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Information Literacy in a Post-Truth Era

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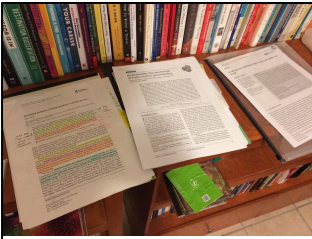
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Information Literacy in a Post-Truth Era

Catherine Baird & Jonathan Howell
Montclair State University

(These slides are from part 2 of this talk. Dr. Jeffery Gonzalez delivered part 1.)

Jonathan: Jeff, Catherine and I wanted to begin with a land acknowledgment statement. We respectfully acknowledge that Montclair State University occupies the traditional and unceded territory of the Lenni-Lenape. The ongoing theft from Indigenous people, along with the stolen blood and work of enslaved Africans and African-descended individuals, facilitates our presence. We also pay our respects to Indigenous elders past, present, and future and to those who have stewarded their communities and land throughout the generations. By offering this land acknowledgement, we affirm Indigenous sovereignty more broadly and commit to increasing awareness of the historical legacies of Indigenous dispossession while actively working to dismantle practices of erasure that perpetuate these legacies in the present. We know that this acknowledgement is neither sufficient nor complete but is part of a process of learning to become more thoughtful and negotiate new and equitable ways forward.



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Information is ubiquitous



[CC-BY cmh2315fl on Flickr](#)



Catherine:

Information is ubiquitous.

In this crowd here today (i.e. in higher education), the term *information* might make you think of books, journal articles, conference proceedings, maybe the podcast you listened to this morning. And given our topic today, *information* may evoke things like social media posts, perhaps cable news broadcasts, or news articles. The study of information actually extends even more broadly to include not just educational and not just the visual, but the entire body. The work of Annemaree Lloyd (2010) examines information behavior practices of firefighters, sensing (e.g. sight, sound, touch) their surroundings as they fight a fire. Anderson and Johnston (2016) describe train conductors who gather information from the sounds of a train (p.4.) Lupton & Bruce (2010) using the everyday example of the information behaviour of planning a vacation.

We use information (or avoid it) in all aspects of our lives, personal, educational, workplaces, families and communities.

Information behaviour is invisible



"Do you really know what you're doing, or do you Google-search know?"

Smaller, Barbara. (2014) *The New Yorker*.

Catherine:

As humans, we are constantly engaging in information behaviors. But they are usually invisible. In addition, processes associated with information are becoming invisible as well. [Reveal image] Take, for example, search. Information searching is so ubiquitous in our lives, we hardly even notice when we are doing it. Have you ever asked a friend or a student what they thought of something and the next thing you know, a phone is pulled out to do a search for information? (Haider and Sundin) Michael Lynch calls this "Google knowing."

What are all the invisible processes that go through your head when you're Googling something? Let's see if Jonathan will let us take a peak inside his Google-knowing brain as he looks at a list of Google search results.

References:

Haider, J., & Sundin, O. (2019). *Invisible search and online search engines : the ubiquity of search in everyday life*. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Lynch, M. P. (2017). *The internet of us : knowing more and understanding less in the age of big data*. Liveright Publishing Corporation, a division of W.W. Norton & Company.

prosody african american



About 28,400 results (0.12 sec)

[\[book\]](#) Present accounted for: **Prosody** and aspect in early **African American** English.

[\[PDF\]](#) uottawa.ca

[JA Walker](#) - 2000 - ruor.uottawa.ca

This study reconstructs the present temporal reference system of Early **African American** English (AAE) by investigating the linguistic factors conditioning several variables within the domain of present temporal reference in three varieties argued to be representative of Early ...

☆ Cited by 24 [Related articles](#)

Prosodic features of African American English

[ER Thomas](#) - [The Oxford handbook of African American ...](#), 2015 - books.google.com

Page 461. Chapter 22 Prosodic Features of **African American** English ERIK R. THOMAS 22.1 Introduction The **prosody** of **African American** English (AAE) 1 shares one frustrating characteristic with the **prosody** of other varieties of English ...

☆ Cited by 29 [Related articles](#) [All 4 versions](#)

[\[PDF\]](#) **Prosody** and political style: The case of Barack Obama and the L+ H* Pitch accent

[\[PDF\]](#) researchgate.net

[N Holliday](#), [J Bishop](#), [G Kuo](#) - ... [Conference on Speech Prosody](#), 2020 - researchgate.net

... be involved in the construction of sociopolitical meaning. Index Terms: sociophonetics, intonational variation, **prosody**, **African American** Language, political speech 1. Introduction Research within each of the domains of intonational ...

☆ Cited by 4 [Related articles](#) [All 3 versions](#)

Regional variation in West and East Coast African-American English prosody and rap flows

[\[PDF\]](#) sagepub.com

Full View

[S Gilbers](#), [N Hoeksema](#), [K De Bot](#)... - [Language and ...](#), 2020 - journals.sagepub.com

Regional variation in **African-American** English (AAE) is especially salient to its speakers involved with hip-hop culture, as hip-hop assigns great importance to regional identity and regional ...

Catherine:

I asked Jonathan to do a search on the prosody of African American English. He took about 3 seconds and chose the third hit in the Google results.

Jonathan:

OK. I'm gonna do a think-aloud here. The first result says it's a book, but the domain name "ruor.uottawa.ca" makes me think it's probably a dissertation. Plus with a year 2000 publication date it's over 20 years old. And anyway, it says "early" African American English and I'm interested in contemporary language. Next.

The second one looks like a good overview article, it's relatively recent. There's no link to a PDF, but I recognize the handbook it comes from, and I'm pretty sure the library has it as an eBook.

The third result is much narrower: it focus on a single speaker (Barack Obama) and a particular phenomenon. It's also from a conference, rather than a peer reviewed journal, but I'm familiar with the conference and I know that Nicole Holliday is one of the leading experts on the topic and I've met her co-author. So since it's so recent, I'm going to start with this to get an idea of what research is happening on the topic right now. Done.

What would your students do? Ask them to do this kind of reflection of search results as an information literacy activity!

The point here is that a lot of mental processing is going on, but no one is saying it out loud. It's completely invisible.

Information is perceived as neutral, but it's social



[CC-BY Steve Davis on Flickr](#)

Catherine:

Information is ubiquitous and invisible. We're also going to argue against thinking of information as a neutral object to be consumed by students or the public. Rather, we encourage you to think of information as something that you engage with in a social way. In fact, we encourage you think less about information itself and more about behaviours and practices around information as a social interactions.

Students, like all humans, have an information literacy practice. But it often happens that students' information literacy practice is not seen, not validated, or even actively critiqued. Their authority is undermined or even negated.

That will be the endpoint, the goal, for this part of the talk. We will offer this diagnosis--at least a partial diagnosis--of the information-related challenges in our classrooms and in our society. People often feel disempowered and some of the behaviours we see, such as grade complaints and disruptive classroom behaviour, are expressions of resistance.

And we want to convince you, especially if you are an educator, to make visible your own information literacy practice, to check your information privilege and invite others, especially students, to assume authority in their own information literacy practices.

References:

Lloyd, A. (2012). Information literacy as a socially enacted practice. *Journal of documentation*, 68(6), 772-783. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/00220411211277037>

(Evanson & Hare 2018:727 write that information privilege is a term “that carries assumptions about who has power, who does not, and what types of information are valuable”)

Agenda

1. A functioning democracy requires an informed citizenry
2. Information Literacy Learning
 - i. (Lupton and Bruce, 2010)
3. Why Students Resist Learning

Jonathan:

But we'll try to guide you there gently.

First, we'll explicitly acknowledge democracy, given that this is a talk *about* democracy, and the role of information.

Then we'll talk about some ways of thinking about information literacy learning.

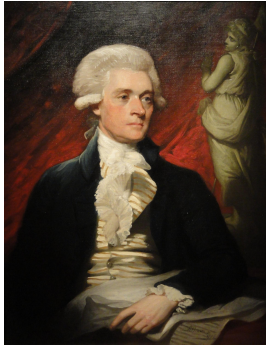
The literature on information literacy is VAST and multidisciplinary. To frame the discussion, we'll draw on work by Lupton & Bruce who identify 3 perspectives or windows of information literacy.

Finally, we'll look at why students resist learning.

References:

Lupton, Mandy, & Bruce, Christine. (2010). Windows on information literacy worlds: Generic, situated and transformative perspectives. In *Practising information literacy: Bringing theories of learning, practice and information literacy together* (pp. 4-27). Centre for Information Studies.

A functioning democracy requires an informed citizenry



“If we are to guard against ignorance and remain free, it is the responsibility of every American to be informed.”

Thomas Jefferson

The
Strength
of a People
The Idea *of an*
Informed
Citizenry
in America
1650-1870
Richard D. Brown

Jonathan:

There is a popular idea that a functioning democracy requires an informed citizenry. For the rest of the talk, we’re going to take this for granted, but we wanted to take a moment to problematize it.

The ideology of an informed citizenry has a long history in this country. Many founding fathers were quite vocal about the idea that a functioning democracy required it. As historian Richard Brown notes, however, the ideology has been fraught from the start, with many people living in America were totally excluded from the category of citizen.

But let’s go with the premise that an informed citizenry is required for a functioning democracy. How are we doing?

References:

Schudson, M. (1999). The social construction of the ‘Informed Citizen.’ *Good Society*, 9(1), 30–35. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20710919>.

Evidence we should be concerned

- [Research Strategies: Finding Your Way Through the Information Fog](#) (Badke 2000, 2021)
- [Infodemic](#) (World Health Organization, 2020)
- [Infoglut](#) (Andrejevic 2013)
- [The Organized Mind : Thinking Straight in the Age of Information Overload](#) (Levitin, 2014)
- [Weaponized Lies: How to Think Critically in the Post-Truth Era](#) (Levitin, 2017, 2020)
- [Information Disorder](#) (Wardle & Derakhshan 2017)
- [Truth Decay](#) (Kavanagh & Rich 2018)
- [Democracy and Fake News : Information Manipulation and Post-truth Politics](#) (2020)

Catherine:

You don't have to look far to see that a lot of people are talking and writing about information problems from a multitude of perspectives. On this slide, there's a selection of books and reports to name just a few. When I first became a librarian, it was all about overload, glut and fog. Newer, are the metaphors of disorder, decay, and Infodemic.

References:

Andrejevic, M. (2013). *Infoglut : How too much information is changing the way we think and know*. Routledge.

Badke, W. B. (2004). *Research strategies : Finding your way through the information fog* (2nd ed.). iUniverse.

Giusti, S., & Piras, E. (Eds.). (2021). *Democracy and fake news : Information manipulation and post-truth politics*. Routledge.

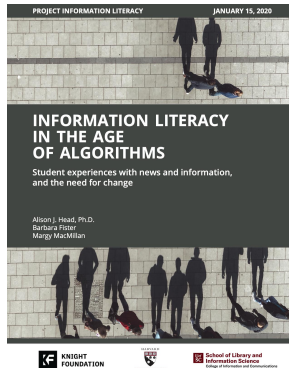
Levitin, D. J. (2014). *The organized mind : thinking straight in the age of information overload*. Dutton.

Wardle, Claire, and Hossein Derakhshan. *Information Disorder: Toward an*

Interdisciplinary Framework for Research and Policymaking. Council of Europe Report DGI(2017)09. Strasbourg, France: Council of Europe, October 2017.
<https://www.coe.int/en/web/freedom-expression/information-disorder>.

Kavanagh, J., & Rich, M. D. (2018). *Truth decay : An initial exploration of the diminishing role of facts and analysis in american public life*. RAND Corporation.
https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_reports/RR2300/RR2314/RAND_RR2314.pdf

Evidence we should be concerned



Project Information Literacy has been conducting large scale studies with college students for more than a decade. Their researchers conclude” quote **“that students’ approaches to research -- and the challenges they face -- have not changed significantly and neither have the kinds of research-based learning opportunities faculty provide.”** In their study of research assignment handouts Project Information Literacy researchers discovered that assignment instructions largely focused on prescribing the end product and directing students to use a limited type of sources such as peer-reviewed articles. (Algo Report 2020, p. 9 but citing [“Assigning Inquiry: How Handouts for Research Assignments Guide Today’s College Students.”](#))

What about you? How different or the same are your research assignments and handouts from 5 years ago? 10 years ago?

If there’s a disconnect between the world of the research papers and assignments in which we ask students to cite peer-reviewed sources and their day to day information worlds, what are the interventions?

References

Alison J. Head and Michael B. Eisenberg (July 13, 2010), *Assigning Inquiry: How handouts for research assignments guide today’s college students*. Project

Information Literacy Research Institute,
<https://projectinfoit.org/publications/research-handouts-study/>

Alison J. Head, Barbara Fister, and Margy MacMillan, *Information literacy in the age of algorithms: Student experiences with news and information, and the need for change* (15 January 2020), Project Information Research Institute,
<https://www.projectinfoit.org/uploads/2/7/5/4/27541717/algoreport.pdf>

Just teach them the *generic* skills

CRAAP ([Blakeslee, 2004](#))

Currency, **R**elevance, **A**uthority, **A**ccuracy, **P**urpose

SIFT ([Caulfield, 2019](#))

Stop, **I**investigate (the source), **F**ind (better coverage), **T**race (claims, quotes and media back to the original content)

BEAM ([Bizup, 2008](#))

Background, **E**xhibit (Evidence/Example), **A**rgument, **M**ethod

See: Lupton and Bruce, 2010

Catherine:

Here's one kind of intervention you may be familiar with. If we can teach students the skills, they will find the good stuff, the "good" information.

If you've used a source evaluation checklist like the CRAAP test (evaluating a source based on currency, relevance, authority, accuracy and purpose), then you've been teaching information skills. There are different takes (and acronyms) on information evaluation.

The SIFT method asks you to stop and investigate the source through lateral reading and tracing claims.

The BEAM method points you to look at how you are using a piece of information, whether that's for background information, as an exhibit (to interpret or analyze), for its argument or for its methods.

If you've set up a one-shot session with a librarian, we might have used these approaches with your students. And they can be very useful. They provide an individual with concrete strategies to follow, questions to think about, and can make information evaluation more visible.

Checklists, database search skills, boolean search strategies, citation skills: all of these fall into this category of generic skills, what Mandy Lupton and Christine Bruce

call the “Generic Window” where information literacy is “a set of cognitive skills and processes that individuals use for finding and managing information.” (p. 12)

But what are the limitations?

References:

Lupton, Mandy, & Bruce, Christine. (2010). Windows on information literacy worlds: Generic, situated and transformative perspectives. In *Practising information literacy: Bringing theories of learning, practice and information literacy together* (pp. 4-27). Centre for Information Studies.

Bizup, Joseph. (2008). “BEAM: A Rhetorical Vocabulary for Teaching Research-Based Writing.” *Rhetoric Review* 27,1: 72-86. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20176824>

Blakeslee, Sarah (2004) "The CRAAP Test," *LOEX Quarterly* 31,3:, Article 4. <https://commons.emich.edu/loexquarterly/vol31/iss3/4>

Limitations of “Just teach them the generic skills”

- Information literacy varies by context
- Useful but not sufficient
- Results in overconfidence
- Information literacy is up to the individual
- Prescriptive (right/wrong)

Generic

CRAAP
SIFT
Database searching
Citation mechanics
Individual responsibility
Step by step

See: Lupton and Bruce, 2010

Catherine:

Information literacy (like writing and critical thinking, etc.) varies a lot by discipline and context. Citation practices differ, what counts as evidence differs, authority differs, currency can be more or less important.

The checklist and procedural approaches (like CRAAP, SIFT) are a good start, but aren't flexible or nuanced enough. Information is not a thing to be curated and instrumentalized (e.g. I cited my 5 sources, so I've completed my research.) If you only see information literacy learning only in this way, it's just not complete. We compare it to learning how to write the 5 paragraph essay in writing. It introduces the idea of having structure in writing, but it can quickly become a constraint.

Students can become overconfident once they've mastered generic information literacy skills, thinking that's all there is to research. I can find the date on this source, so I'm good. I used the CRAAP checklist so my source evaluation is done. I did some fact-checking or lateral reading on this source. Check. I've had “the library session” already.

Finally, generic information literacy skills are shouldered by the individual. It's up to our learners to learn them and then sift through the content to find the “good stuff.”

It's important to spend time “unteaching” prior commandments like “do not trust Wikipedia” and “Dot Org” is good “Dot Com” is bad. These are prescriptive statements

that don't resonate with personal experience and they can shame and alienate learners.

What's the feeling of being wrong? Think back to a time when you discovered you were wrong. The thing with being wrong about something is that you don't know when you're wrong. It feels like being right. So shallow source evaluation or even lateral reading can just confirm that bias (Schulz).

References:

Schulz, Kathryn. (2010). *Being wrong : Adventures in the margin of error*. Ecco.

Intervention: Just teach them *situated* info literacy

Situated

Communities of practice
Authentic
Real research questions
Scholarship as conversation
Create new knowledge
Solve problems

Generic

CRAAP
SIFT
Database searching
Citation mechanics
Individual responsibility
Step by step

See: Lupton and Bruce, 2010

Catherine:

Where does that leave us? Generic skills are important, but not enough. The second window of information literacy is the situated window. Information practices are situated in different disciplines, workplaces or communities. If you're teaching in the Counseling department, you're teaching information literacy in the context of counseling. (If you're teaching in the Chemistry department, you're teaching information literacy in the context of Chemistry.) Students learn the information practices of that discipline, ideally in authentic ways by exploring real research questions in the field. Students are invited to develop a voice in this context and "create new knowledge" and "solve problems."

(e.g. Writing in the Disciplines movement; domain-specific critical thinking such as math problems that are *about* something)

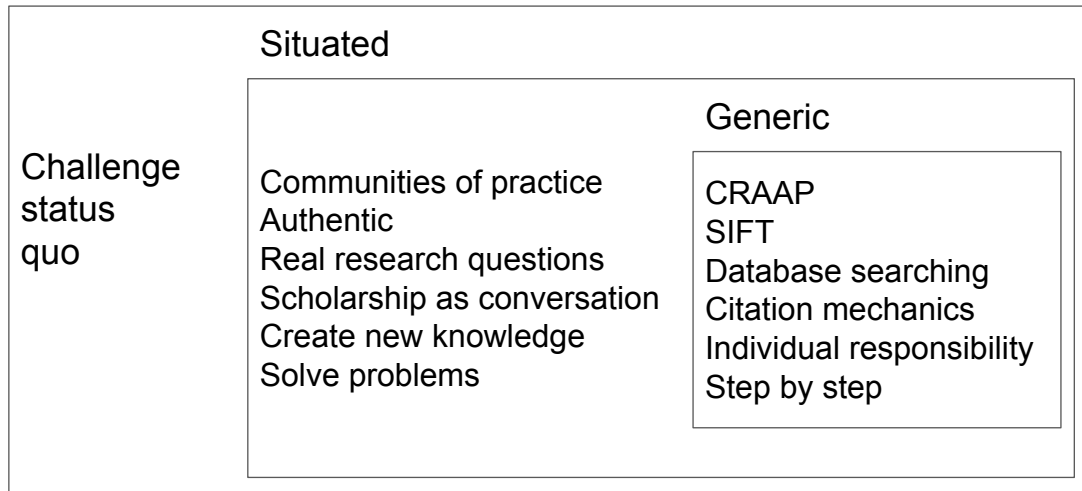
If I'm invited into a classroom as a librarian (on Zoom or in-person), I don't often get to work with students on this kind of information literacy learning. There's simply not enough time. Usually, I get to engage in these conversations when working with students during research appointments, as they are working through research for an assignment. What I often see is that students are focusing so much on using the research process for citing, that it's forgotten that the research process is actually about learning.

It's important to be explicit that students are learning information literacy in a situation,

in many cases, in a discipline. Is this visible or invisible in your teaching?

Transition (and foreshadow conclusion): Teaching information literacy from the situated or sociocultural window rather than *just* the generic window is more likely to lead learners towards “intellectual empathy”. However, the situated window also has limitations. This leads to consider Lupton & Bruce’s third perspective: the transformative window.

Transformative



See: Lupton and Bruce, 2010

Lupton & Bruce (2010) introduce 3 views or “windows” of information literacy. In the generic window, information literacy is a set of skills and processes. The situated window includes the generic window and builds on it. In the situated window we take a more sociocultural approach to information literacy.

Finally, in the transformative window, we ask:

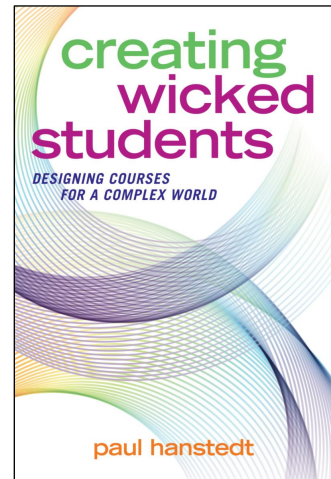
- Who generated the information?
- For what purposes?
- Whose interests are served?
- Who is silent?

According to Lupton & Bruce, information literacy is taught in the transformative window by “empowering learners to critique information in order to challenge the status quo,” and information literacy is assessed by “the process and outcome of this critique and activism.”

If this sounds political, well...

Reference:

Lupton, M., & Bruce, C. (2010). Windows on information literacy worlds: Generic, situated and transformative perspectives. In *Practising information literacy: Bringing theories of learning, practice and information literacy together* (pp. 4-27).



It is. It may evoke images of important recent social movements. And that may make some folks feel uncomfortable. But, as Lupton & Bruce, argue, teaching information literacy from the perspective of the generic window is also political, because it maintains the status quo.

As educators we want our students to be more than good consumers. To borrow ideas from Paul Handstedt, our world is full of wicked problems: the kind of messy problems in contexts of uncertainty for which there is no handbook and no checklist to consult.

As educators, we want our students to engage in thoughtful change. To do this, we have to develop authority in our students.

Both of these things are important: it is important that we teaching students how to assume authority; and it is important that we teach students to engage in change that is thoughtful.

Reference:

Hanstedt, P. (2018). *Creating wicked students : Designing courses for a complex world*. Stylus Publishing

Marshall, Tabitha. "Idle No More". The Canadian Encyclopedia, 04 February 2019, Historica Canada. <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/idle-no-more>.

TECHNOLOGY

The Librarian War Against QAnon

As “Do the research” becomes a rallying cry for conspiracy theorists, classical information literacy is not enough.

BARBARA FISTER FEBRUARY 18, 2021



“**research it yourself**” has become the empowering antidote to elitist expertise”

“Those who spend their time in the library of the unreal have an abundance of something that is scarce in college classrooms: **information agency**”

In a recent article in the Atlantic “The librarian war against QAnon”, Barbara Fister draws our attention to a particular mantra of the QAnon community: “do the research”.

She writes: “It should give advocates of information literacy pause that, similar to the way the phrase “fake news” was appropriated to disparage mainstream journalism, the slogan “**research it yourself**” has become the **empowering antidote to elitist expertise**. Do you really believe vaccines are dangerous? Research it yourself.”

Those who spend their time in the library of the unreal have an abundance of something that is scarce in college classrooms: information agency. One of the powers they feel elites have tried to withhold from them is the ability to define what constitutes knowledge. They don’t simply distrust what the experts say, they distrust the social systems that create expertise. They take pleasure in claiming expertise for themselves, on their own terms.”

Fister is arguing that an important part of the appeal of the QAnon movement is that, rather than just giving people information, or telling people who to trust, QAnon invites them to uncover information themselves. They have information agency. It’s less clear, however, that they are engaging in thoughtful change.

Now it would be a stretch to suggest that, if you fail to approach information literacy from the transformative window, that all your students will join the Q community.

On the other hand, we do believe that students who lack information agency may be

more likely to resist learning, and that they may communicate that resistance in ways that instructors may not recognize.

Note:

And we know from other research that there is a strong connection between conspiracy movements like this and a person's sense of powerlessness and alienation (Beene & Greer 2021).

From Beene & Greer 2021:

"Researchers have also found a correlation between conspiracism and feelings of powerlessness and alienation (Abalakina-Paap et al., 1999; Goertzel, 1994; Swami et al., 2010), which can, in turn, result in a state of hypervigilance (Kramer & Gavrieli, 2005)."

"Believers often feel they have become experts on a hidden truth (Oliver and Wood, 2014b)."

"feelings of powerlessness during crises may have lead to a loss of trust in established institutions, including universities and libraries (Lewandowsky & Cook, 2020)"

Some forms of **active** resistance:

- Arguing or disagreeing with professor in classroom
- Saying they paid for the class
- Arguing with professor over grades received; seeking additional points

Some forms of **passive** resistance:

- Failing to turn in or being consistently late with assignments
- Expressing concerns about working with others
- Minimally participating in class (withdrawn, does not speak or give feedback)

Anton Tolman and colleagues, many of them students themselves, explore over the course of many chapters, a variety of reasons why students may resist learning, including societal and environmental factors and negative past classroom experiences. And they catalog a number of different forms that resistance may take. On this slide, we include just a few.

Some forms of active resistance:

- Arguing or disagreeing with professor in classroom
- Saying they paid for the class
- Arguing with professor over grades received; seeking additional points

Some forms of passive resistance:

- Failing to turn in or being consistently late with assignments
- Expressing concerns about working with others
- Minimally participating in class (withdrawn, does not speak or give feedback)

Of course there may be other reasons for some of these behaviors. It may not necessarily resistance, but it might be.

Another important factor in student resistance to learning is cognitive/epistemic development. In other words, how a student's thinking about information develops.

References:

Tolman, A. O., & Kremling, J. (Eds.). (2017). *Why students resist learning : a practical model for understanding and helping students* (First). Stylus Publishing, LLC.

Epistemic development

- Realist/Absolutist position.

Beliefs are directly based in reality.
Information is true or false.

- Multiplicity position:

Everyone has a right to their own opinion and each is equally valid

- Evaluative position:

Not all perspectives are equal: depends on strength of evidence

There are several models of epistemic development (e.g. Perry 1970; King & Kitchener 1994; Baxter Magolda 1992). We'll give you a broad strokes version (based on Anderson & Johnson 2016):

- Realist/Absolutist position. Beliefs are directly based in reality. Information is true or false.
- Multiplicity position: "Everyone has a right to their own opinion" and each is equally valid
- Evaluative position: Not all perspectives are equal: depends on strength of evidence

Where do you see yourself? Where do you see your students? Where do you see your neighbor/family member/colleague/etc.?

The evidence suggests that most students show up to college approaching information from a realist position: many, but by no means all students, leave college approaching information from an evaluative position.

In my own classes, I observe quite a bit of diversity. I like to give an assignment in my senior-level linguistics class that asks students to search the literature for two analyses that explain the same set of data in different ways. A few students get along without much help. For many students, though, it is sometimes a challenge to work

though what that even means.

References:

Anderson, A., & Johnston, B. (2016). *From information literacy to social epistemology : Insights from psychology*. Chandos Publishing.

Perry, W. G., Jr. (1999). *Forms of intellectual and ethical development in the college years : A scheme*. Jossey-Bass.

King, P. M., & Kitchener, K. S. (1994). *Developing reflective judgment : Understanding and promoting intellectual growth and critical thinking in adolescents and adults*. Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Baxter Magolda, M. B. (1992). *Knowing and reasoning in college : gender-related patterns in students' intellectual development*. Jossey-Bass.

Multiplicity and the “AI Roker strategy”



We want to end by zooming out a bit. The available evidence suggests that most people do not hold an evaluative position. Here I’m going to play you a short clip from a 2016 episode of Last Week Tonight with John Oliver.

PLAY VIDEO

We play this clip not to judge or shame AI Roker. Who doesn’t love AI Roker? No, it’s actually the opposite. If we understand AI Roker as taking a multiplist position “everyone has a right to their own opinion and each is equally valid”, we can empathize with him. In the same way that we hope you will empathize with your students. In the same way that you will empathize with your neighbours.

References:

Scientific Studies: Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (HBO).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Rnq1NpHdmw>

Final thoughts

- Check your information privilege
 - Have empathy for others
 - See resistance as a signal, not a character flaw
- Encourage students to make connections between information worlds
 - e.g. Authentic research assignments
- Make the invisible visible
 - Your information behaviour
 - Your students' information behaviour
- Teach information literacy explicitly
 - Generic, situated, transformative

How can we do this? Stay tuned for our book:

Teaching Information Literacy: A Guide for Faculty

Jonathan:

And so we'll leave you with that as one of few final thoughts. We invite you have empathy for others, especially students, and to see resistance as signal, an outcome of systemic factors, not as individual character failing.

(Andrea Baer (2020) "intellectual empathy", in contrast with what Tom Nichols views as "narcissistic and misguided intellectual egalitarianism" that he decries in his book "The Death of Expertise".)

Catherine:

If you teach, we are inviting you to help your students make connections between their information worlds. Also, strive to make the invisible visible. Reflect on your own information behavior; learn about and value your students' information behavior. We invite you to teach information literacy explicitly. Consider the generic, consider the situated and take the perspective of the transformative window where students can assume information authority.

Jonathan:

We've kept our discussion high-level, but we know there is a need for concrete strategies. Fortunately, we are working on a book. So stay tuned...

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