First-Year Students’ Internet Source Evaluation Habits
Research Questions

How do first-year students evaluate online sources?

What source evaluation behaviors do we see most/least from students?

What do students say they do to evaluate vs. what they actually do?
Methods

- Rate articles before and after “research” from 1-10
- Talk aloud protocols and screen recording
- At the end of survey select what behaviors they believe are important when evaluating sources
- Transcription and coding (by researchers)
Now it’s your turn...

- Everyone should have a paper with a QR code/link for one of the sources.
- Take 5 minutes to evaluate your source, and give it a score for reliability (1-10).
- Write your score on the paddle and get ready to share!
PUBLIC HEALTH

Over-The-Counter Birth Control Pills Would Be Safe For Teens, Researchers Say

March 16, 2017 - 3:00 PM ET

Heard on All Things Considered

REBECCA HERSHER
A Third Way for Universities

In higher education, people like to pick sides and stay there, often in the face of stubborn facts. Such is true of the ongoing and seemingly endless debate in higher education of
Global warming fail: Study finds melting sea ice is actually helping Arctic animals

Justin Haskins  Apr 2, 2017 6:29 pm
What is $x$: $\sqrt{x + 15} + \sqrt{x} = 15$  

The Switch

Elon Musk’s SpaceX makes history by launching a ‘flight-proven’ rocket

By Christian Davenport  March 20  

SpaceX launches Falcon 9 rocket

QUICKEN LOANS URGES AMERICANS TO SWITCH TO A 15-YEAR FIXED

If you owe less than $250,000, you may be shocked by how much Quicken Loans can reduce your monthly mortgage payment. Try this radically simple mortgage experience and see if you can lock in a crazy low rate that will never rise.

SELECT YOUR MORTGAGE BALANCE:
- $150 - $200K
- $200K - $250K
- $250K - $300K
- $300K - $350K
- $350K+

CALCULATE NEW
There's a growing crisis in care for disabled and elderly people. Oh, and it's a jobs crisis, too.
How did students rate the sources?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Initial Score</th>
<th>Score after Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NPR</td>
<td>6.47</td>
<td>6.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huff Post</td>
<td>6.34</td>
<td>6.49</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blaze</td>
<td>5.76</td>
<td>5.83</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wash Post</td>
<td>7.69</td>
<td>8.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Kos</td>
<td>5.85</td>
<td>5.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What criteria did students use to judge sources?
What they said was important vs. what we observed
Students lack flexible evaluation techniques

Students stuck with the same evaluation techniques time after time, instead of adapting based on the source.

Students often use a different set of criteria to evaluate than the criteria that they say is important.
Distrust of the Media

“I’m not a huge fan of the media...I don’t really trust the writers...I think they have a flawed view, they romanticize, they give too much importance to getting information out, they don’t realize the harm they cause by getting bad information out, or even just getting information out that people don’t need to hear.”
Struggle to distinguish good/bad sources

Relying on
Surface Features
Biases
Belief Systems

Lack Foundation

Information Creation Is a Process
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