

HOW TO EVALUATE RESOURCES AND AVOID INFORMATION OVERLOAD

NOT ALL INFORMATION IS CREATED EQUAL: QUALITY VARIES

During your research, you will encounter **lots of information**, and the quality will range the gamut from righteous to rubbish. And while you can simply avoid the latter by sticking to Lane Library resources, to otherwise utilize electronic resources (like the Internet) and ensure some validity of result you must be trained and willing to take the time to evaluate your results. There is an awful lot of rubbish mixed in with the righteous, therefore evaluation is essential. It is your responsibility to determine whether or not your resources are trustworthy or misleading, credible or implausible—specifically on the Internet. The following guideline has been created to help.

ASK THESE QUESTIONS WHEN EVALUATING RESOURCES:

AUTHORITY

- Who are the authors? Are they qualified? Credible?
- With whom are they affiliated? Does their affiliation effect their credibility?
- Who is the publisher? What is their reputation?

ACCURACY

- Is the information accurate? Reliable and error-free?
- Are the interpretations and implications reasonable?
- Is there verifiable evidence to support the author's conclusion?
- Is there a citation, reference, works sited page?

OBJECTIVITY

- What is the purpose of the resource? What do the authors hope to accomplish?
- Does this purpose affect the presentations?
- Is the information fact or opinion?

CURRENCY

- Is the information current? Is it still valid?
- Has it been superseded by subsequent research?

COVERAGE

- Is the information relevant to your topic and assignment?
- Who is the intended audience?
- Is the materials presented at an appropriate level?
- Is the information complete and unique?

**REMEMBER: YOU CAN ALWAYS GET RESEARCH HELP FROM THE REFERENCE DESK
GOOD LUCK!**