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Evaluate Everything

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Evaluate Everything!

Amanda Izenstark
Associate Professor
Reference & Instructional Design Librarian
University Libraries

Good afternoon and thanks for coming! I am here to encourage you to evaluate everything!

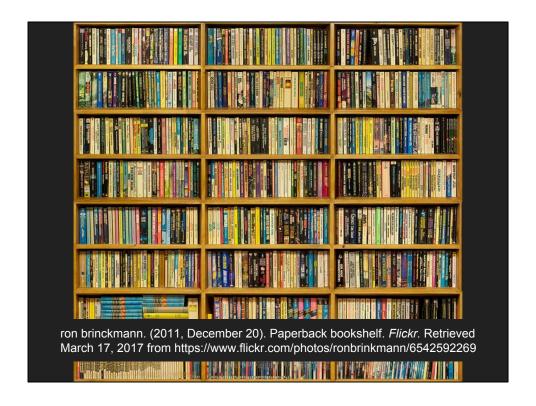
More than ever,
the onus is on
all of us,
as information consumers,
to determine
who's telling the truth.

And it's gotten harder.

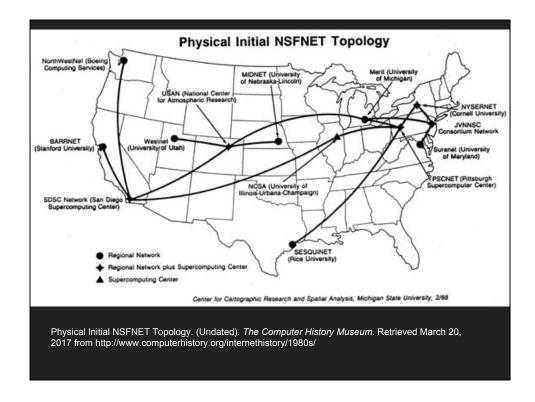
Why?



Here's a picture of a library that was started about 1,000 years ago. Books then were expensive and rare, so you didn't want them leaving the library.



Fast forward to the twentieth century when books became super cheap - just a few dollars for a paperback! But you certainly weren't going to spend money on a book that was just bad, or full of lies, or unreliable. And if you bought one, you weren't going to buy more from that author.



Then came the internet! This is a picture of the "early" internet, around the late 80s.



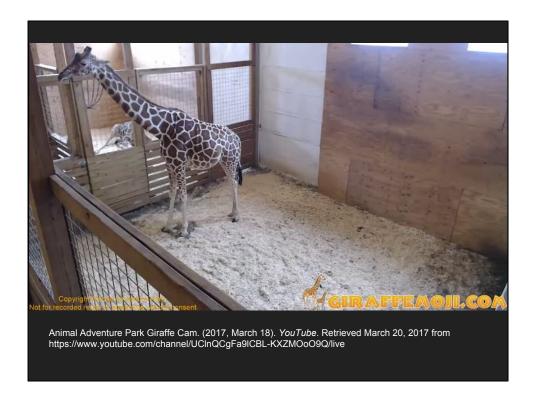
The Internet allowed us to put all sorts of stuff online, like the news!



And old books out of copyright!



And sites like dhmo.org that talk about the grave dangers of dihydrogen monoxide - water.



And super cute, really pregnant giraffes!

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Before 2000, it was pretty easy

.gov And a whole bunch of country codes:
.edu .uk, .ca, .au, .il, .fi, .de, .kr, .cn, etc.
.mil .int .net
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As far as evaluation before 2000, it was easy. You had a limited number of top level domains that generally indicated the type or quality of the website you were looking at.

And it was way harder to make a decent looking website.

In 2014 and onward...

buzzfeed.news

replyall.soy

viz.wtf

tbicare.ninja

mayo.education

blog.google

see the list of generic Top Level Domains added since 2013 at https://newgtlds.icann.org/en/program-status/delegated-strings

But in the early 200s, and really in 2014, we got a whole slew of new and interesting top level domains that people could use. Some represent what the domain owners are about - buzzfeed.news - but others are not terribly indicative. Reply All is a podcast that has nothing to do with soy, nor do they have anything to do with diamonds, and they've also registered the domain replyall.diamonds.

But wait.

en.wikipedia.org

Perhaps you were told

.org = good

and

wikipedia = bad

Here's where *your* critical thinking skills come in.

How?

One Option:

Does it pass the CRAAP Test?



The CRAAP Test was given its quirky name by librarians at California State University - Chico.

C - Currency

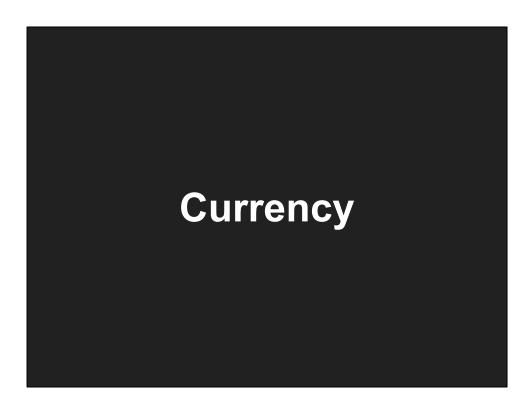
R - Relevance

A - Accuracy

A - Authority

P - Purpose

It's a great mnemonic for Currency, Relevance, Accuracy, and Purpose. The order isn't important - you could call it PAARC if you wanted to! The elements are the important parts.



Currency: How recent is the information and is that important to your research?

COFFEE AS AN AID TO DIGESTION.

Some recent experiments in Germany, says The Montreal Herald, confirm the opinion of physicians that the coffee which is an aid to digestion must be an infusion, and not boiled. For this particular reason, the after-dinner coffee should always be an infusion. The caffeine of coffee, however, which is the element most stimulating to travelers, is said to be best drawn out by keeping the coffee at the boiling point for a few minutes. It is a prolonged boiling both of tea and of coffee that extracts the poisonous tannin. To avoid this, it is better that two pots of tea or coffee be made for breakfast or any other meal for which the members of the family have different hours. Both are so easily made, and add so much to the pleasure of a meal, that a good housekeepr should feel unwilling to give any one a cup of either that has been made for any length of time.

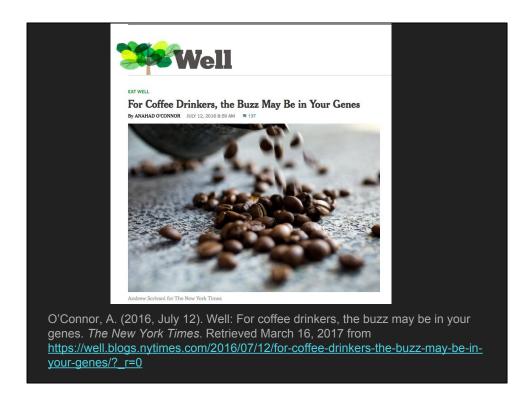
The New york Times

Published: March 18, 1894 Copyright © The New York Times

Coffee as an aid to digestion. (1894, March 18). *The New York Times*. Retrieved March 16, 2017 from

http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=9C05E1D71431E033A2575BC1A9659C94659ED7CF

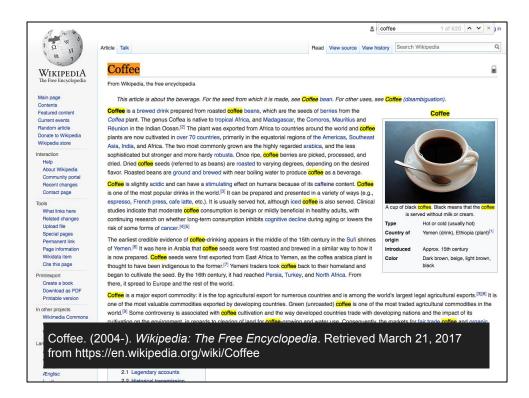
Here's an article from The New York Times about coffee - from 1894! If I'm helping a history student find information about historical uses and research into coffee, this is gold. It cites research done in Germany, and maybe we can track that down!



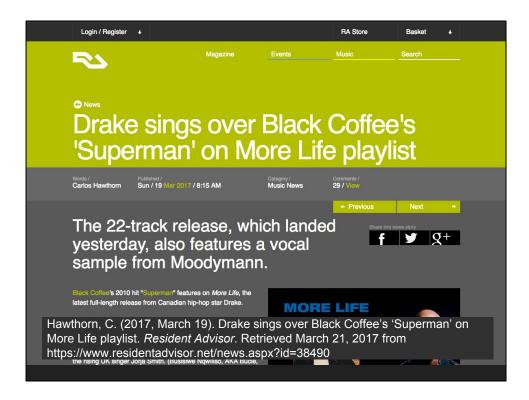
But if I am interested in the most recent research, this is far better - it was published in July 2016, on the New York Times' Well blog.



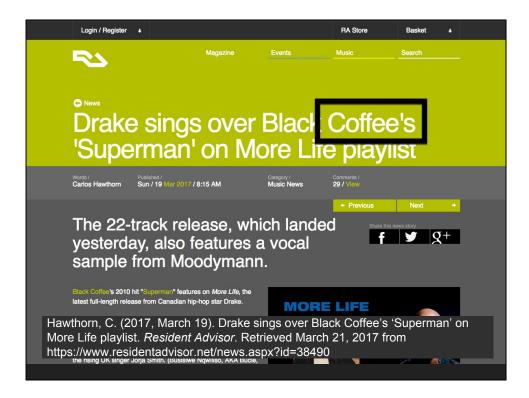
Relevance: How much does it pertain to your information needs?



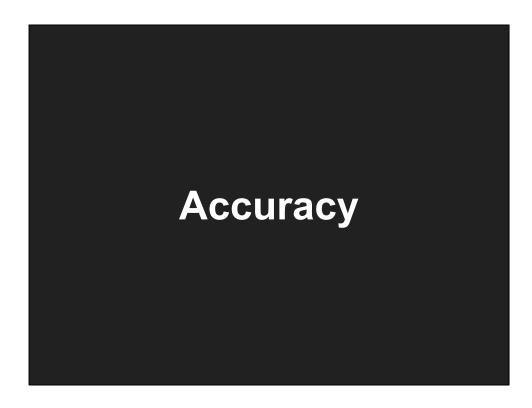
This wikipedia article talks about coffee 620 times! It looks really relevant.



But this article is not about coffee as I'm looking for it, but coffee is in the title.



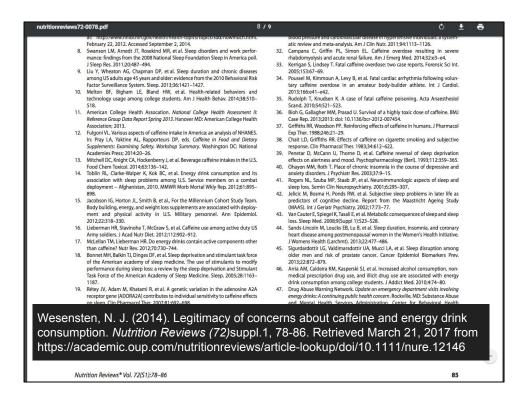
It's just a recent article about Drake.



How accurate is the information? This is tricky.

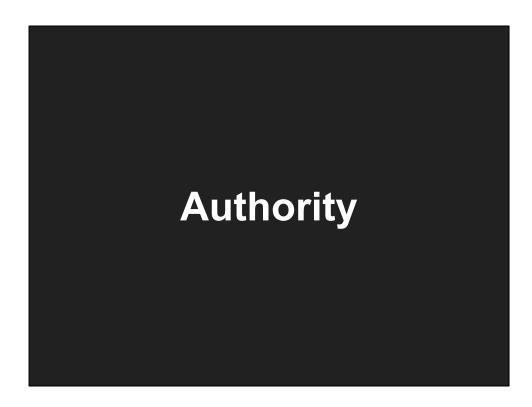


If I look closely at the references for this wikipedia article, I'll see that it includes a wide variety of types of sources, some of which were used because they were freely available online to the article's editors. Some items are from trade publications, some are books, it really varies.



The sources listed for this scholarly research article are... other scholarly research articles!

In either case, I can look at some of the references to see if the authors' claims are accurate.



What are the author's credentials?



Anahad O'Connor

Anahad O'Connor is a reporter for The New York Times, covering health, fitness, nutrition and epidemiology. He writes for the Science Times section as well as the paper's Health and Wellness blog.

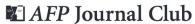
Anahad O'Connor is a reporter for The New York Times, covering health, fitness, nutrition and epidemiology. He writes for the Science Times section as well as the paper's Health and Wellness blog.

Anahad joined The Times in 2003 after graduating from Yale University with a degree in psychology and a focus on neuroscience and child studies. He has written four books, including the bestsellers "Never Shower in a Thunderstorm" and "Lose It! The Personalized Weight Loss Revolution."

In addition to health, he has covered science, politics, metropolitan and breaking news. He was born and raised in New York City, and lives on Manhattan's Upper West Side.

Anahad O'Connor. (Undated). *The New York Times*. Retrieved March 16, 2017 from https://www.nytimes.com/by/anahad-oconnor

I Googled the author of the article from the New York Times Well blog, and found out about his background. He's a reporter, not a doctor. For some of my information needs, this is fine! If I am looking for an article to send to my mother-in-law, that New York Times article is perfect. Sending her a scholarly research article would be too much, even though she's a super smart woman.



The Story Behind the Study

If It Seems Too Good To Be True...

JILL ENDRES, MD, MS, University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine, Iowa City, Iowa
MARK A. GRABER, MD, FACEP, University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine, Iowa City, Iowa
ROBERT DACHS, MD, FAAFP, Ellis Hospital Family Medicine Residency Program, Schenectady, New York

Purpose

In AFP Journal Club, three presenters review an interesting journal article in a conversational manner. These articles involve hot topics that affect family physicians or "bust" commonly held medical myths. The presenters give their opinions about the clinical value of the individual study discussed. The opinions reflect the views of the presenters, not those of AFP or the AAFP.

Article

Vinson JA, Burnham BR, Nagendran MV. Randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled, linear dose, crossover study to evaluate the efficacy and safety of a green coffee bean extract in overweight subjects [retracted in: Diabetes Metab Syndr Obes. 2014;7:467]. Diabetes Metab Syndr Obes. 2012;5:21-27.

bean extract (350 mg twice daily), high-dose green coffee bean extract (350 mg three times daily), and placebo (350 mg inert capsules three times daily). It was given in differing sequences to which the participants were randomly assigned. Each phase of the sequence was six weeks, followed by a two-week washout (no supplementation taken). Weight, height, and body fat percentage were measured at baseline and at six, eight, 14, 16, and 22 weeks. All participants were counseled about diet and exercise at each visit. Data were analyzed using repeated mea-

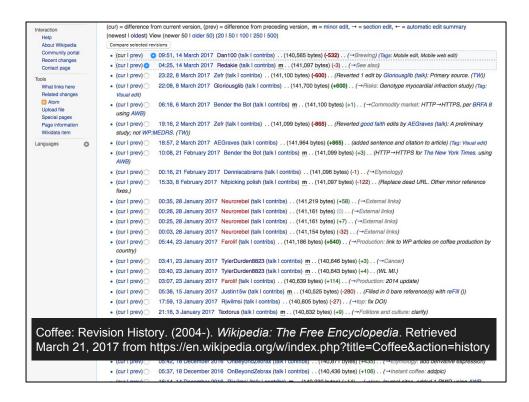
Endres, J., Graber, M. A., & Dachs, R. (2015, May 15). If it seems too good to be true... *American Family Physician* 91(10), 729-730. Retrieved March 21, 2017 from http://www.aafp.org/afp/2015/0515/p729.pdf

Jan Overweight and Obesity are releasing loss, 13, and 22 weeks), results revenue a

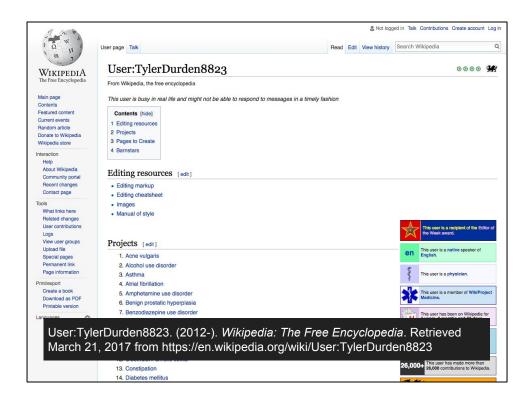
But this article from American Family Physician is written by medical doctors with a multitude of relevant credentials. (They're actually critiquing an article about using green coffee beans to lose weight that was debunked.)



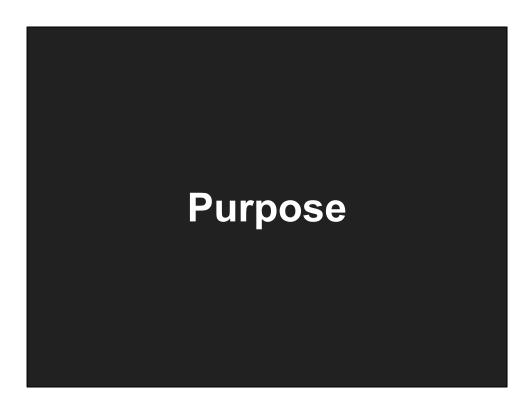
Whenever I use Wikipedia, I look at the article History (and the Talk page, which is on the left).



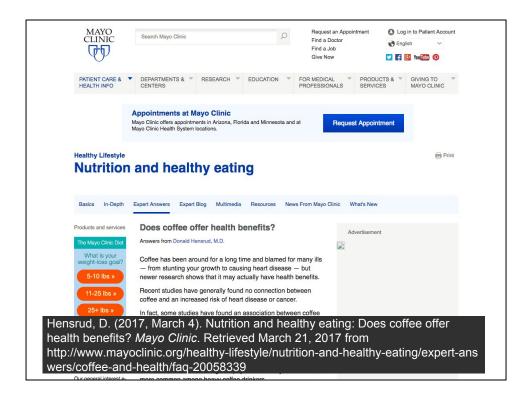
Here's the History page for the Coffee article. I scrolled down a bit to look at the authors of the article. One is named Tyler Durden. Anyone know offhand who Tyler Durden is? (Character from the novel and movie Fight Club!)



On his user page, TylerDurden8823 indicates that he's a physician. (In the book/movie, Tyler Durden was not a physician.) I'm not sure how much I trust "Tyler Durden" the "physician"!



Purpose: WHY was this information shared?



This is a page from the Mayo Clinic's website - the Mayo Clinic is a real and respected hospital and research facility in Rochester, MN. I can see clearly on this who wrote the article, and I can click on his name and see what his qualifications are. This is here to educate.



Then I found Coffee & Me, a .org website, which has beautiful pictures and talks about liver health, athletic endurance, effects on diabetes, and how it can help me live longer! Sounds great!

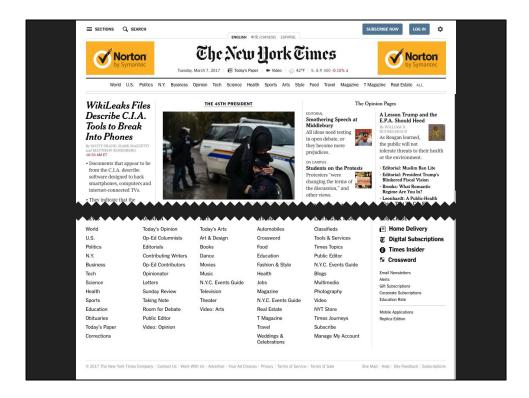


And then I discover it's a publication of the National Coffee Association, which is really trying to sell me more coffee.

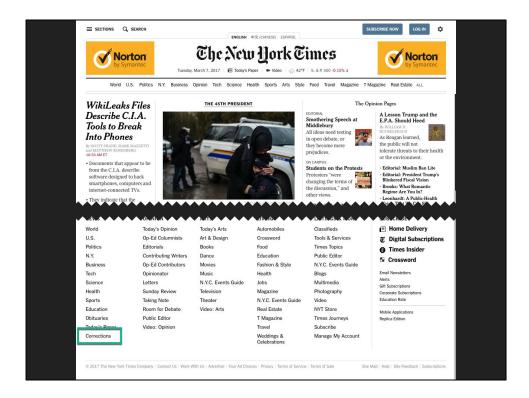
Remember: Domain Knowledge is Important!

How much do you already know about a topic?

Don't assume that because a source is generally reputable that they don't make mistakes.



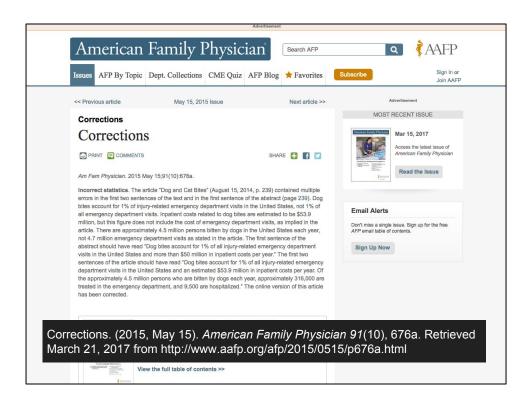
Here's the website of the New York Times, which is generally reputable.



And if you scroll to the bottom of their main page, you'll see they list their Corrections.

≡ Q. The New York Times	Corrections	SUBSCRIBE NOW	SIGN IN Register 💠
Corrections: Tuesday, March 7, 2017 Corrections appearing in print on Tuesday, March 7, 2017.			
No Corrections: Monday, March 6, 2017 No corrections appeared in print on Monday, March 6, 2017.			
Corrections: March 5, 2017 Corrections appearing in print on Sunday, March 5, 2017.			
Corrections: March 4, 2017 Corrections appearing in print on Saturday, March 4, 2017.			
Editors' Note: March 3, 2017 Corrections appearing in print on Friday, March 3, 2017.			
Corrections: March 2, 2017 Corrections appearing in print on Thursday, March 2, 2017.			
Corrections: March 1, 2017 Corrections appearing in print on Wednesday, March 1, 2017.			
The Times welcomes complaints about errors that warrant correction. It on yntnews@nytimes.com or left toll-free at 1-844-NYT-NEWS (1-844-6 e-mailed to letters@nytimes.com or faxed to (212) 555-5622.	dessages on news coverage can be e-mailed 198-6397). Comments on editorials may be		
Readers concerned about issues of journalistic integrity may reach the p (212) 556-8044.	ublic editor at public@nytimes.com or		
For newspaper delivery questions: 1-800-NYTIMES (1-800-698-4637)	or e-mail customercare@nytimes.com.		
RECENTLY CORRECTED ARTICLES			
Life on Colonnade Row: The Hidden History Behind the	Columns 12:15 PM ET		
A Conversation With: Why We Can't Look Away From O	ur Screens 1:47 PM ET		
'The Daily': Travel Ban Do-Over 10:40 AM ET			
Op-Ed Contributor: A Lesson Trump and the E.P.A. Shou	ld Heed 11:16 AM ET		
Rangers 1, Lightning 0, OT: Rangers Beat Lightning on M $_{\rm 11:48\;AM\;ET}$	lika Zibanejad's Overtime Goal		
Robert Osborne, Turner Classic Movies Host, Dies at 84	2:11 PM ET		
Nancy Willard, Prolific Children's Book Author, Dies at 8	0 12:19 PM ET		
Stephen Adly Guirgis to Return to the Stage at Dorset Th	eater Festival 12:41 PM FT		

They are very transparent about the corrections that needed to be made for each day, and tell you what articles were corrected!



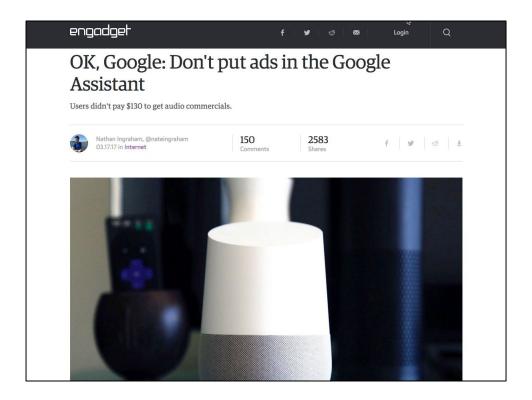
Even scholarly articles have corrections on occasion. In 2015, American Family Physician listed a correction to an article about dog and cat bites.

p.s. about knowing where to look...

So, the title of this panel is "FINDING reliable information..." so I want to talk briefly about finding.



Google is probably the first place most - if not all of us - go to in order to find out more about something.

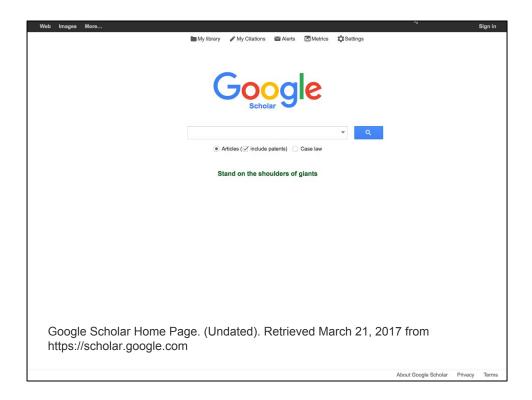


But this recent Engadget article includes an important reminder.

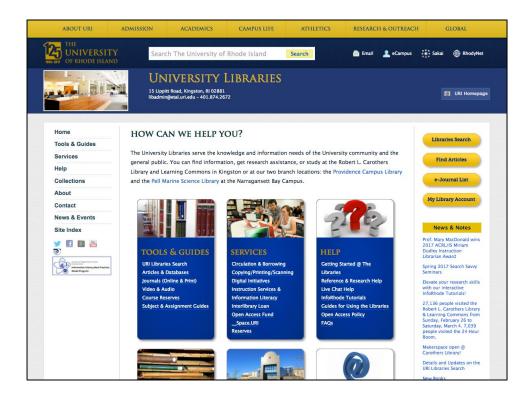
Given how genuinely useful so many of its products are, I sometimes forget that Google is, above all else, an advertising company. The <u>vast majority of Google's money</u> comes from ads, and it has made a business out of finding ways to integrate them into its services. Search, Maps and Gmail are just a few Google services that integrate ads without compromising their utility.

Ingraham, N. (2017, March 17). OK, Google: Don't put ads in the Google Assistant. *Engadget*. Retrieved March 21, 2017 from https://www.engadget.com/2017/03/17/google-home-ads-bad-precedent/

Google is an advertising company.



Google Scholar is less ad-y, but keep in mind that not everything in Google Scholar is scholarly, and not everything scholarly is in Google Scholar. For example, when helping a patron find information about beef and nutrition, we found propaganda from the beef industry. Google's algorithms thought it looked scholarly enough for inclusion, so there it was.



The University Libraries, on the other hand, pay for resources that are curated by non-profit and other research organizations - none of whom are basing their futures on delivering ads to you.

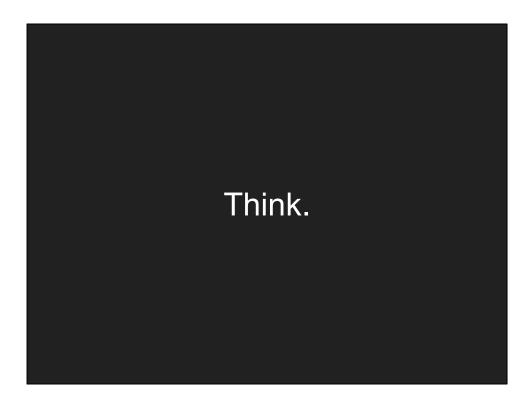
If you're a knowledgeable and savvy searcher, you may find good and bad information everywhere.

Keep in mind, though...

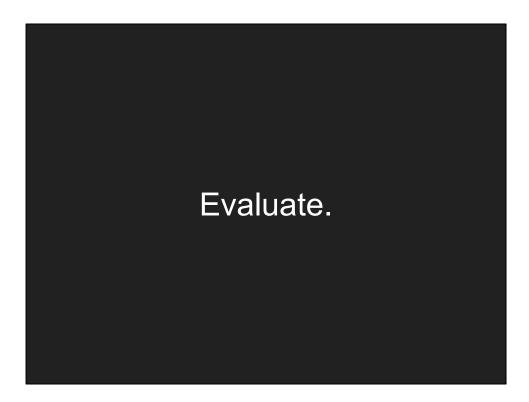
YOU have the power.

Dig deeper.

Research your authors.



Think critically.



Evaluate everything.

Thank you!

Amanda Izenstark Reference & Instructional Design Librarian amanda@uri.edu