Assessing Online Resources

Introduction

Anyone with the technological know-how can publish anything on the Internet. It is unregulated, unedited, and unmonitored. The burden is on the reader to assess the value and validity of the material presented. Therefore, it is important for students and faculty alike to have techniques for evaluating web pages. The links below offer evaluation criteria, guidelines, and tutorials for assessing online resources.

General Resources

“The Good, the Bad, & the Ugly, or Why It’s a Good Idea to Evaluate Web Sources,” Susan E. Beck (New Mexico State University Library).
Criteria, examples (good, bad, and ugly), suggestions for instructors planning Internet assignments, and a bibliography of online sites and publications with further information.
http://nmsu.libguides.com/libraryinstruction [1]

Detailed guidelines for evaluating web pages, a “pop quiz” comparing two web sites, and an Internet assignment designed to increase awareness of the need to assess sources and develop Internet assessment skills.

“Thinking Critically about World Wide Web Resources,” Esther Grassian (University of California, Los Angeles College Library).
Presents points to consider when using Internet resources, including evaluating sites for subject disciplines. Also links to “Thinking Critically About Web 2.0 and Beyond.”

For additional evaluation criteria, see "Thinking Critically about Discipline-Based World Wide Web Resources at http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/library/modules/Judge/CLThinkDisc.pdf [4]

Evaluating Web Pages: Techniques to Apply and Questions to Ask (University of California, Berkeley Library).
Offers a detailed tutorial on techniques for Web evaluation, with many ideas for ways to check on the credibility of the
Librarians’ Internet Index: Websites You Can Trust (LII is supported by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services).
Extensive annotated links to trustworthy web sites organized by broad areas of interest and specific disciplines.
http://www.ipl.org

Covers many guidelines for evaluating sources, with especially valuable information on assessing point of view or bias, and methods for distinguishing propaganda, misinformation, and disinformation.
http://guides.library.jhu.edu/evaluatinginformation

Assessing the Credibility of Online Sources (St. Cloud State University, LEO: Literacy Education Online).
Contains criteria for assessing online sources: authorship, publisher, currency, perspectives, coverage, and accuracy or verifiability.
http://leo.stcloudstate.edu/research/credibility1.html

Transcriptions: Evaluating and Citing Online Resources (University of California Santa Barbara, Department of English).
Offers checklists for evaluating and citing online materials. Includes links to evaluation exercises, examples of where to look on a website for citation information, and citation examples.

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Links