Remember these guys? Both were inventors and businessmen (one more successful than the other), but both also started revolutions that changed the face of the world. In both cases the revolution was to democratize the creation, spreading and consuming of information. Gutenberg's invention led to challenges of authority – from Martin Luther to Tom Paine – that overturned centuries-old power relationships. The creation of Digital Social Media has made possible or at least heightened political uprisings around the world. The big difference between the two revolutions is that the first one increased the power possible of the individual to CONSUME information. The second one makes it possible for the individual to PUBLISH information.

http://www.theonion.com/articles/print-dead-at-1803,33244/

(LECTURER: ALTERNATE STARTING SLIDE)

Back in July 2013, the satirical newspaper The Onion declared print dead. RIP.

ANIMATION: Click1=Burress quote shrinks, Happy Cosby meme appears
Click2=Happy Cosby meme replaced by Cosby Rapist meme
Click 3=USA Today headline, NBC has dropped the Cosby show it was preparing to launch

Let's talk about how news works in the Era of Social Media.

Comedian Bill Cosby produced and starred in one of the decade's defining sitcoms, The Cosby Show, which was the number one show in America for five straight years (1985–89. It highlighted the experiences and growth of an affluent African-American family. He also produced the spin-off sitcom, which became second to The Cosby Show in ratings. Before that, he had had a successful career as a standup and an actor. Beloved, iconic American father figure.

October 16, Comedian Hannibal Burress recycles an old joke about Bill Cosby's criticisms of saggy pants on black teens and foul-mouthed comics, repeating the charge that Cosby is a rapist.

This time, someone posts a short clip of the joke online and it goes viral.

CLICK1 The clip goes viral…at about the same time that Cosby's Publicity team has flooded the Internet with old still photos, inviting Net users to make funny memes using Cosby pictures.

CLICK2 Major backfire.

Burress' joke is making the rounds and then some of the women who have alleged rape in the past revive their claims.

The memes get negative.

CLICK3NBC-TV gets nervous about where this is headed and cancels a new show it was planning to launch, starring Cosby.
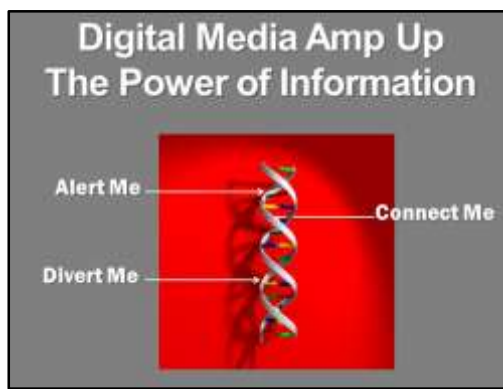
Has there been a trial?

Has he ever pleaded guilty?

He settled one case in 1996 out of court. Several women have come forward this month to say he drugged and raped them, but their charges haven't been subjected to court action.
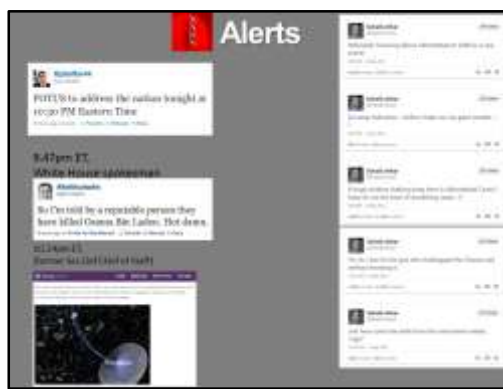
Is Cosby guilty of serial rape?

Is his career over?

Do you have enough information to make a decision?

Digital Media amplify the power of information to equalize the many and the few, the connected and the obscure.

ANIMATION:
CLICK1=WHITE HOUSE ANNOUNCES A RARE SURPRISE PRESS CONFERENCE
CLICK2=FORMER WHITE HOUSE INSIDER TWEETS THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG
CLICK3=NYT REPORTER BRIAN STELTER RETWEETS URBAN'S TWEET TO HIS 50,000 FOLLOWERS
**CLICK3=SOHAIB ATHAR TWEETED THE EVENT WITHOUT KNOWING WHAT IT WAS**

Increasingly, the major stories of our day break first on social media, where savvy reporters may pick up on the news, but often the audience is ahead of the News Media.

Certainly, the reporting isn't as careful, but the speed is remarkable.

The killing of Osama Bin Laden was reported on social media hours before it "broke" on the news.

Much of the entertainment of a daily newspaper is now found online, where we share and make comments about things like this Instagram post of one of Kim Kardashian's tamer shots from the PAPER magazine photo spread
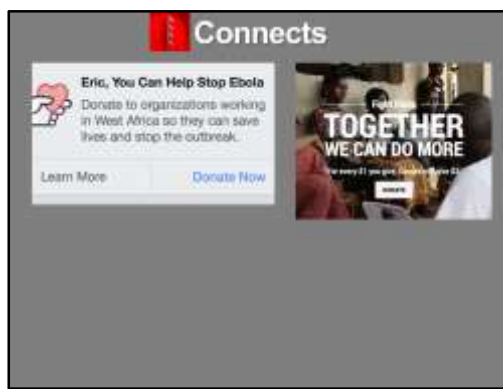
Perhaps the most powerful thing social media does is to connect us.

Certainly, we over-share videos of cute puppies and cats.

But when a situation or problem strikes a nerve, or resonates with our understanding of our own humanity, social media echoes and amplifies that fellow-feeling in powerful ways.

Google and its users put together $22 million in about a week.

Facebook has started asking its 1.3 billion users to donate. (Figures not available as of 11.19)

That kind of human-to-human connection is what we were talking about: we have a DNA-level need for information at Alerts, Diverts and Connects us...and in that way, there's nothing new about what we do on social media.

Housekeeping, announcements & notes

Electronic Wasteland: 60 Minutes story

What can you conclude?

Opportunity to review the Electronic Wasteland homework.

Last week's Quick Quiz

1. **False:** Background music mixed into a TV news report in the editing process has no effect on the reliability and fairness of the report.

2. What kinds of news are you likely not to know about if you only consume TV news and not radio, online text or print news? **Stories that lack strong visuals, complex stories: i.e. Supreme Court, Policy issues, certain kinds of international**

Your questions and comments ...

❖ xxxx

After this lecture, you should be able to:

1. Teach a peer or relative at least three ways to test the reliability of news that comes via social media.

2. Explain how social media is a cognitive dissonance "enabler" and can amplify confirmation biases.

3. Explain how anonymity contributes to the crisis of authenticity in social media.

4. Articulate both the strengths and weaknesses of social media as a source of reliable information.

5. Explain the ethical news consumer's role as a news publisher, and the burdens that accompany that role.

This slide intended for instructors as a focusing tool, but can be shared with students to prime them.

Wanted

Best News Literacy
final essay

R E W A R D
One semester's in-state tuition
(about $2,800)

Watch this space for the essay prompt!

Preparing for the final exam:
This online exercise is the best way to study

This set of directions is in the "Reading Assignments" tab that takes you to our CourseLoad™ eReader. It's not a graded assignment, but it will prepare you for the final exam. You'll find two broken links ("Keep It Simple" and "Make It Look Good"). Just skip to the next exercises.

Students are sent to the Poynter NewsU site to prepare for the final exam.
Any student who does NOT do this is jeopardizing their score.
Students who spend a couple of hours on it will improve their score.

On the Web, *You* Contribute News

New, Higher-Resolution Image of Boston Marathon Suspect Emerges
By RAVI SOMAIYA and JEREMY ZILAR   APRIL 18, 2013 11:13 PM   197 Comments

A photograph taken by David Green at 2:50:19 p.m. on Monday showing a clear shot of a man on the left in a white hat who was described by the F.B.I. as suspect No. 2. View larger – David Green

The idea of crowd-sourcing is catching on. Increasingly, news organizations are finding ways to put many hands to work on the drudgery of investigative reporting: reading documents, tallying items, building databases, scanning photos…It's a partnership of professional and passionate amateur Fourth Estate-ers.

There are a number of crowdsourced news sites that you can contribute to without having a press pass. Our hope is that you would only provide accurate information to one of these sites.

The Power To Alert, Divert and Connect Is *Your* Hands

The power of social media is that it democratizes the power of information, placing it in the hands of individual users of Facebook, Twitter, Wikipedia, crowdsourced websites, smart phones. Individuals have the ability to use that power for good or for ill…in the same ways that a small elite used to hold that power because they could afford a printing press or a broadcast station.

Social Media Also Amplify **Dis**information

"Facebook™ found truth astir on earth and gave it wings; but untruth was also abroad, and it was supplied with a double pair of wings."

Mark Twain, who started out as a newspaper reporter in the era of the printing press has warmed up to Twitter as a way to reach a younger audience.
But he still has smart reservations.
What was it he said on CNN the other day?
"The whole world admits unhesitatingly; and there can be no doubt about this, that Zuckerberg's invention is incomparably the greatest event in the history of the world. BUT "untruth was also abroad and it was supplied with a double pair of wings".
??
(Wait for it. Best if a student catches it. But you're coming back to it in a few slides)

The Power of *Dis*information

Colbert foxbot

Colbert shows how easy it can be to manipulate information online. Using David Folkenflik's book, which reports that News Corp. (which owns Fox News among other news outlets) has employed staff to go online and contest every negative post about the company and its subsidiaries, one of Colbert's writers fashioned a "bot" that inserts the names of Fox News personalities into reviews on RottenTomatoes,com. The resulting bogus tweets have been widely distributed and shared. Though this hoax is amusing and rather benign, some can have damaging consequences…

During Superstorm Sandy, these pictures of
sharks…sharks in the flooded subway
stations…circulated.
There were, of course, bogus,
Still, they were passed around as examples of a
historic flood.

The Power of *Dis*information

Breaking: Two Explosions in the White House and Barack Obama is injured

This was a trending story on April 23, 2013, but it's a hoax. The Associated Press's Twitter account was hacked, and the hackers tweeted bogus news that the White House had been attacked and Pres. Obama was injured. As indicated in the image above, by 12:07 PM it had been retweeted more than 3,000 times. (The AP has some 1.9 million followers on Twitter.) In the wake of the bogus tweet, the Dow Jones plummeted 145 points in 2 minutes and the S&P Index lost $136.5 billion in value in 3 minutes. The AP issued a correction within 2 minutes, and the markets recovered once the record was set straight. (As fast as false information can spread, it can be debunked just as fast—but does the correction reach everyone?) The Syrian Electronic Army later claimed credit for the cyber attack.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/post-politics/wp/2013/04/23/ap-twitter-account-hacked-hacker-tweets-of-explosions-in-the-white-house/
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/markets/10013768/Bogus-AP-tweet-about-explosion-at-the-White-House-wipes-billions-off-US-markets.html
http://news.msn.com/rumors/rumor-two-explosions-reported-at-white-house-obama-injured
http://www.businessinsider.com/ap-hacked-obama-injured-white-house-explosions-2013-4
http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424127887323735604578441201605193488

With this slide we can introduce the idea of the wisdom—or lack of wisdom—of crowds. This case illustrates why we want news reports to rely on Authoritative Sources for information. We'll return to this idea when we discuss Wikipedia.

In the hours after the Boston Marathon bombing, it was pretty exciting to see Internet-izens banding together in the ManHunt for the bombers. On Reddit, where they really understand the power of crowd-sourcing, distributed computing and the other wonders of the Web, power users vacuumed up every photo they could find on Facebook™, Twitter™, and Instagram™ and shared them to their friends and followers to scrutinize and analyze. Then, by combining vague police statements and photos, they found in all those crowds of people at the marathon, the bad guys. The New York Post, following along with Reddit, grabbed the photo and plastered it on the front page. It was a demonstration of the great power of social media has to help informed citizens take care of problems without the government's help…

Only it was the wrong pair of young men. 16-year-old Salaheddin Barhoum and 24-year old Yassine Zaimi are totally innocent.

The two runners from Massachusetts have filed a lawsuit, suing the Post for libel, negligent infliction of emotional distress, and invasion of privacy. They may get some money, but will they ever get their reputations back?

Reddit is exempt from libel actions?

Ooops777, one of the leaders of the Reddit manhunt, said he needed to post a request that Reddit users not re-post things that haven't been proven…

So, what is social media…reliable and free of corporate and government control…or reckless and dangerously uncontrollable?

 We'll talk about this, too.

Now we're going to take a minute to breathe and then look at the context that surrounds the social media revolution.

Challenges for Empowered Consumers In the Digital Age

- Speed versus Accuracy

- Information overload

- Authenticity

- Blurring of lines

- Confirmation Bias

To summarize, news consumers in the digital age who use non-traditional outlets have some challenges to think about.
If you're going to be informed and make decisions on reliable information, how do these features of the digital news landscape impact your search?

Challenges

Speed vs Accuracy
(aka Fast & Furious)

> The Associated Press quoted a fake Vin Diesel Instagram account in an obit for actor Paul Walker:
>
> In a Dec. 1 obituary for Paul Walker, The Associated Press reported erroneously that Walker's "Fast & Furious" co-star Vin Diesel reacted to Walker's death in a message on Instagram. The account that was quoted is a fake and does not represent Diesel, said his publicist. Diesel has since posted a message on his Facebook page, verified by the publicist, honoring Walker "as the brother you were, on and off screen."

All new communication technologies have heightened the tension between being first and being right.
When journalists began using the telegraph in earnest during the Civil War. In fact, the byline was created by General John Hooker because of his frustration with inaccurate and even dangerous reporting:
. That same day, the general issued General Order No. 48 requiring that all reporters with the Army of the Potomac "publish their communications over their own signatures." The byline, as it came to be known in newspaper circles, was born.
Now these flash announcements of celebrity deaths are one of the most common kinds of hoax.

Challenges
Information Overload

Digital Junkie - Information Overload

"Between the dawn of civilization through 2003 about 5 exabytes of information was created. Now, that much information created every 2 days." -Eric Schmidt, former Google CEO

Of course, it's his business to make you anxious about information, and turn to Google for help.

But let's watch this 3:27 video a group of students made about information overload in the digital era.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VxfGuZ5Bsgk

Digital Junkie.mp4

INSERT ABOVE-CAPTIONED VIDEO IN THIS SLIDE AND SET TO RUN AUTOMATICALLY.
VIDEO IS 3:27
I've been known to argue these responses are no different than my grandmother's response to all the books in the world that she would never have time to read, but you see the point…

How do you know what's real? This was done as a commercial but practically everyone can create information forgeries that are hard to spot

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DKMllY6jHp0

- Longoriaball.mp4

How do you know what's real? This was done as a commercial but practically everyone can create information forgeries that are hard to spot

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DKMllY6jHp0

ANIMATION: **CLICK** covers up the Rogin spoof with the custom spoof website.
Want to freak out your friends? Just kill off their favorite movie star and then share it on Facebook
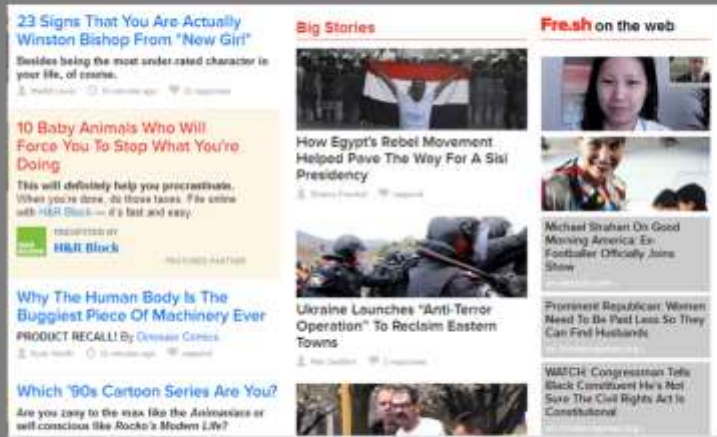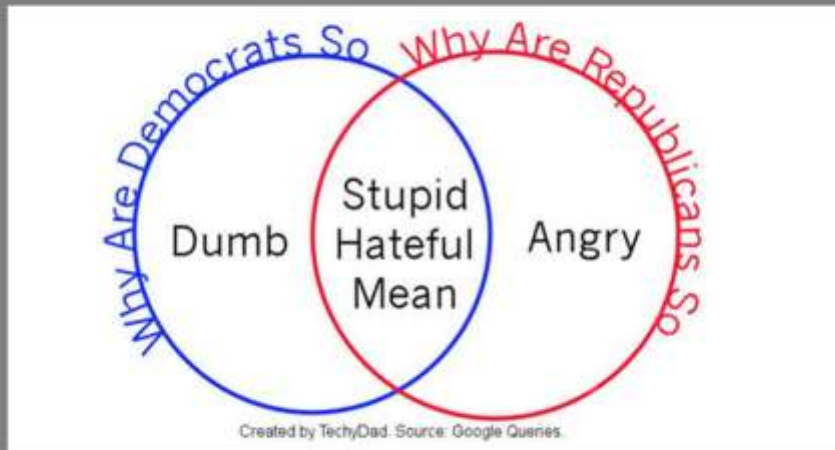
In the olden days, it was relatively easy to know your neighborhood at least in news media like newspapers, magazines, and radio and tv broadcasts. Today for a variety of reasons (but mostly commercial pressures) it's a lot easier to get lost.

It is now possible to live entirely within an information world in which you are offered only data that conforms to your beliefs.

Google and Facebook and YouTube monitor your searches, your likes, your friends and they – in the name of service – deliver more and more customized ads and search. Pretty soon, you'll rarely encounter anything that triggers cognitive dissonance in you. Instead, you'll learn just how smart you are, over and over.

As some of you know, the algorithms that determine your search results on Google are also shaped by your own interests: your search histories, the things you like and share on social media. As a result, we have to be aware that our search results may not give us the complete picture.

Does crowd-sourcing actually mean you're getting a comprehensive review of the information available to you, but out of reach without the help of millions of other users contributing their time and attention to the search for truth? (Deliver ironically….) Or is it just a massive petri dish of individuals all feeding off each other's biases?

In 2011, a political activist named Eli Pariser started sounding an alert about the way our web behavior, channeled through search analysis, may not serve us well.

He illustrated it by asking his friends Scott and Daniel to do a Google search for "Egypt"

As you can see, the two searches look different. More importantly, look at the content differences: Daniel's search is all travel and vacations, while Scott's has zoomed in on the democratic protest movement.

Here's the gist of his argument:

"Today's Internet giants — Google, Facebook, Yahoo and Microsoft — see the remarkable rise of available information as an opportunity. If they can provide services that sift though the data and supply us with the most personally relevant and appealing results, they'll get the most users and the most ad views. As a result, they're racing to offer personalized filters that show us the Internet that they think we want to see. These filters, in effect, control and limit the information that reaches our screens. But increasingly, and nearly invisibly, our searches for information are being personalized too. …Both Yahoo News and Google News make adjustments to their home pages for each individual visitor. And just (recently) this technology began making inroads on the Web sites of newspapers like The Washington Post and The New York Times."

How to *Pop* the Bubble: Search "Incognito"

Open an incognito window

1. Click the Chrome menu ≡ on the browser toolbar.
2. Select **New incognito window**.
3. A new window will open with the incognito icon 🕵 in the corner. You can continue browsing as normal in the other window.

You can also use the keyboard shortcuts **Ctrl+Shift+N** (Windows, Linux, and Chrome OS) and **⌘-Shift-N** (Mac) to open an incognito window.

Windows 8 users: To switch between windows, click the window switcher ▣ on the top right corner.

On the slide are instructions on how to search "incognito" in Google.

But active searches are safer than passive newsfeeds, right?

Animation: Click brings up highlight
Are Google, Facebook and Wikipedia reliable sources of information?
Let's take a look.
Say you're writing a paper about Martin Luther King, the Nobel Peace Prize winning civil rights leader from Atlanta, Georgia.
When you go looking, here's the Google payload: 60 MILLION web pages.
No way you've got time to look at them all. Luckily, Google's algorithm sorts them into a priority list
Google checks your spelling, offers some images and then lists the top returns on similar searches.
Number three on the list looked good on this particular day when we went searching.
A dot.ORG offering historical information.

How Do We Know What to Trust?

MartinLutherKing.org

There's a lot here, a student quiz, historical writings, various libraries, some disgressions into civil rights topics and…
and what is this "peaceful in da hood" crap?
Whaat?
Whose site is this?

Click brings up blowup of stormfront host.
Martin Luther King.org is hosted by Stormfront.
Who is Stormfront?

How Do We Know What to Trust?

Stormfront.org

The White Power logo makes it clear what's up. Stormfront as in Storm Trooper.
You're on a site that repeats all the most negative rumors about King and emphasizes his flaws, while attacking his achievements and promoting white supremacist ideology. That's their First Amendment right, but if you're looking for Independent information about King, Google's ranking system is clearly not based on reliability.

Key Lesson:

Rank ≠ Reliability

Google PageRank

trends

Which. brings us to the next of News Literacy's key lessons: On the Web, Rank does not equal Reliability. The first hit on Google is not necessarily the most reliable. The same goes for social media: Following trending topics does not mean you'll find accurate information from those Twitter accounts and links.

The Wisdom of Crowds
The Power of Crowd-Sourcing

"Crowdsourcing is...the voluntary undertaking of a task...in which the crowd should participate bringing their work, money, knowledge and/or experience...The user will receive ... social recognition, self-esteem, or the development of individual skills, while the crowdsourcer will obtain and utilize to their advantage that what the user has brought to the venture."

WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia

ASK: how many use Wikipedia.?

(Most studies say about 85% of students use it.)

Luckily, most studies of student research habits say you only use it as a starting point.

Why is that important? Starting at Wikipedia, but never finishing your research there?

To answer that, we go back to basic News Literacy Source Analysis...When Wikipedia says I am attractive, suave and brilliant, who EXACTLY is saying that.

Well...you don't really know.

To be fair, Wikipedia's accuracy rating has been found to be as strong as any encyclopedia.

But Wikipedia's fundamental structure protects the anonymity of people who write, for free, all the definitions and histories for the world's biggest online encyclopedia.

It's called crowd-sourcing, and once they saw Wikipedia's success, many other organizations enlisted volunteers.

And in some ways, it isn't risky. A powerful support for this idea came in a 2004 book: The Wisdom of Crowds by James Surowiecki , who claims to prove that"a diverse collection of independently deciding individuals" is likely to make certain types of decisions and predictions better than individuals or even experts.

Watch for tags, warnings, and captions . . . . . . which can help you spot problems in articles

Wikipedia gets credit for working hard at responsible publishing.

A Wikipedia page includes numerous tags that alert you when you are straying into articles that are new or haven't been edited much.

Learn what they mean and watch out for them.

Be Skeptical

Does the article cite sources?

Does the information sound plausible?

Are there obvious problems with the writing style?

Be aware if you see the tag: [citation needed]

   That may indicate unverified information

Look Deeper

Links to articles by professional journalists.

Context about people, places and events in the news

Peek behind the scenes – read the Discussion page about the article.

At the very top of every Wikipedia entry, there is a "talk" tab. There, you'll find notes from people who are doing the work on that particular subject, describing why they have made additions and subtractions. This is one of Wikipedia's transparency mechanisms.

But it's also where you'll find snarky debates about Barak Obama's birthplace, religious affiliation, etc.

On a Wikipedia page like this one, you quickly learn that super-partisans on both sides of the political divide appear to have unlimited time on their hands for: "Oh Yes He Did. Oh No He Didn't. Jerk. Moron. Sheep. Racist." and other brilliant debates of that type.

How do we begin to navigate the online maze?

Verification

Independence

Accountability

When attempting to sort fact from fiction on the web, particularly in social media, we can start by returning to an earlier tried-and-true lesson: VIA. The standards of journalism, which are put in place in order to ensure that journalists keep their obligation to the truth, may be used when looking for reliable and actionable information in social media or anywhere online. When anyone can create a Twitter account, create a Facebook page, or a website, it's necessary to approach new information with caution, and start by applying VIA.

Evaluating Web Pages: VIA

- Articles provide evidence, reliable sources and transparency.
- Dates for page creation and content updates are provided.
- Links are working (don't lead to dead/outdated pages).

- Information on the page is not out of date.

(Animation: Click for each bullet)
What about Websites?
Social Media often function as promotional services, sending you from Twitter or Facebook to longer reports or videos that are housed on a website.
Our old standby, "VIA", provides useful rules of thumb to help you find reliable information.
START WITH VERIFICATION.
What kind of evidence is provided by the website's writers?
What kind of sources are provided?
News on the Web is archival. A good thing. But you need to be alert to the date of a post. It may be two minutes old or two years old. See that links are current and in working order. Keep an eye on creation dates and look for sites that update as new information is found.

Evaluating Web Pages: vIA

- Information is independent and verifiable.
- Multiple sources are cited, ideally with a variety of viewpoints.
- Links out to reputable, independent, or authoritative sites.
- News and opinion are clearly labeled.

(Animation: Click for each bullet point)

Students should judge whether they are looking at an **independent** website providing journalism, as they would judge any other news organization. Is the website's primary mission to *inform* the public?

Does it in any way attempt to deceive the public? Independence means financial, emotional and intellectual independence.

Self-interest is not, as we have been saying, a fatal flaw. But if the site is owned by the Long Island Power Authority, chances are you're getting the most positive information available about the progress of electrical crews working after Hurricane Sandy

Evaluating Web Pages: vIA

The person/organization providing the information is INDEPENDENT, informed and knowledgeable. By virtue of experience, data collection, observation, training, credentials, access, they know what they are talking about.

When you cover Congress or even a State Legislature as a reporter, you start to talk to your colleagues about people who are *"Net contributors to the pool of common wisdom"* and people who are *"Net subtractors from the pool of common wisdom."*

Ditto with websites. Some are useful. Some poison the public discourse by introducing bogus statistics, distortions and outright lies. That's why you should seek information from reputable, established sites and be skeptical of sites with no track record.

Evaluating Web Pages: viA

- "About Us" is easily found, and with robust information about funding, ownership, contact numbers for corrections, etc.

Students should always begin by considering what *information neighborhood* they are in. If they are in the news neighborhood, is this website **accountable** for the information they provide? Do they stand behind the material on their website? Look for the "About Us" section. It should be comprehensive and clear about who is accountable for the website's contents.

- CLICK to see FAIR's "About" page.

- Look at the "About Us" page

- THIS IS KEY. STUDENTS SHOULD DO THIS EVERY TIME THEY ARRIVE AT A NEW SITE!

      - Is there contact information?

      - Is there copyright information?

      - Is there someone taking credit for the work?

      - What sites are linked to the page?

Can anyone register a URL at these top-level domains?

.com	.edu
.museum	.xxx
.net	.travel
.gov	.name
.info	.mil
.org	.uk
.us	.se

Which of these domains have restrictions on them that limit who can register URLs there?

Which of the following domains have restrictions placed on them?

.com .edu
.museum .xxx
.net .travel
.gov .name
.info .mil
.org .uk
.us .se

Don't assume a .org is a charitable or non-profit, or that a .net is a hive of do-gooders.

Here are the facts

It's harder to get a .travel domain than a .org. You have to prove you are a travel agency. Same goes for .museum. Heck, even .xxx has more restrictions placed on it!

Californiabenefitexchange.com

This is a bogus Health-care exchange site, one of ten such phony sites recently shut down in California. The casual observer may look at this and say, "Of course, why would a government website have .com at the end of it?" Well…

http://securitywatch.pcmag.com/security/316473-beware-of-fake-obamacare-insurance-marketplace-sites
http://www.nbcnews.com/technology/california-takes-down-10-fake-obamacare-websites-2D11591128
http://nation.time.com/2013/11/14/the-latest-obamacare-worry-scam-websites/

It turns out that California's legitimate health-care
exchange site also ends in .com

Shortcuts: Is It a Hoax?

Check Snopes

It turns out that there are members of the online crowd who, instead of following the crowd, try to educate the crowd.

There are those on the web who can help you to bust information you suspect is bogus.

One of the better-respected sites is Snopes.com. It started out as a collection of urban myths, tracked back to their origin. Now, Snopes specializes in busting online hoaxes and myths.

It's not fool-proof, but a quick check at Snopes can save you from following the crowd into another mistake.

Animation: Click1 brings up FactCheck and Click2 zooms in the Christmas Tree QnA.
Politicfact and Punditfact are fact-checking sites that keep politicians and political commentators honest by publishing ratings of their statements, such as this case, in which Rachel Maddow's attack on Missouri's Republican governor was not factual.
Here's the other main politics site: FactCheck.Org, based at USC.
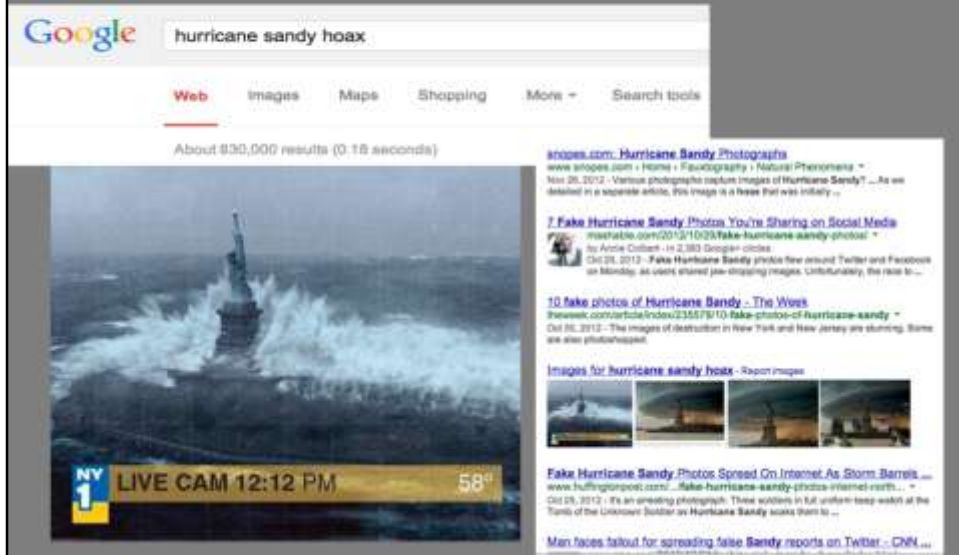
If you type the subject of a story or the name of a source into Google with the word "hoax," the search results will be illuminating.

Navigating social media

Things are a little different in social media.
It changes rapidly.
The neighborhoods are even less clear.
So, maybe more caution is required.

This is a fake Twitter account. How would you check it out to figure that out?
More importantly, what would you do if you could NOT verify its authenticity?

As you begin to perform "information forensics," you'll first see that this account lacks a bio. We see 50 tweets, 101 following, and 26 followers. That's suspiciously low for the pope. Now let's take a look at one of his tweets **[CLICK]**. The content of this tweet doesn't seem very pope-like. I think we can safely dismiss this account as a fake.

http://nakedsecurity.sophos.com/2013/03/13/fake-pope-on-twitter-dupes-thousands-of-followers-says-hes-loved-more-than-santa-claus/

http://mashable.com/2013/03/13/new-pope-fake-twitter/

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/03/13/fake-pope-twitter_n_2869594.html

http://news.msn.com/world/fake-pope-twitter-account-gains-more-than-100000-followers

http://sg.news.yahoo.com/followers-journalists-fooled-fake-pope-tweets-172059769.html

http://twitchy.com/2013/03/14/oops-ny-times-other-media-hoaxed-by-fake-pope-francis-twitter-account/

How would you check this out if it's the real Pope's Twitter Feed
More importantly, what would you do if you could NOT verify its authenticity?

This is The Pope's official Twitter feed. We have a little more to go on here. It says it's the "official Twitter page of His Holiness Pope Francis." It has the check mark of aproval (though this is not 100% accurate). And it notes a location: Vatican City. This pope has more than two million followers. The tweets seem more pope-like **[CLICK]**

https://twitter.com/Pontifex
http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/habemus-pontifex-social-media-greets-its-pope/

So-called follower bots (on "bots," see the Colbert video earlier) can pull information from existing accounts to make fake ones. It's very difficult to tell real from fake. The lesson is to be careful of multiple accounts belonging to the same individual.

Transition to next slide: And so there's so information available to us, and so much of it is user-generated and user-manipulated. Are there filters in place to sort fact from fiction? And if those filters are in place, how can we tell if they're working properly?

http://socialmediatoday.com/michellelamarspiral16/1585111/can-you-spot-fake-twitter-account-infographic
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/08/twitter-bots-influence_n_3542561.html

Is this the real Pope? Five ways to spot a fake Twitter account

Monday 3 December 2012, 18:05

Sue Llewellyn
is a social media expert and BBC trainer. Twitter: @suellewellyn

COMMENTS (1)

1. The **bigger** the story, the more fakes and hoaxes there will be.
2. Fake Twitter accounts often **substitute** a 0 for an O or a 1 for the I, playing on the real name of some person or organization.
3. Beware tweets from the person making news themselves. Hoaxers target **news makers**.
4. Check the **bio** on that Twitter handle. Are there troubling typos or poor grammar?
5. If a public personality's account doesn't have Twitter's official "**checkmark,**" be extra-cautious.

The BBC's Twitter expert Sue Llewellyn says five things to remember that can prevent you being Twitter hoaxed.

1.   The bigger the story, the more fakes and hoaxes there will be.
2.   Fake Twitter accounts often use the real name but substitute a 0 for an O or a 1 for the I.
3.   Beware tweets from the person making news themselves. Hoaxers target the famous.
4.   Check the bio on that Twitter handle. Are there troubling typos or poor grammar?
5.   If a public personality's account doesn't have Twitter's official "checkmark," be extra-cautious.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/blogcollegeofjournalism/posts/Is-this-the-real-Pope-Five-ways-to-spot-a-fake-Twitter-account

Information Forensics: Check
✓ Bio
✓ Numbers
(tweets, followers, retweets)
✓ Language
✓ Location
✓ Evidence (i.e. photos)
✓ Timing
Tweet to verify:
will they tweet back evidence?

Patrick Meier, PhD

Bio: Is there a name, picture, bio, Linked In page, blog? Does a Google search provide any further clues to the person's identity? Comfortably Smug's Twitter bio was vague and his past tweets were almost exclusively on politics and deeply partisan.

Numbers: In general, the longer the Twitter handle has been around and the more Tweets linked to this handle, the better, Meier says…"Scan for evidence of past behavior. How many Twitter users does the Twitter handle follow and are they known and credible sources? How many credible sources retweet this Twitter handle's material?

Language: Is the language sober or emotional? Are there exaggerations? Verification? How's the grammar? Andy Carvin of NPR says that tweets that sound too official, using official language like "breaking news", "urgent", "confirmed" etc. he replies and asks for additional details, for pictures and video. Or he will quote the tweet and add a simple one word question to the front of the message: "Source?"

The BBC's UGC (user-generated content) Hub in London also verifies whether the vocabulary and accents are correct for the location a source claims to be reporting from.

Location: One way to try and find out if they are where they say they are is to examine during which periods of the day/night the source tweets the most.

Evidence: If the twitter handle shares photographic "evidence", does the photo provide any clues about the location where it was taken based on buildings, signs, cars, etc., in the background?

The BBC's UGC Hub checks weaponry against those know for the given country and also looks for shadows to determine the possible time of day that a picture was taken. In addition, they examine weather reports to confirm that the conditions shown fit with the claimed date and time.

Timing: Does the source appear to be tweeting in near real-time? Or are there delays?

Social authentication: If you're still unsure about the source's reliability, use your own social network–Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn–to find out if anyone in your network know about the source's reliability.

Tweet to Verify: Tweet them back and ask them for further information. NPR's Andy Carvin Asks online sources for the source of the report and for any available pictures, videos, etc.

During Sandy, Buzzfeed started noticing fact errors, searched around and sleuthed out who Comfortably Smug was, finally shaming an apology out of Shashank Tripathi , a former hedge fund analyst and campaign manager for a Republican candidate for the U.S. House from New York.
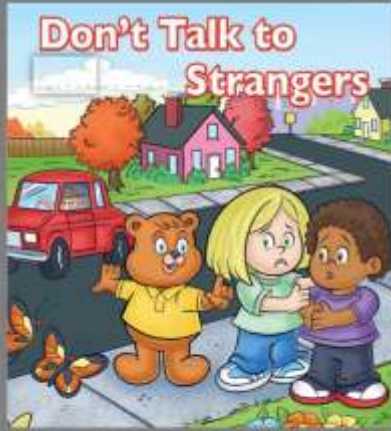
Here are some guidelines to follow. First, don't trust information from an unknown source, especially if they promise candy (i.e., the most unbelievable story! Something you won't believe!). Second, seek out multiple sources of information for corroboration. And third, develop a network of sources you trust, and rely on them when news breaks.

Transition: What follows are some handy tools to use when attempting to seek out and share reliable information.

YOU Can Harness the Power of Reliable Information and Defeat the Goblin of Disinformation.

"With great power comes great responsibility." –Uncle Ben Parker

Cheap digital technology and its harnessing of the wisdom of crowds has put great power in your hands...which means great responsibility. So it's incumbent upon the individual to take advantage of social media's strengths while not falling prey to hoaxes, scams, and lies. What follows are some lessons on how best to take advantage of the best aspects of the digital revolution.

(Animation: Photo fades out)

See the kayaker in the upper right corner? He's sitting in slower water called an eddy.

In the middle of almost every chaotic whitewater run, there are eddies, where kayakers can tuck in behind a rock and think for a minute.

Your life in social media is like that.

If you let the current carry you, next thing you know you are citizen Spike Lee, siccing an angry mob on an innocent old man and his wife.

You have to share carefully and, because social media moves quickly, you have to occasionally eddy out of the torrent like the kayaker in the upper right corner and take a minute to think, "Is this Reliable and Should I share it?"

By applying the principles of news literacy, you find reliable information in the torrent of information online.

By shouldering the responsibility to share carefully, you make torrent purer, safer and more fun.

The Big Lessons

✓ Anonymity Weakens Authenticity

✓ Rank does not equal reliability

✓ Popularity does not equal reliability

✓ VIA and IMVAIN help you spot hoaxes

✓ Think critically at your own pace. The rush to judgment is a weakness of social media.

(Animation: Photo fades out)

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The Quick Quiz

1. List two important sections of a Wikipedia entry for a news consumer seeking reliable information.

2. List at least three ways to check out a Tweet for authenticity.

3. Write a question we can answer to clarify today's lesson ... or a comment that will help us improve our work.

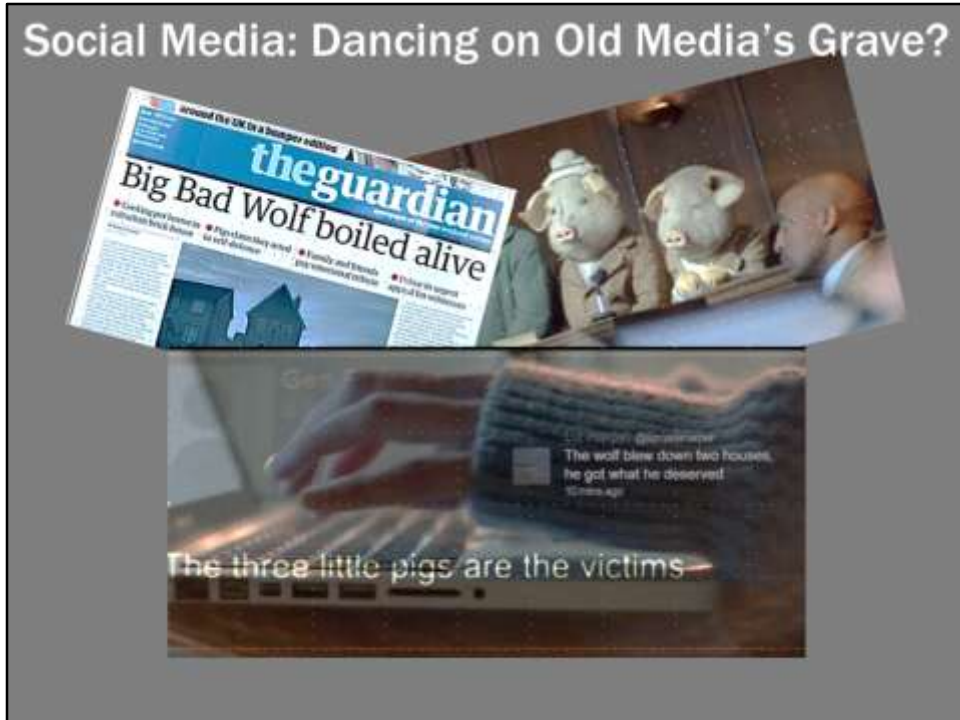**EMAIL OR HAND THE ANSWERS TO YOUR RECITATION INSTRUCTOR**

Note, they are to bring the Deconstruction Guide to Recitation, as well.

Thus endeth the Lesson…

Social Media: Dancing on Old Media's Grave?

This ad for The Guardian gives a great summary of how news is changing, particularly the relationship between journalists and consumers, who now provide both feedback and, increasingly, well-informed opinion.
The two-way nature of this is a crucial change.
You and Arthur Sulzburger, Jr. of the New York Times are, in many ways, on equal footing in social media.

NEWS FELLOW: PLEASE INSERT VIDEO HERE.
This ad for The Guardian gives a great summary of how news is changing, particularly the relationship between journalists and consumers, who now provide both feedback and, increasingly, well-informed opinion