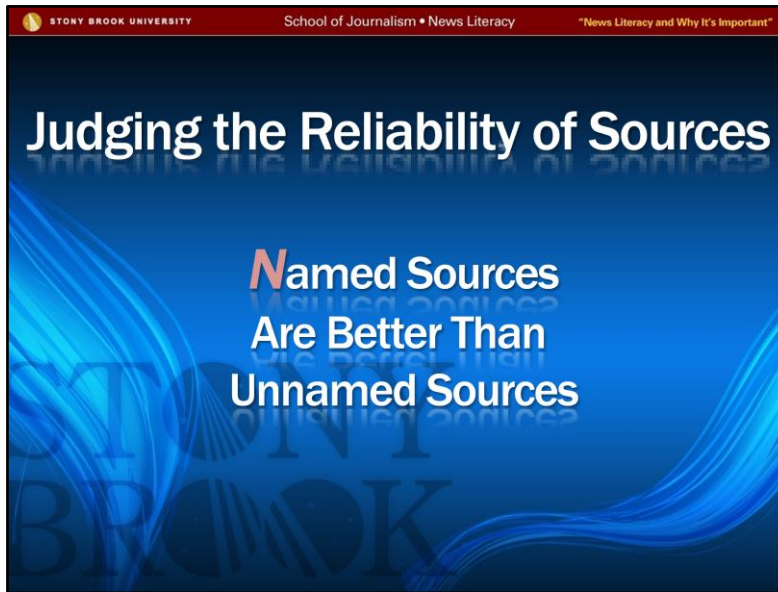
ANIMATION: One Click covers up Mr. Moore's conspiratorial suggestions with the answer from the Wildlife Health Center's lab

Shortly after New Years, thousands of dead blackbirds were found near Beebe, Arkansas. Network news coverage included clips from Alfred Hitchcock's 1963 horror film: "The Birds." In Beebe, local TV reporters interviewed a Mr. Moore, whose New Year mood was a little dark, suggesting officials were covering up something sinister.

ASK: What kind of source is he?

CLICK AND ASK: What kind of source is the Wildlife Health Center?

(which autopsied the birds and found they died of trauma, likely from being startled on New Years Eve by fireworks...



This one seems so obvious it is barely worth mentioning, but it's a good time to mention this complex idea:

ASK: Who can remind us what is Cognitive Dissonance and What Can it Make Us Do?


So, when you're analyzing sources, it's worth challenging your evaluations and asking if your weighting of sources is based on the facts, or based on your biases and strongly-held beliefs?

Let's look at this simple idea, encapsulated in the very first slide: **"Says Who?"**

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Named Sources vs. Unnamed Sources

March 21, 2014 12:07 PM
 New York Proposes Delay for Waste Transfer Stations
 BY JEFFREY M. HARRIS



"Moving the costs of these facilities to future budgets in no way confers priority upon them in those budgets," **Gavin Kearney, director of the environmental justice program at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest**, wrote in a memo to the City Council, which is holding budget hearings. "And

A city official with knowledge of the budget process, speaking on condition of anonymity, pointed out that not all proposals make it into the final capital plan.

"It is very possible these cuts will be reversed," said the official, who said he spoke on condition of anonymity because of the sensitive nature of budget negotiations.

In this New York Times report from the Green Blog, the reporter has the representative of an environmental group on the record by name and organization and then a city official who won't be quoted by name.

ASK: Do you think there is a good reason for the official to be anonymous?

As a reader, how does the lack of a name strike you?

Are anonymous sources ever valid?

How about this example



(ANIMATION: First three clicks go from Nixon waving farewell from Marine 1 through a series of headlines detailing his fall. Fourth Click brings up the Deep Throat covers.)

ASK: Who is this guy? (it's Nixon on the steps of Marine 1)

It is pretty tempting to dismiss all anonymous sources as untrustworthy, especially after the WMD debacle.

But when corroborated with other kinds of evidence, un-named sources can be the only way news consumers learn about serious problems in government or elsewhere.

An anonymous source was one key to the Washington Post's investigation of the attempted cover-up of the role Nixon's White House and campaign played in a break-in at the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee.

"Deep Throat" was first introduced to the public in the book written by Washington Post reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein about how they broke the Watergate story. His identity was the best-kept secret in Washington until June 2005, when his imminent death prompted him to go public. He was Mark Felt, the 2nd-in-command at the FBI and he fed the reporters a series of tips the FBI had been forced to sit on by the Nixon Whitehouse.

The scandal would eventually lead to the resignation of President Nixon as well as prison terms for six White House staffers and presidential advisers. Felt was the key to the Washington Post's Watergate investigation. Without his information, The puny Washington, D.C. newspaper would not have been able to take on the Executive Branch of the U.S. government.



ANIMATION: TWO CLICKS. First brings up the offending quote from “officials” Second brings up ombudsman’s comments.)

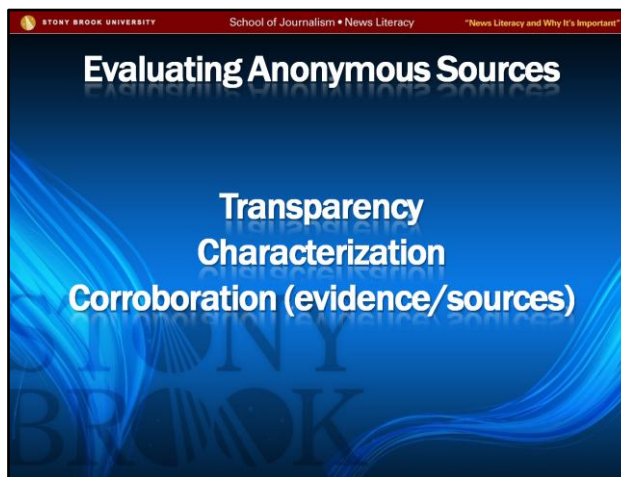
Once you start permitting public officials to speak off the record, they all want to.

Call it an accountability deficit.

This example is from the Washington Post’s ombudsman.

It’s a problem everywhere.

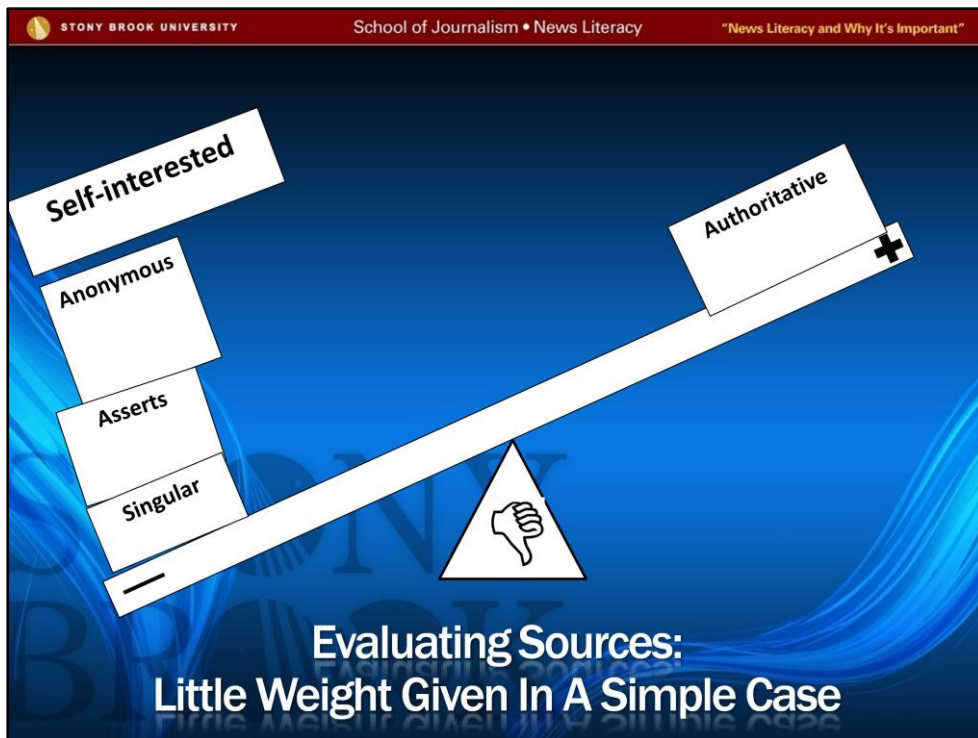
New York Times ombudsman Clark Hoyt correctly notes that readers “distrust nameless snipers .”



We revisit this question later this semester, but here are some questions to ask when you’re evaluating an anonymous source:

- Is there an adequate explanation why the source must remain anonymous (fear of retribution, prosecution)
- Is there sufficient information given to establish the source’s value (“A witness...a co-worker”)
- Is there other information in the story, from named sources, documents or other forms of evidence, that independently corroborates what the anonymous source says?

If not, are you being asked to take too much on faith?

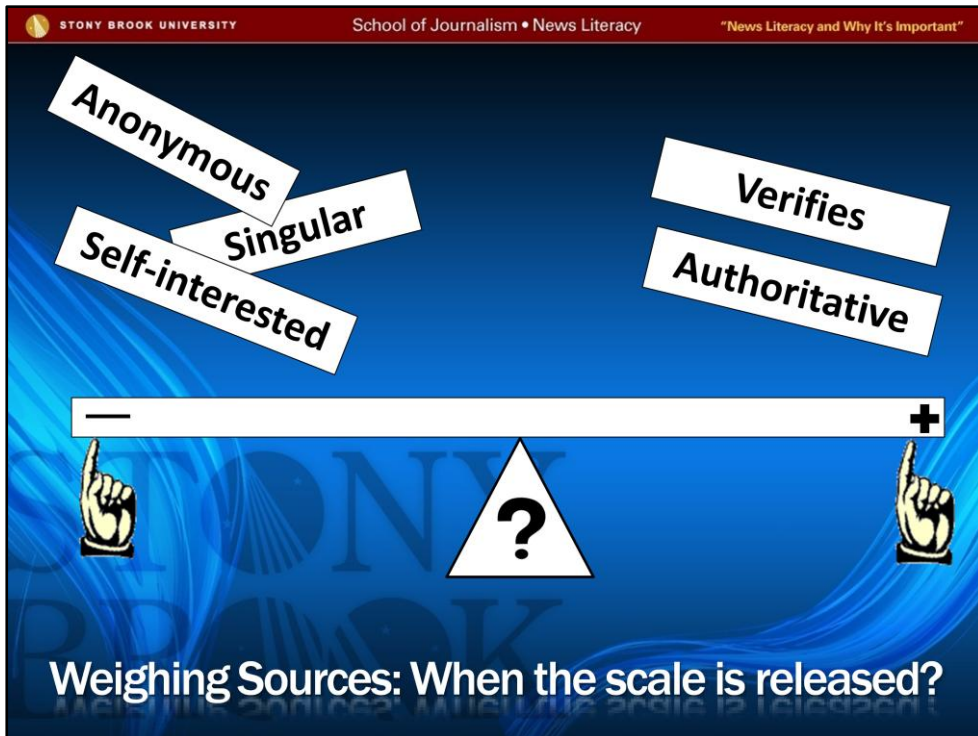


Let's step back from the details of these stories to think about the relative weight of the various characteristics of sources.

Here's a simple example. An anonymous source makes an unverified or unverifiable assertion. No one else is backing that assertion, plus in describing the source, the news report says *"The source, who benefited from the sale before it fell apart, asked not to be named to protect her remaining investment..."* Because she is close to the situation, she is authoritative, but the other characteristics reduce the weight you'd give her.



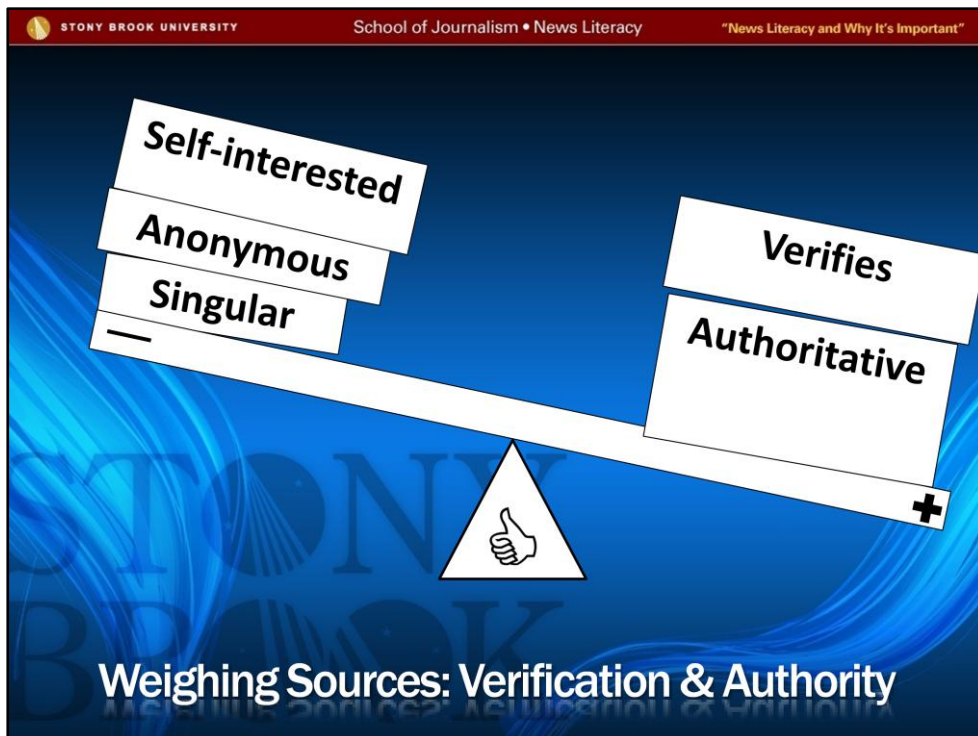
Here's the kind of sophistication we expect you to bring to your evaluation of sources. A named and independent source sounds great. But you might not give them much weight if they are well-informed and authoritative, but only in a similar field: for example it's a story about vaccination safety and this source is a medical doctor, but is a surgeon. Further, he doesn't cite evidence for his claim that H1N1 vaccination is dangerous. And, the report doesn't indicate any other doctors saying the same thing.



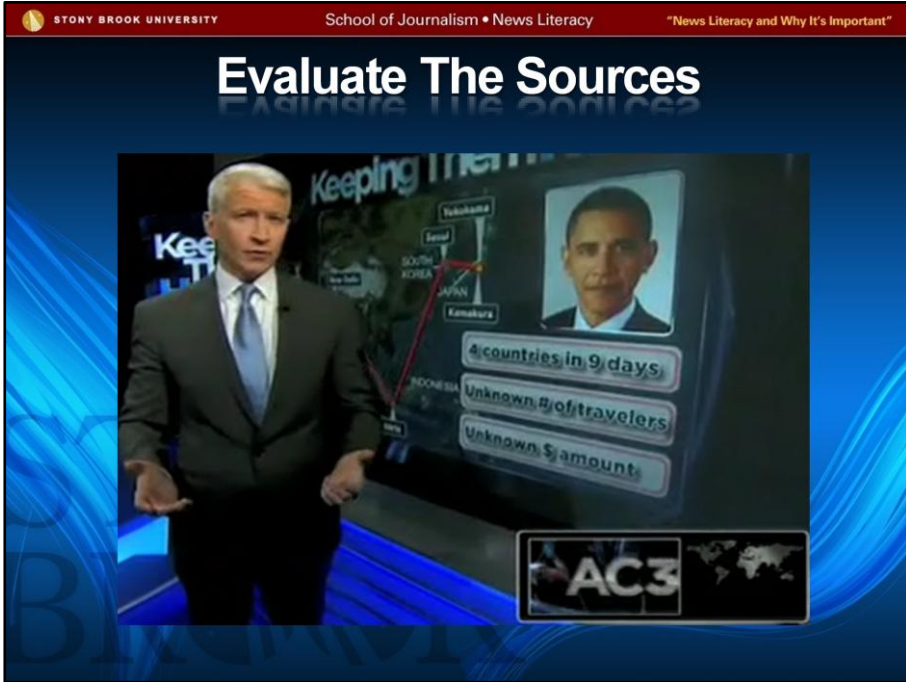
Now try it yourself.

What will this look like once the scale is released?

Would this one be thumbs up or thumbs down?



The problem with self-interest is that even though it's a negative, it is also a constant of sorts. A really authoritative source will be one who is close to some dangerous or illegal activity, so she will either be afraid of losing her job or her life or some money. But because she is so far inside, she's got documents or photos or other evidence that verifies what she is saying.



When persistent reports circulated earlier this year that President Obama's trip to India was costing \$200 Million per day, Anderson Cooper went to the source of the information.



Sources



"The huge amount of around \$200 million would be spent on security, stay and other aspects of the Presidential visit," a top official of the Maharashtra Government privy to the arrangements for the high-profile visit said.



Outlets

Article Comments

US to spend \$200 mn a day on Obama's Mumbai visit

Press Trust of India, Updated: November 03, 2010 08:25 IST



Let's evaluate the sources in this report. Remember, don't get confused between the Sources in news reports and the Outlets that quote those sources in news reports...



Evaluate The Sources



COOPER200mIL.WMV

(NEWS FELLOW LINK VIDEO HERE)
(Lecturers: it's a monster. 6 minutes!)

But , you could stop at the end of Geoff Morrell's remarks, around 4:46

Judging the Reliability of Sources

1) **I**ndependent Sources Are Better Than Self-Interested Sources

2) **M**ultiple Sources Are Better Than Single Sources

3) Sources Who **V**erify Are Better Than Sources Who Assert

4) **A**uthoritative/**I**nformed Sources Are Better Than Uninformed Sources

5) **N**amed Sources Are Better Than Unnamed Sources

(Mnemonic Device: **I'M VAIN**)

Just a reminder of how we evaluate sources:

I

'M

V

A/I

N

STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY School of Journalism • News Literacy "News Literacy and Why It's Important"



Evaluate The Source

Article Comments

US to spend \$200 mn a day on Obama's Mumbai visit

Press Trust of India, Updated: November 03, 2010 08:25 IST

"The huge amount of around \$200 million would be spent on security, stay and other aspects of the Presidential visit," a top official of the Maharashtra Government privy to the arrangements for the high-profile visit said.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE

GAO U.S. Government Accountability Office

Okay, so let's break these down using I M V A/I N.

ASK: Congresswoman **Michele Bachmann**, R-Minnesota?

ASK: **Robert Gibbs**, then-White House Press Secretary ?

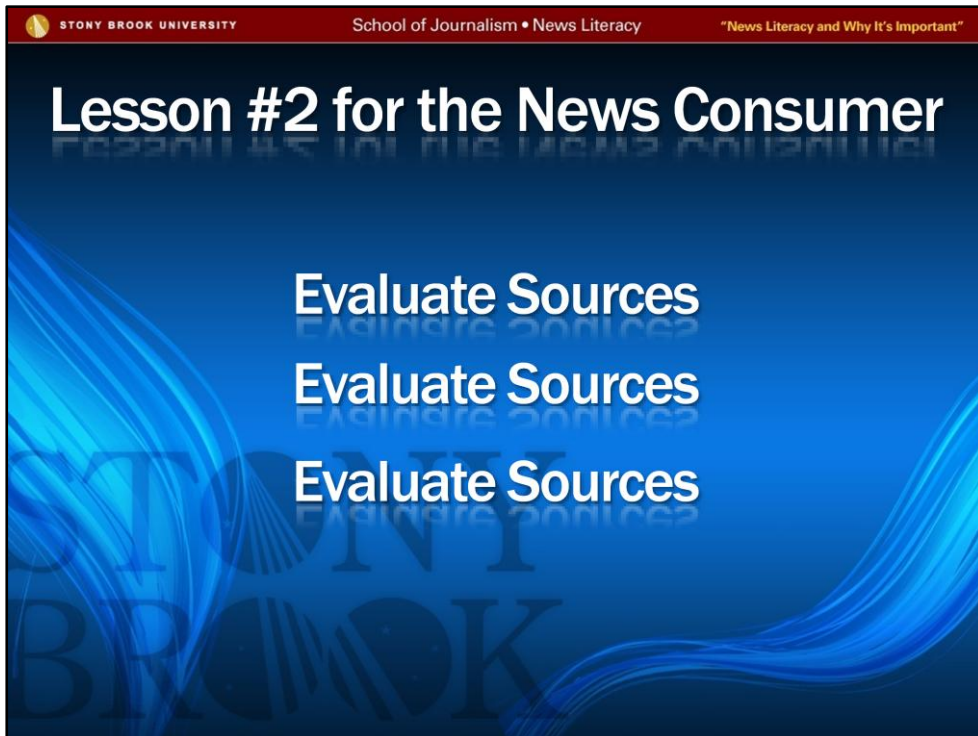
ASK: **Geoff Morrell**, Pentagon Press Spokesman?

ASK: **Congressional Budget Office**?

(House and Senate leaders select director for 4-year term)

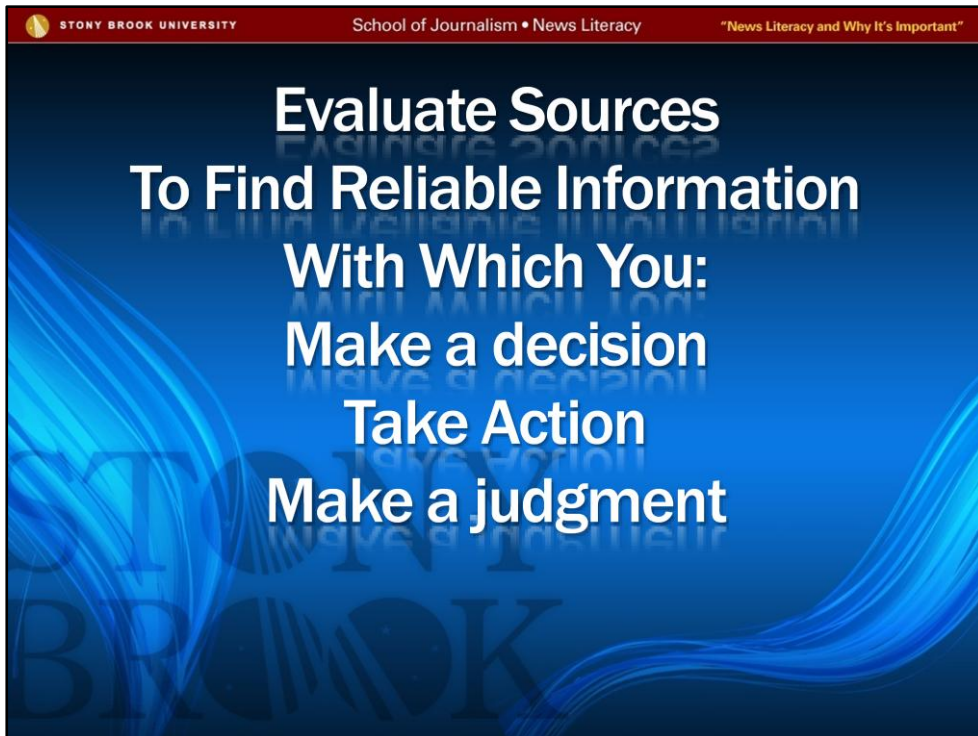
ASK: **Government Accountability Office**?

(Congress Proposes director, President appoints to 15-year term)

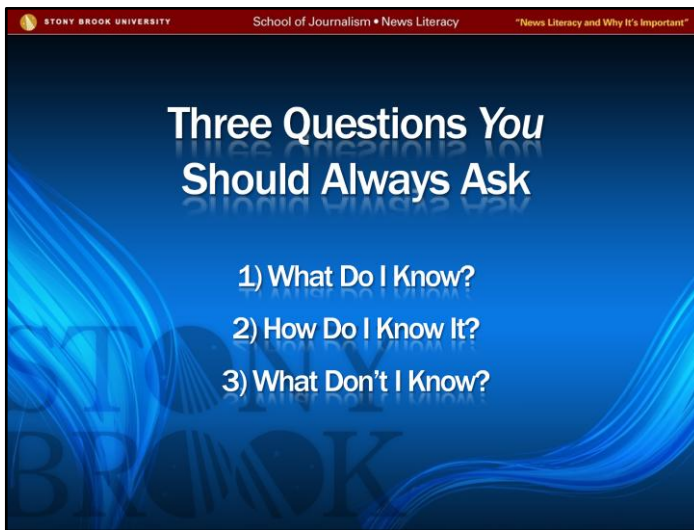


Does verification trump self-interest? It depends. Does authority outweigh anonymity? Sometimes. Is singularity and anonymity a fatal flaw? It might be. It often frustrates students that there is no formula. But there can't be. The five rules of source evaluation: I.M.V.A/I.N give you a vocabulary with which to make judgments with clarity, but critical thinking is lonely work: you, probing information and Thinking For Yourself.

We may disagree with you in the amount of weight you give to characteristics, but so long as you are evaluating sources and not just taking for granted their weight...you are well on your way to News Literacy, particularly if you begin to demand that your news diet consist of reports built on credible sources.



And as always, this is not some snazzy jargon intended to make you insufferable to your friends and family. Rather, it is a crucial skill in your civic life.



Combining the skills of this lecture and the prior lecture on evidence prepares you to look for transparency and context that allow you to reasonably judge the quality of a report.

These three questions will help you decide if a news report has provided adequate **context** to prevent you from drawing a false conclusion and if the journalist has been **transparent** about how the information was collected, and from whom:

What Do I Know?

How do I know It?

What Don't I know?

In the end, it's all about the news consumer weighing the evidence to reach a conclusion. No story is perfect and it's up to you to decide: Is this reliable?

Assignments:

**Don't forget that your Provisional Truth homework is due this week!**

(It was in last week's assignment folder).

**Reading: Journalism of Verification**

Read chapter 4 in *The Elements of Journalism*, "Journalism of Verification."
Must be completed prior to recitation March 30.

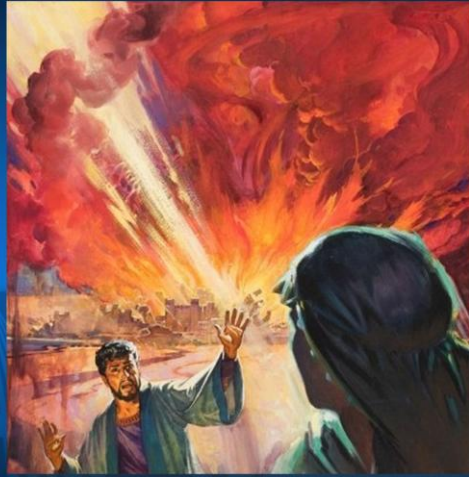
**Anderson Cooper Folder**

Deadline: Must upload before recitation March 30.

Inside this folder you will find:

- Homework directions.
- A link to the Digital Textbook where you'll read a chapter from Anderson Cooper's book "Dispatches from the Edge: A Memoir of War, Disasters and Survival." In the chapter Cooper describes his reporting in Sri Lanka shortly after the tsunami hit in 2004.

Sodom and Gomorrah



Are there ten students in class who have done the work?

For use by lecturers who suspect the readings aren't being done.

No? Then... Pop Quiz!

