After this lecture, students will be able to:

1. **Begin to apply key lessons of News Literacy in real time to find or identify reliable information.**
2. **Use the IMVAIN test of source reliability on the fly.**
3. **Distinguish, on the fly, between direct and indirect evidence and even spot-check if conclusions are logical or not.**
4. **Begin to correctly use the terms "Transparency" and "Context" to judge the professionalism of news reporting.**
5. **Use the Deconstruction Workbook as a means to rehearse detailed and sophisticated judgment of news reports.**

These are the capstone skills of this course, encompassing all 6 outcomes promised by the syllabus.

Reminder: Bring Deconstruction Workbook to Recitation, too

Print it.

Read it.

Bring it

'Deconstructing' the News

Is Too Much Texting A Mental Illness?

How to Assess the Reliability of the News

Texting.wmv

Housekeeping, Announcements & Notes

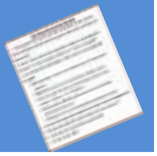
Countdown
To Test #2

Held in Recitation,
Emphasizes Lectures 7-11,
(Fairness & Bias through Power of Images)
…but requires some use of concepts from Test 1.
Same format: 10 questions, 100 points possible.

Deconstruction: *"Application of News Literacy concepts to the analysis of component parts of a news report in order to dispassionately judge its reliability."*

A Deconstruction Worksheet
How to Judge Reliability

1) Summarize the main points: Does the headline and the lead support the main point(s)?
2) How close does the reporter come to opening the freezer? Is the evidence direct or arm's-length?



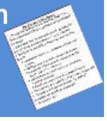
A Deconstruction Worksheet

How to Judge Reliability

3) Evaluate the reliability of the sources using I'M VA/IN

4) Does the reporter make his/her work transparent?

5) Does the reporter place the story in context?



A Deconstruction Worksheet

How to Judge Reliability

6) Are the key questions answered?

- Who -What -When -Where? -Why? -How?

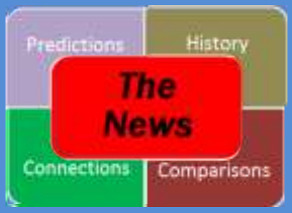
7) Is the story fair?

And The Whole Point Is….

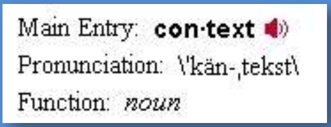
What can a news consumer
Do with this information

Is it actionable?

Context & Transparency
Two Ideas Students Struggle With


Predictions
History
The News
Connections
Comparisons

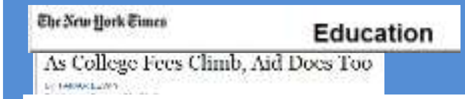
Key Definitions



Main Entry: **con·text**
Pronunciation: \ˈkän-ˌtekst\
Function: *noun*

Context: Facts that surround an event or elements of a news story and provide meaning or significance

Context

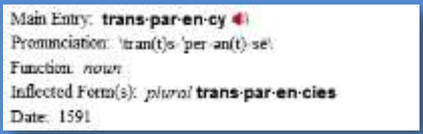


The New York Times **Education**

As College Fees Climb, Aid Does Too

When you look at how much students are actually paying, on average, it is lower, after adjusting for inflation, than five years earlier.”

Key Definitions



Main Entry: **trans·par·en·cy**
Pronunciation: \tran(t)s-ˈper-ən(t)-sē\
Function: *noun*
Inflected Form(s): *plural* **trans·par·en·cies**
Date: 1591

Transparency: The reporter specifies in the story what he or she *does not* know, and why it could not be learned; how they know what they do know; when the reporter pulls the curtain aside.

TRANSPARENCY

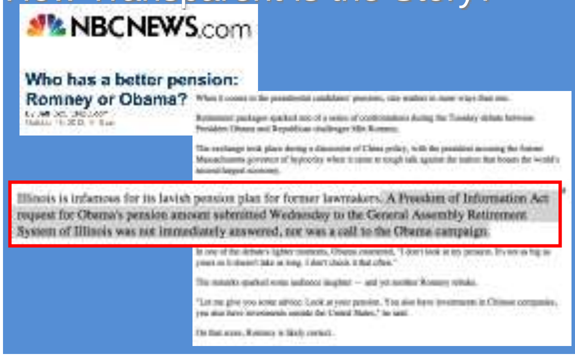
A Source Who
Saw Her Boss
And Fears
Retribution

TRANSPARENCY

*"…lax oversight of the district's credit card, (was) among a series of financial irregularities **outlined in a critical audit** of the Wilton-Lyndeborough School District."*

Deconstructing the News

How Transparent is the Story?



NBCNEWS.com

Who has a better pension: Romney or Obama?

Illinois is infamous for its lavish pension plan for former lawmakers. A Freedom of Information Act request for Obama's pension amount submitted Wednesday to the General Assembly Retirement System of Illinois was not immediately answered, nor was a call to the Obama campaign.

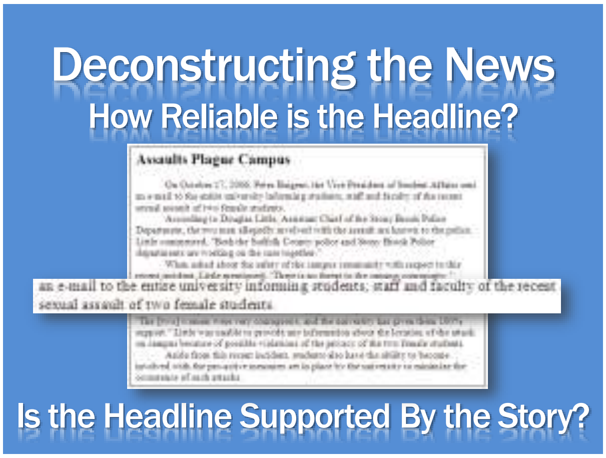
Deconstructing the News

Transparency is Openness about Methods

- *"Could not be reached"*
- *"Requested anonymity because she feared losing her job"*
- *"A reporter attempted to contact the family at home, but no one came to the door."*
- *"The information could not be independently verified."*

Deconstruction

1) Summarize the main points of the story



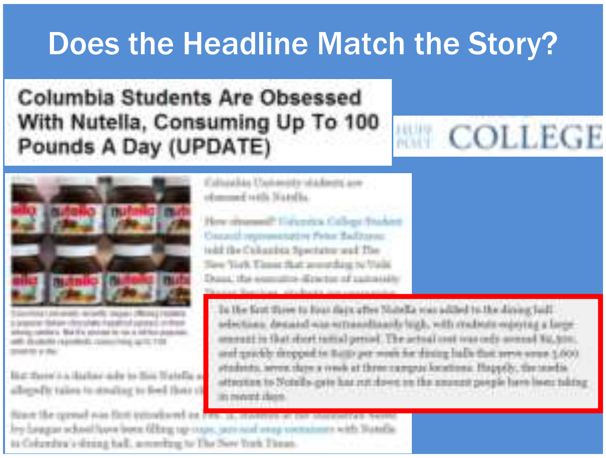
Deconstructing the News

How Reliable is the Headline?

Assaults Plague Campus

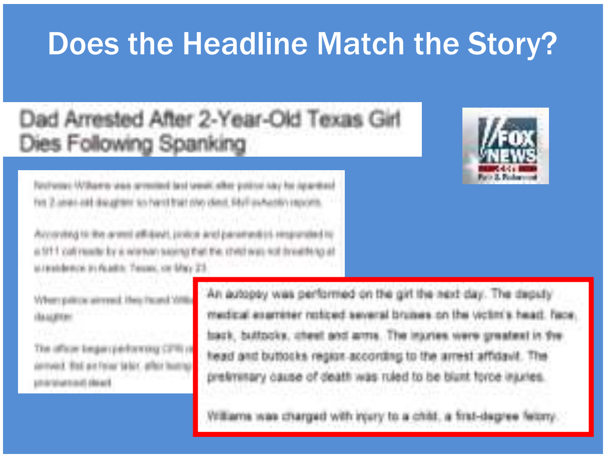
an e-mail to the entire university informing students, staff and faculty of the recent sexual assault of two female students

Is the Headline Supported By the Story?



Does the Headline Match the Story?

Columbia Students Are Obsessed With Nutella, Consuming Up To 100 Pounds A Day (UPDATE)

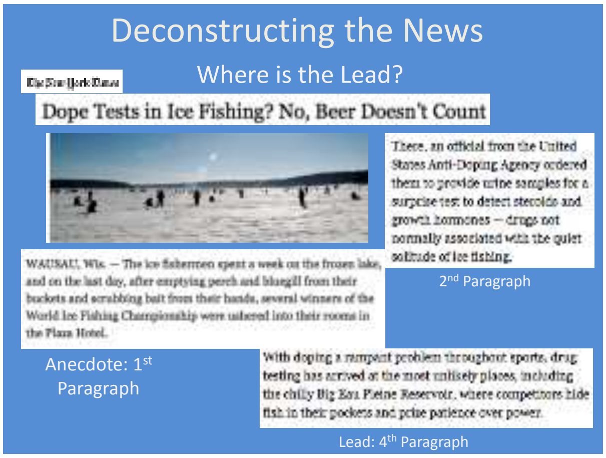


Does the Headline Match the Story?

Dad Arrested After 2-Year-Old Texas Girl Dies Following Spanking

An autopsy was performed on the girl the next day. The deputy medical examiner noticed several bruises on the victim's head, face, back, buttocks, chest and arms. The injuries were greatest in the head and buttocks region according to the arrest affidavit. The preliminary cause of death was ruled to be blunt force injuries.

Williams was charged with injury to a child, a first-degree felony.



Deconstructing the News

Where is the Lead?

Dope Tests in Ice Fishing? No, Beer Doesn't Count

WAUSAU, Wis. — The ice fishermen spent a week on the frozen lake, and on the last day, after emptying perch and bluegill from their buckets and scrubbing bait from their hands, several winners of the World Ice Fishing Championship were ushered into their rooms in the Plaza Hotel.

Anecdote: 1st Paragraph

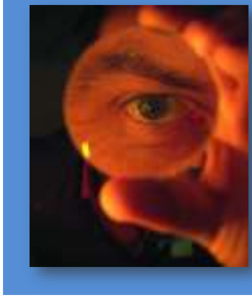
There, an official from the United States Anti-Doping Agency ordered them to provide urine samples for a surprise test to detect steroids and growth hormones — drugs not normally associated with the quiet solitude of ice fishing.

2nd Paragraph

With doping a rampant problem throughout sports, drug testing has arrived at the most unlikely places, including the chilly Big Eau Pleine Reservoir, where competitors hide fish in their pockets and prize patience over power.

Lead: 4th Paragraph

Deconstructing the News

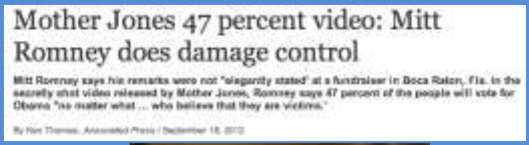


2) Assess the evidence supporting the main points of the story.

Deconstructing the News

Direct Evidence, Indirect Evidence? Think Like a CSI

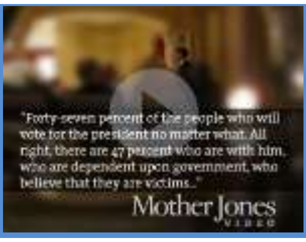
The Christian Science Monitor Direct Evidence



Mother Jones 47 percent video: Mitt Romney does damage control

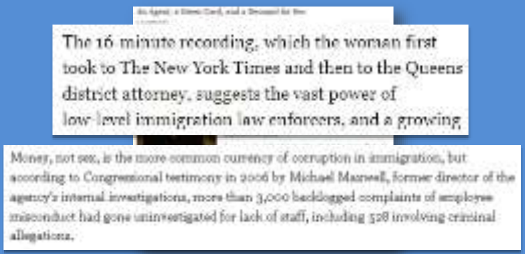
Mitt Romney says his remarks were not "elegantly stated" at a fundraiser in Boca Raton, Fla. In the secretly shot video released by Mother Jones, Romney says 47 percent of the people will vote for Obama "no matter what ... who believe that they are victims."

By Ken Thomas, Associated Press / September 18, 2012



"Forty-seven percent of the people who will vote for the president no matter what. All right, there are 47 percent who are with him, who are dependent upon government, who believe that they are victims."

Deconstructing the News

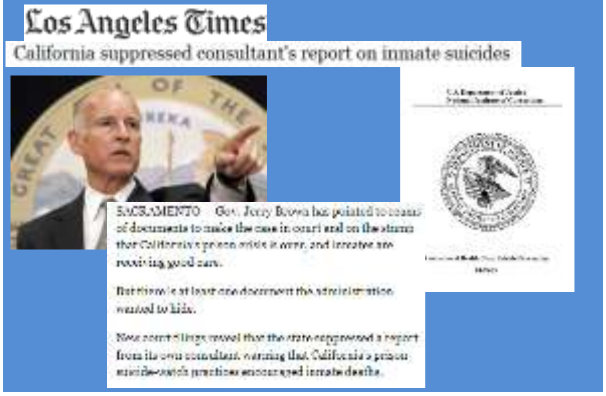


The 16 minute recording, which the woman first took to The New York Times and then to the Queens district attorney, suggests the vast power of low-level immigration law enforcers, and a growing

Money, not sex, is the more common currency of corruption in immigration, but according to Congressional testimony in 2006 by Michael Maxwell, former director of the agency's internal investigations, more than 3,000 backlogged complaints of employee misconduct had gone uninvestigated for lack of staff, including 528 involving criminal allegations.

Evidence: Did the reporter open the freezer?

Did the reporter open the freezer?



Los Angeles Times

California suppressed consultant's report on inmate suicides

SACRAMENTO — Gov. Jerry Brown has pointed to reams of documents to make the case in court and on the stump that California's prison crisis is over, and inmates are receiving good care.

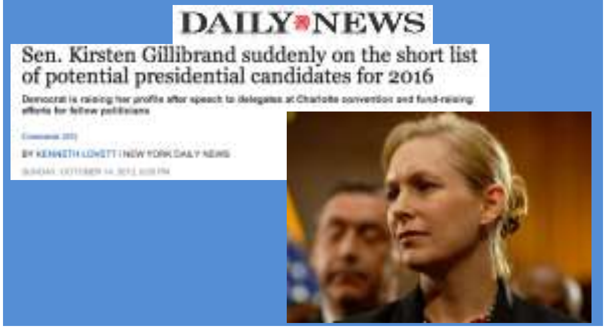
But there is at least one document the administration wanted to hide.

New court filings reveal that the state suppressed a report from its own consultant warning that California's prison suicide-watch practices encouraged inmate deaths.

Deconstructing the News

How close did the reporter come to opening the freezer? If not, did a reliable source open it?

What's the Evidence That Sen. Gillibrand Will Run for President?



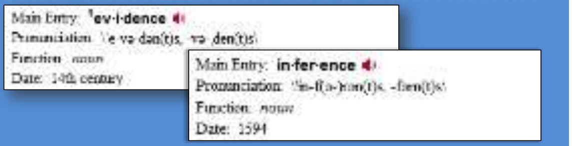
DAILY NEWS

Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand suddenly on the short list of potential presidential candidates for 2016

Democrat is raising her profile after speech to delegates at Charlotte convention and fund-raising efforts for fellow politicians

BY KENNETH LOVETT / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

Test Inferences for Soundness



Main Entry: ¹ev·i·dence
Pronunciation: \ˈe-və-dən(t)s, -və-ˌden(t)s\
Function: noun
Date: 14th century

Main Entry: in·fer·ence
Pronunciation: \ˈin-f(ə-)rən(t)s, -fərn(t)s\
Function: noun
Date: 1594

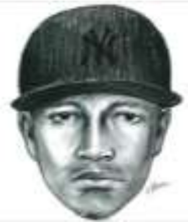
Evidence: Information that proves or disproves something

Inference: Taking information that is accepted as true and then drawing a conclusion that may or may not be valid

Checking Inferences

The New York Times

Crime Blotter Has a Regular: Yankees Caps



Deconstructing the News

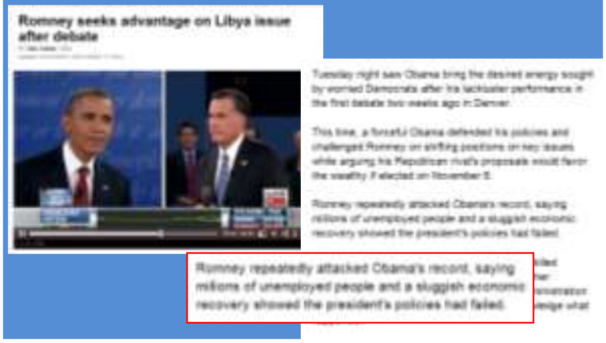
USA TODAY

Pulling all-nighters earns lower GPAs

In Thacher's first study, 65 students said they had pulled one or more all-nighters, and 45 said they hadn't done any. The survey was conducted in Psychology 101 classes, and included students in a variety of majors.

Is The Inference Sturdy?

Deconstructing the News: Inference



Romney seeks advantage on Libya issue after debate

Tuesday night saw Obama bring the desired energy sought by worried Democrats after his lackluster performance in the first debate two weeks ago in Denver.

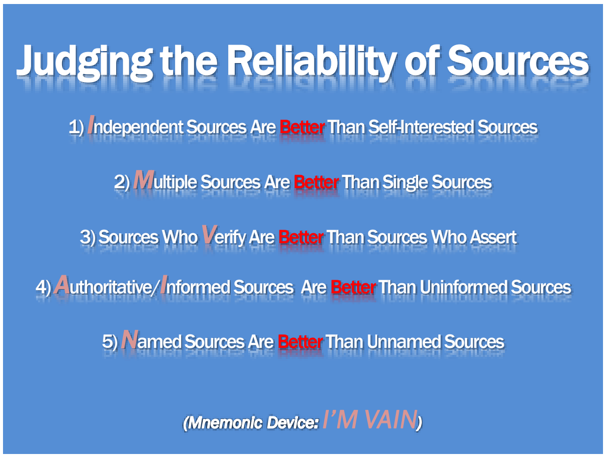
This time, a forceful Obama defended his policies and challenged Romney on shifting positions on key issues while arguing his Republican rival's proposals would favor the wealthy if elected on November 6.

Romney repeatedly attacked Obama's record, saying millions of unemployed people and a sluggish economic recovery showed the president's policies had failed.

Romney repeatedly attacked Obama's record, saying millions of unemployed people and a sluggish economic recovery showed the president's policies had failed.

Deconstructing the News

3) Are the Sources Reliable?



Judging the Reliability of Sources

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

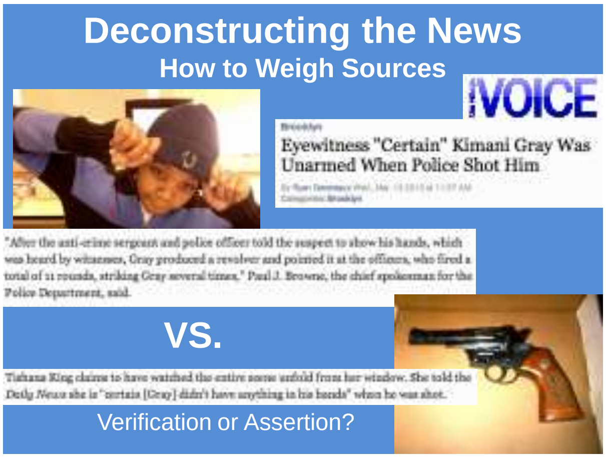
2) *M*ultiple Sources Are Better Than Single Sources

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)



Deconstructing the News

How to Weigh Sources

VOICE

Brooklyn

Eyewitness "Certain" Kimani Gray Was Unarmed When Police Shot Him

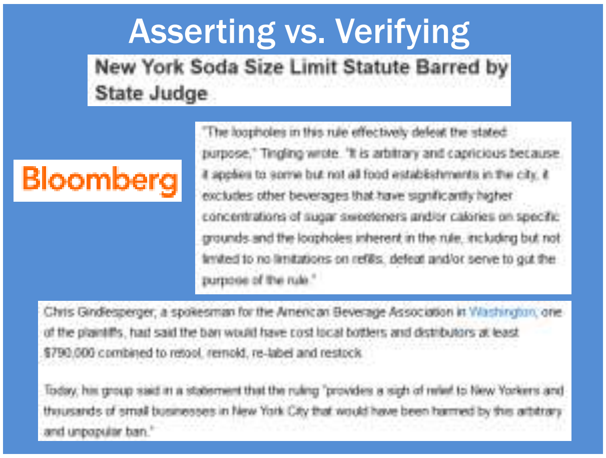
[illegible]

"After the anti-crime sergeant and police officer told the suspect to show his hands, which was heard by witnesses, Gray produced a revolver and pointed it at the officers, who fired a total of 11 rounds, striking Gray several times," Paul J. Browne, the chief spokesman for the Police Department, said.

VS.

Tiahana King claims to have watched the entire scene unfold from her window. She told the *Daily News* she is "certain [Gray] didn't have anything in his hands" when he was shot.

Verification or Assertion?



Asserting vs. Verifying

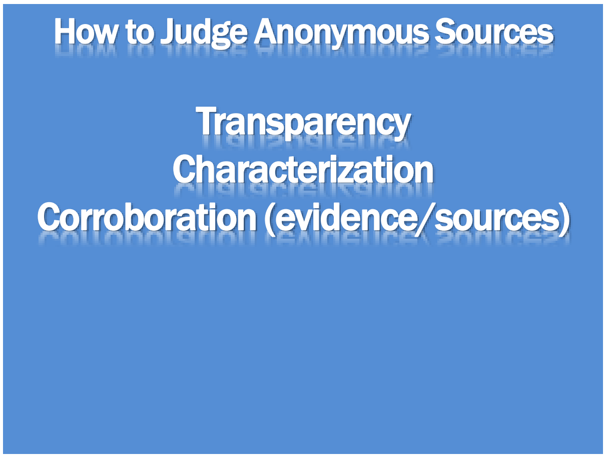
New York Soda Size Limit Statute Barred by State Judge

Bloomberg

"The loopholes in this rule effectively defeat the stated purpose," Tingling wrote. "It is arbitrary and capricious because it applies to some but not all food establishments in the city, it excludes other beverages that have significantly higher concentrations of sugar sweeteners and/or calories on specific grounds and the loopholes inherent in the rule, including but not limited to no limitations on refills, defeat and/or serve to gut the purpose of the rule."

Chris Gindlesperger, a spokesman for the American Beverage Association in Washington, one of the plaintiffs, had said the ban would have cost local bottlers and distributors at least $790,000 combined to retool, remold, re-label and restock.

Today, his group said in a statement that the ruling "provides a sigh of relief to New Yorkers and thousands of small businesses in New York City that would have been harmed by this arbitrary and unpopular ban."



How to Judge Anonymous Sources

Transparency

Characterization

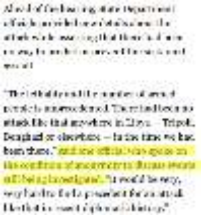
Corroboration (evidence/sources)

Anonymous Sources

Transparent enough? Characterized enough?

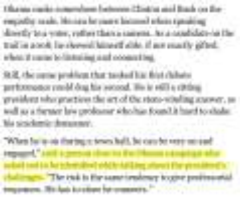
The Washington Post

Benghazi attack may cloud Clinton's legacy

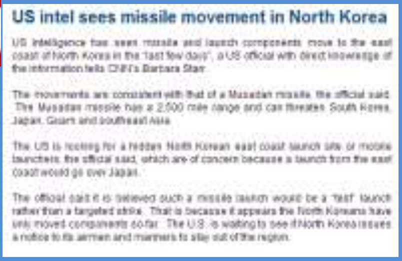


Los Angeles Times

Town hall awaits Obama and Romney



Anonymous Source



US intel sees missile movement in North Korea

US intelligence has seen missile and launch components move to the east coast of North Korea in the "last few days", a US official with direct knowledge of the information tells CNN's Barbara Starr.

The movements are consistent with that of a Musudan missile, the official said. The Musudan missile has a 2,500 mile range and can threaten South Korea, Japan, Guam and southeast Asia.

The US is looking for a hidden North Korean east coast launch site or mobile launchers, the official said, which are of concern because a launch from the east coast would go over Japan.

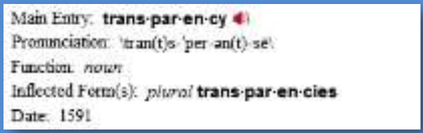
The official said it is believed such a missile launch would be a "test" launch rather than a targeted strike. That is because it appears the North Koreans have only moved components so far. The U.S. is waiting to see if North Korea issues a notice to its airmen and mariners to stay out of the region.

Is there transparency? Characterization? Corroboration?

Deconstructing the News

4) Does the reporter make his or her work transparent?

Key Definitions



Main Entry: **trans·par·en·cy**
Pronunciation: \tran(t)s-ˈper-ən(t)-sē\
Function: *noun*
Inflected Form(s): *plural* **trans·par·en·cies**
Date: 1591

Transparency: The reporter specifies in the story what he or she *does not* know, and why it could not be learned; how they know what they do know; when the reporter pulls the curtain aside.

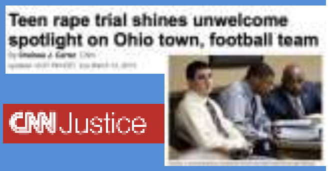
Deconstructing the News

How Transparent is the Story?

National Public Radio Reports from Basra

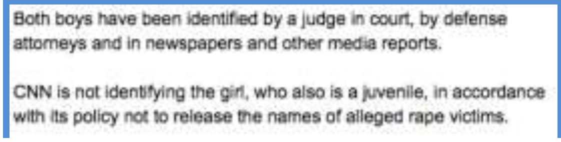
Npr_basra.wmv

Transparency



Teen rape trial shines unwelcome spotlight on Ohio town, football team

CNN Justice



Both boys have been identified by a judge in court, by defense attorneys and in newspapers and other media reports.

CNN is not identifying the girl, who also is a juvenile, in accordance with its policy not to release the names of alleged rape victims.

Transparency and "Quote Approval"

ite House Quote
nity Fair Profile
BAMA'S WAY

Deconstructing the News

Corrections are Institutional Transparency

The New York Times

Corrections

Deconstructing the News

5) Does the reporter place the story in context?

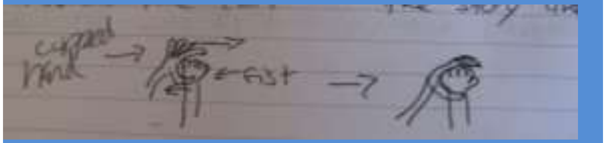
Deconstructing the News

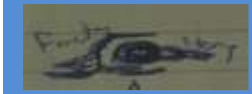
Does the reporter put the story in context?

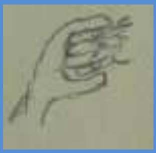
A Car Is Stolen Every 20 Minutes

Nassau and Suffolk are two of New York's 62 counties, but account for 10% of car thefts.

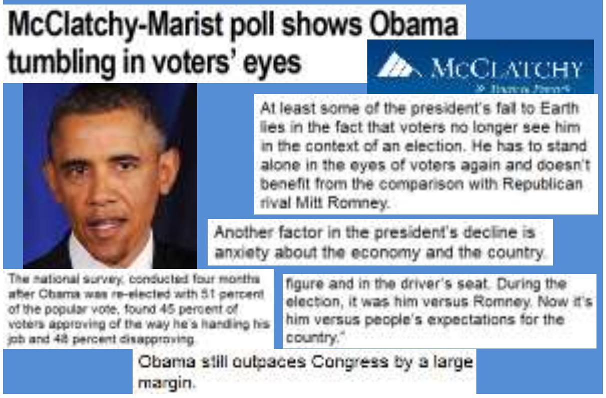
The News Literacy Gang Sign







Find the Context



McClatchy-Marist poll shows Obama tumbling in voters' eyes

At least some of the president's fall to Earth lies in the fact that voters no longer see him in the context of an election. He has to stand alone in the eyes of voters again and doesn't benefit from the comparison with Republican rival Mitt Romney.

Another factor in the president's decline is anxiety about the economy and the country.

The national survey, conducted four months after Obama was re-elected with 51 percent of the popular vote, found 45 percent of voters approving of the way he's handling his job and 48 percent disapproving.

figure and in the driver's seat. During the election, it was him versus Romney. Now it's him versus people's expectations for the country."

Obama still outpaces Congress by a large margin.

Deconstructing the News

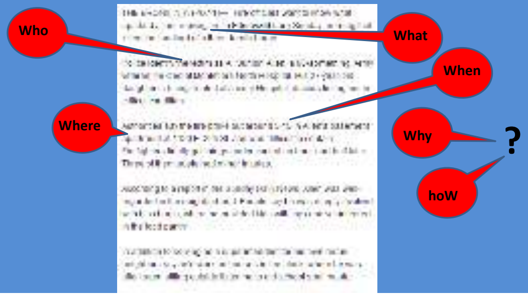
Step 6:

Are the key questions answered?

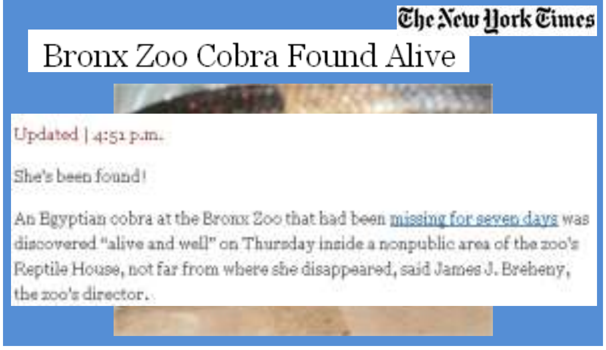
What
Where
When

Deconstructing the News

Step 6: Are the key questions answered?



GAP Analysis: Are all Questions Answered?



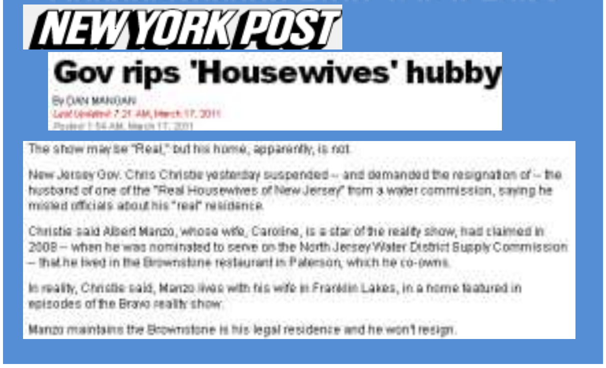
Bronx Zoo Cobra Found Alive

Updated | 4:51 p.m.

She's been found!

An Egyptian cobra at the Bronx Zoo that had been missing for seven days was discovered "alive and well" on Thursday inside a nonpublic area of the zoo's Reptile House, not far from where she disappeared, said James J. Breheny, the zoo's director.

Deconstruction Step 7: Is it Fair?



NEW YORK POST

Gov rips 'Housewives' hubby

By DAN MANGAN
Last Updated: 7:21 AM, March 17, 2011
Posted: 1:54 AM, March 17, 2011

The show may be "Real," but his home, apparently, is not.

New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie yesterday suspended -- and demanded the resignation of -- the husband of one of the "Real Housewives of New Jersey" from a water commission, saying he misled officials about his "real" residence.

Christie said Albert Manzo, whose wife, Caroline, is a star of the reality show, had claimed in 2008 -- when he was nominated to serve on the North Jersey Water District Supply Commission -- that he lived in the Brownstone restaurant in Paterson, which he co-owns.

In reality, Christie said, Manzo lives with his wife in Franklin Lakes, in a home featured in episodes of the Bravo reality show.

Manzo maintains the Brownstone is his legal residence and he won't resign.

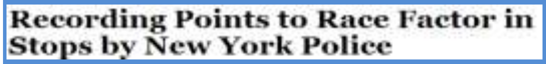
Deconstructing the News

Step 7:

Are people and their ideas fairly presented? Is fair language used?

Deconstructing the News

Step 7: Are people and their ideas fairly presented?



Recording Points to Race Factor in Stops by New York Police

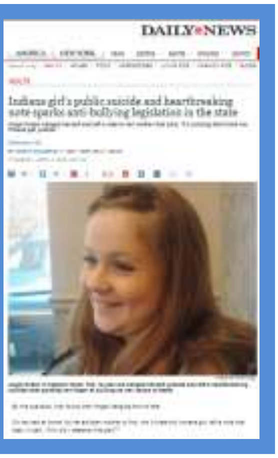
By JOSEPH GOLDSTEIN

For years, the debate over the New York Police Department's use of stop-and-frisk tactics has centered on whether officers engage in racial profiling. Now, a recording suggests that, in at least one precinct, a person's skin color can be a deciding factor in who is stopped. …Deputy Inspector Christopher McCormack, urged the officer to be more active… The way to suppress violent crime, he said, was for officers to stop, question and, if necessary, frisk "the right people at the right time, the right location."

Deconstruct this story

Evaluate the reliability of sources using the IM/VAIN.

Does the reporter open the freezer?

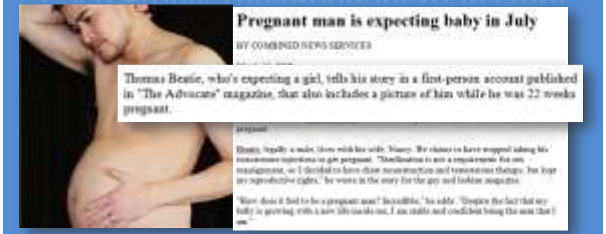


DAILY NEWS

Indiana girl's public suicide and heartbreaking note sparks anti-bullying legislation in the state

Deconstructing the News

Case Study: The pregnant man story



Pregnant man is expecting baby in July

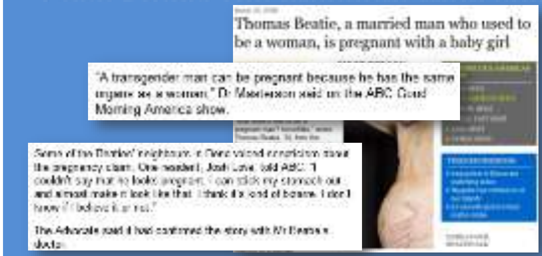
BY COMBINED NEWS SERVICES

Thomas Beatie, who's expecting a girl, tells his story in a first-person account published in "The Advocate" magazine, that also includes a picture of him while he was 22 weeks pregnant.

Assess reliability by Evaluating Sources & Evidence

Deconstructing the News

Case Study: The pregnant man story



Thomas Beatie, a married man who used to be a woman, is pregnant with a baby girl

"A transgender man can be pregnant because he has the same organs as a woman," Dr Masterson said on the ABC Good Morning America show.

Some of the Beaties' neighbours in Bend voiced scepticism about the pregnancy claim. One resident, Josh Love, told ABC: "I couldn't say that he looks pregnant. I can stick my stomach out and almost make it look like that. I think it's kind of bizarre. I don't know if I believe it or not."

The Advocate said it had confirmed the story with Mr Beatie's doctor.

Do These Sources Help?

Deconstructing the News

Case Study: The pregnant man story

Does This Sonogram Help?

Deconstructing the News

Case Study: The pregnant man story

'Pregnant man' Thomas Beatie gives birth to baby girl

Do Baby Photos Help?

Deconstructing the News

Too Much Texting a Mental Illness?

How reliable?

Texting.wmv

Deconstructing the News

Too Much Texting a Mental Illness?
SYMPTOMS OF TEXTING ADDICTION
1. Excessive Use
2. Withdrawal
3. Tolerance
4. Negative Repercussion

Weigh sources and evidence

A Deconstruction Worksheet

How to Judge Reliability

1) Summarize the main points: Does the headline and the lead support the main point(s)?

2) How close does the reporter come to opening the freezer? Is the evidence direct or arm's-length?

A Deconstruction Worksheet

How to Judge Reliability

3) Evaluate the reliability of the sources using I'M VA/IN

4) Does the reporter make his/her work transparent?

5) Does the reporter place the story in context?

A Deconstruction Worksheet

How to Judge Reliability

6) Are the key questions answered?

- Who -What -When -Where? -Why? -How?

7) Is the story fair?

And the Whole Point Is…

Is it actionable?

Can you reach a conclusion?

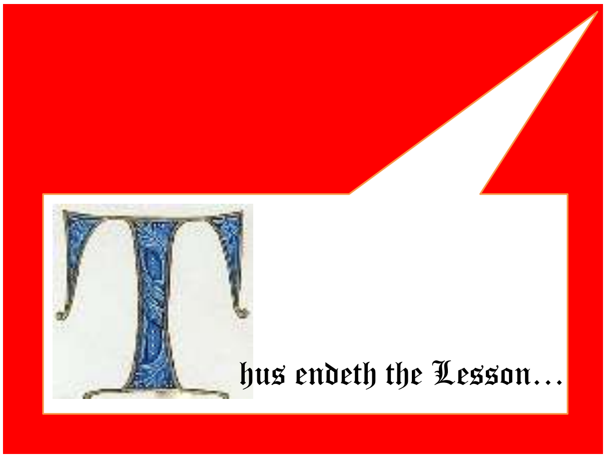
Can you take an action?

Can you make a judgment?

Can you share this information?

Assignments:

1. Bring Deconstruction Workbook to Recitation
2. Writing assignment: "Deconstructing the Washington Post's report on Walter Reed Hospital"



Thus endeth the Lesson…