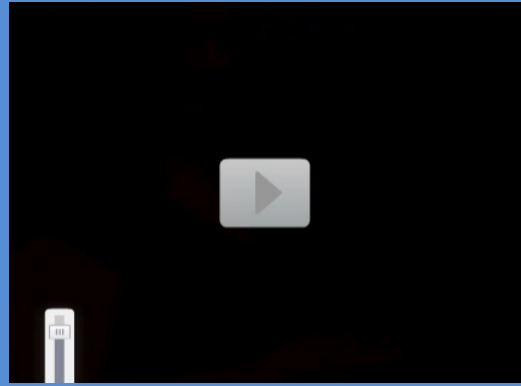


'Deconstructing' the News Is Too Much Texting A Mental Illness?



How to Assess the Reliability of the News



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?

Key Definitions

Main Entry: **con-text** 
Pronunciation: \ˈkən-ˌtɛkst\
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

By TAMAR LEWIN

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-parency** 
Pronunciation: ˈtræn(t)ɪs-ˈpɛr-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



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?



Who has a better pension: Romney or Obama?

When it comes to the presidential candidates' pensions, size matters in more ways than one. Retirement packages sparked one of a series of confrontations during the Tuesday debate between President Obama and Republican challenger Mitt Romney.

The exchange took place during a discussion of China policy, with the president accusing the former Massachusetts governor of hypocrisy when it came to tough talk against the nation that boasts the world's second largest economy.

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.

In one of the debate's lighter moments, Obama countered, "I don't look at my pension. It's not as big as yours so it doesn't take as long. I don't check it that often."

The remarks sparked some audience laughter — and yet another Romney rebuke.

"Let me give you some advice: Look at your pension. You also have investments in Chinese companies, you also have investments outside the United States," he said.

On that score, Romney is likely correct.

Deconstructing the News

Transparency is Openness about Methods

Dispatched Travel History

Search time zone: [Local Over Time]

All assigned travel activity is displayed in local time for the location.

Date/Time	Activity	Location
Oct 16, 2011 4:42 PM	Dispatched	HOLBROOK, WI
Oct 16, 2011 4:54 AM	On Field - vehicle for delivery	HOLBROOK, WI
Oct 16, 2011 4:52 AM	Arrived at Field location	HOLBROOK, WI
Oct 17, 2011 8:10 PM	Dispatched at Field location	HEADQUARTERS
Oct 17, 2011 5:54 PM	Arrived at Field location	HEADQUARTERS
Oct 16, 2011 7:12 AM	Dispatched at Field location	HEADQUARTERSVILLE, NC
Oct 16, 2011 2:30 AM	Arrived at Field location	HEADQUARTERSVILLE, NC
Oct 14, 2011 8:07 PM	Left Field - single for delivery	DURHAM, NC
Oct 14, 2011 8:08 PM	Arrived at Field location	DURHAM, NC
Oct 14, 2011 8:14 PM	Placed up	DURHAM, NC
Oct 14, 2011 8:42 PM	Dispatched information on vehicle for delivery	

- "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

On October 17, 2006, Peter Baigent, the Vice President of Student Affairs sent an e-mail to the entire university informing students, staff and faculty of the recent sexual assault of two female students.

According to Douglas Little, Assistant Chief of the Stony Brook Police Department, the two men allegedly involved with the assault are known to the police. Little commented, "Both the Suffolk County police and Stony Brook Police departments are working on the case together."

When asked about the safety of the campus community with respect to this recent incident, Little responded, "There is no threat to their ongoing coursework."

The [two] women were very courageous, and the university has given them 100% support." Little was unable to provide any information about the location of the attack on campus because of possible violations of the privacy of the two female students.

Aside from this recent incident, students also have the ability to become involved with the pre-active measures set in place by the university to minimize the occurrence of such attacks.

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 300 Pounds A Day (UPDATE)

Columbia University students are obsessed with Nutella.

How obsessed? Columbia College Student Council representative Peter Bailinson told the Columbia Spectator and The New York Times that according to Vicki Dunn, the executive director of university dining services, students are consuming up to 300 pounds a day.

In the first three to four days after Nutella was added to the dining hall selections, demand was extraordinarily high, with students enjoying a large amount in that short initial period. The actual cost was only around \$2,500, and quickly dropped to \$450 per week for dining halls that serve some 3,600 students, seven days a week at three campus locations. Happily, the media attention to Nutella-gate has cut down on the amount people have been taking in recent days.

But there's a darker side to this Nutella as allegedly taken to stealing to feed their... Since the spread was first introduced on Feb. 11, students at the steam-tan-colored Ivy League school have been filling up cups, jars and soup containers with Nutella in Columbia's dining hall, according to The New York Times.

Does the Headline Match the Story?

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

Nicholas Williams was arrested last week after police say he spanked his 2-year-old daughter so hard that she died. MyFoxAustin reports.

According to the arrest affidavit, police and paramedics responded to a 911 call made by a woman saying that the child was not breathing at a residence in Austin, Texas, on May 23.

When police arrived, they found Williams' daughter.

The officer began performing CPR on the child. The officer arrived. But an hour later, after being pronounced dead.

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?

The New York Times

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.

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

Anecdote: 1st 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



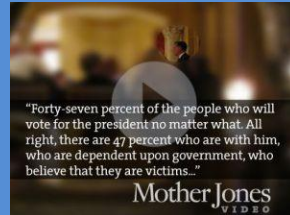
Direct Evidence, Indirect Evidence? Think Like a CSI

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



Deconstructing the News

An Agent, a Green Card, and a Demand for Sex

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.

U.S. Department of Justice
National Institute of Corrections



Correctional Health Care: Suicide Prevention
10-2000

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

Comments (65)
BY KENNETH LOVETT / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2012, 9:25 PM



Test Inferences for Soundness

Main Entry: **ev-i-dence** ◀
Pronunciation: \ˈe-və-dən(t)s, -və-dən(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

By MANNY FERNANDEZ
Published: September 15, 2010



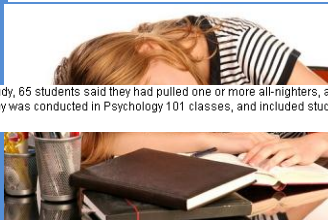
Deconstructing the News



Pulling all-nighters earns lower GPAs

Updated 12/14/2007 8:12 AM | Comments 23 | Recommend 10

By Michael Virtanen, Associated Press



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

By Tom Ichniowski, CNN



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.

killed her administration fudge what

Deconstructing the News

3) Are the Sources Reliable?



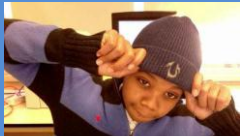
Judging the Reliability of Sources

- 1) Independent Sources Are **Better** Than Self-Interested Sources
- 2) Multiple Sources Are **Better** Than Single Sources
- 3) Sources Who **Verify** Are **Better** Than Sources Who Assert
- 4) Authoritative/Informed Sources Are **Better** Than Uninformed Sources
- 5) Named Sources Are **Better** Than Unnamed Sources

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

Deconstructing the News

How to Weigh Sources



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

By Ryan Devereaux Wood, Mar. 13 2013 at 11:37 AM
 Categories: Brooklyn



"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.

Tishana 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

Ahead of the hearing, State Department officials provided new details about the attack while asserting that there had been no way to predict or prevent the sustained assault.

"The lethality and the number of armed people is unprecedented. There had been no attack like that anywhere in Libya — Tripoli, Benghazi or elsewhere — in the time we had been there," said one official who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss events still being investigated. "It would be very, very hard to find a precedent for an attack like that in recent diplomatic history."

Los Angeles Times

Town hall awaits Obama and Romney

Obama ranks somewhere between Clinton and Bush on the empathy scale. He can be more focused when speaking directly to a voter, rather than a camera. As a candidate on the trail in 2008, he showed himself able, if not exactly gifted, when it came to listening and connecting.

Still, the same problem that tanked his first debate performance could dog his second. He is still a sitting president who practices the art of the stem-winding answer, as well as a former law professor who has found it hard to shake his academic demeanor.

"When he is on during a town hall, he can be very on and engaged," said a person close to the Obama campaign who asked not to be identified while talking about the president's challenges. "The risk is the same tendency to give professional responses. He has to show he connects."

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 Musadan missile, the official said. The Musadan 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: \ˈtræn(t)s-ˈpɛr-ən(t)-sɛ/
 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



Transparency

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

By Chelsea J. Carter, CNN
 updated 10:27 PM EDT, Tue March 12, 2013



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"



Deconstructing the News

Corrections are Institutional Transparency

The New York Times

Corrections

FRONT PAGE
An article on Thursday about the political disposition of Paul Ryan, a major GOP House member, described inaccurately the source of Ryan's support for the House Republican Committee. Mr. Ryan and others affiliated with the Free Enterprise Foundation, an organization that Ryan chairs, are collectively the top source of support for the committee, according to the Congressional Budget Office. The hedge fund itself is not the committee's biggest source of money. (Other sources finance the Free Enterprise Foundation.)

INTERNATIONAL
An article on Monday about the release of secret tapes showed that the former leader of the Taliban, Ahmad Shah Massoud, for a year used the Taliban code of support to help him win the war. The article also stated that the Taliban leader, who is the current leader of the Taliban, was killed in 2011. The article also stated that the Taliban leader was killed in 2011.

NATIONAL
An article last Friday about the release of secret tapes showed that the former leader of the Taliban, Ahmad Shah Massoud, for a year used the Taliban code of support to help him win the war. The article also stated that the Taliban leader, who is the current leader of the Taliban, was killed in 2011. The article also stated that the Taliban leader was killed in 2011.

BUSINESS DAY
An article on Wednesday about a new computer memory technology called the transistor mentioned the potential capacity of the technology as being 100 times that of 1970s memory. The article also stated that the technology was developed by Intel.

THE ARTS
An article on Tuesday about a dispute over whether a book of recipes brought a great deal of work to food scientists at least partly the work of another anthropologist, Paul Broke, mentioned part of a comment by another scientist, Paul Broke, who also brought the negative. When told that an expert who originally reviewed the book to Adams had changed his mind after viewing more photos of the book, the author of the book, Paul Broke, responded that the book was not a collection of recipes but a collection of photos of the book.

CROSSWORD
The crossword puzzle on Tuesday gave an incorrect clue for 5 down, reading the answer "TETRA". The clue was intended to be "The Greek word for four" but the clue was intended to be "The Greek word for four" but the clue was intended to be "The Greek word for four".

Errata and Comments:
The paper's Web page at nytimes.com/errata and nytimes.com/errata. The paper's Web page at nytimes.com/errata and nytimes.com/errata. The paper's Web page at nytimes.com/errata and nytimes.com/errata.

Deconstructing the News

5) Does the reporter place the story in context?

Deconstructing the News

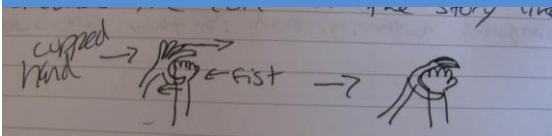
Does the reporter put the story in context?



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



Deconstructing the News

Step 6:

Are the key questions answered?



Deconstructing the News

Step 6: Are the key questions answered?

Who

What

When

Where

Why

How

?

THE BRONX, N.Y. (PIX11)— Fire officials want to know what sparked a fast-moving fire in Edgewater early Sunday morning that killed the landlords of a three-family home.

Police identify the victim as Al "Junior" Allen, a 60-something, Army veteran, he died at Montefiore North Hospital. His 27-year-old daughter is being treated at Jacobi Hospital, doctors listing her in critical condition.

Authorities say the fire broke out around 5:15 in Allen's basement apartment at 1120 E. 225 St. and was difficult to contain. Firefighters finally got things under control an hour-and-half later. Three of them sustained minor injuries.


According to a report in the Sunday Daily News, Allen was well-regarded in the neighborhood. People say he was deeply involved with his church, where he provided kids with toys and volunteered in the food pantry.

In addition to serving as a superintendent for his own home, neighbors say he'd work on houses in the block, where he was often seen sitting outside listening to old-school soul music.

GAP Analysis: Are all Questions Answered?

The New York Times

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?



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.

pregnant

Beatie, legally a male, lives with his wife, Nancy. He claims to have stopped taking his testosterone injections to get pregnant. "Sterilization is not a requirement for sex reassignment, so I decided to have chest reconstruction and testosterone therapy, but kept my reproductive rights," he wrote in the story for the gay and lesbian magazine.

"How does it feel to be a pregnant man?" "Incredible," he adds. "Despite the fact that my belly is growing with a new life inside me, I am stable and confident being the man that I am."

Assess reliability by Evaluating Sources & Evidence

Deconstructing the News

Case Study: The pregnant man story

March 20, 2013

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 Beatie's 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

Beatie Beatie's first born

The pregnant man who conceived a child after a gender-reassignment operation has apparently given birth to a healthy baby girl.

"There's really quite a really pretty," a source told ABC News.

Thomas Beatie, 34, told People magazine that he had given birth at a hospital in Bend, Oregon on Sunday. "The only thing different about me is that I can't breastfeed my baby. But a lot of mothers don't," he said, adding that he planned to publish a book about the experience this autumn.

The bearded 34 Beatie was born a girl and named Tracy.

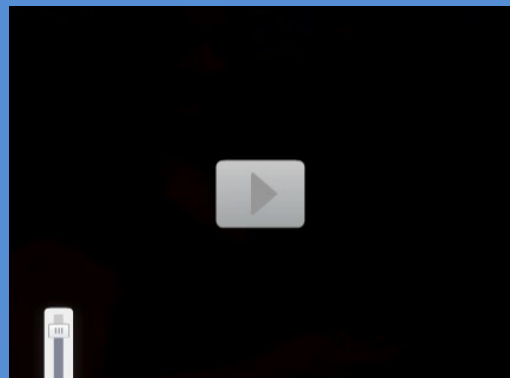


Do Baby Photos Help?

Deconstructing the News



How reliable?



Asserting vs. Verifying

US jobless rate drops to 7.8% in September

October 06, 2012 | Megan Woolhouse

THIS STORY APPEARED IN The Boston Globe



Jack Welch

@jack_welch

Follow

Unbelievable jobs numbers...these Chicago guys will do anything..can't debate so change numbers

5 Oct 12

Reply Retweet Favorites

**Boston
Globe**

John E. Silvia, chief economist for Wells Fargo & Co. in Charlotte, N.C., said he finds the employer survey numbers to be more reliable, but that he does not see evidence of a conspiracy in Friday's report.

He said he suspected September's rise in part-time employment was due to college students returning to school and taking part-time jobs.

The question that has confounded many economists, he said, is whether the sluggish rate of job growth that the nation has experienced for the last three years is now the "new normal."

"Things are getting better, the economy is continuing to improve and people are getting jobs," Silvia said. "The challenge we all have is the economy's just not growing the way we had expected."

Deconstructing the News



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"



hus endeth the Lesson...

Example 4

Afghan investigator: US burning of Qurans was intentional



freep.com

Quran-burning an accident, U.S. tells Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan -- The U.S. apologized Tuesday for the burning of Muslim holy books that had been pulled from the shelves of a detention center library adjoining a major base in eastern Afghanistan because they contained extremist messages or inscriptions.

The White House echoed military officials in saying that the burning of Qurans and other Islamic reading material that had been tossed in a pile of garbage was an accident.

Deconstructing the News

The power of Context

However, behind the image of two-year-old Jingdan lies a tale not of intentional cruelty but, it seems, one of misplaced love and fear: his sister disappeared from the same spot just two weeks ago.

"I was afraid I would lose him too," their father, Chen Chuanliu, said today.



Deconstructing the News

An Agent, a Green Card, and a Demand for Sex

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 desperation on the part of immigrants seeking legal status. The aftermath, which included the arrest of an immigration agent last week, underscores the difficulty and danger of making a complaint, even in the rare case when abuse of power may have been caught on tape.

Web: "Immigration law enforcers' and danger of making a complaint" even in the rare case when abuse of power may have been caught on tape.

The Main Points Aren't Always in the First Paragraph

Deconstructing the News

How to Assess Source Authority

Experts Had Long Criticized Potential Weakness in Design of Stricken Reactor

By TOM SELIGER

"Not banning them might be the end of nuclear power," said Mr. Lochbaum, a nuclear engineer who spent 17 years working in nuclear facilities, including three that used the G.E. design.

Is the Source Authoritative? Independent?

Why or Why Not?

Deconstructing the News

How to Weigh Sources

Accused G.I. 'Snapped' Under Strain, Official Says

By ERIC SCHMITT and WILLIAM YARDLEY

"When it all comes out, it will be a combination of stress, alcohol and domestic issues — he just snapped," said the official, who has been briefed on the investigation and who spoke on the condition of anonymity because the soldier has not yet been formally charged. His comments drew from accounts of the sergeant's state of mind from two other soldiers with whom he illicitly drank alcohol on the night of the shootings, the official said, and those soldiers face disciplinary action.

Verification or Assertion?

Deconstructing the News

How to Assess Source Reliability

The New York Times

Criticism and Questions Over Plan to Move Macy's Thanksgiving Parade Out of Times Sq.

By NOAH ROSENBERG
Published: March 8, 2011

But some critics are skeptical. A community leader who spoke on the condition of anonymity to preserve his publicly neutral stance, said he was at a meeting with Macy's representatives last year, at which the retailer "threatened to move the parade to another city," unless the route changes were agreed upon.

How Do You Weigh the Anonymous Source?

Does the Headline Match the Story?

Japan to officially celebrate end of US occupation after WWII

radio
THE VOICE OF RUSSIA

Japan will officially celebrate the end of the US occupation of the country for the first time since the end of the Second World War. The government will use the forthcoming event to galvanize a campaign to revise the post-war constitution.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told the MPs earlier today that the growing number of young people today is unaware that there was a seven-year long period after the war when Japan was deprived of sovereignty.

The US officially ended its occupation of Japan on April 28th 1952, when the San Francisco Peace Treaty between Tokyo and most of those who formed part of the anti-Nazi Allied Nations took effect.

Voice of Russia, TASS