**How to Evaluate a Source Homework—Selecting your Final Text**

Worth 10 Homework Points

Due Monday, November 1st

Some claim (and worry) that the proliferation of false information has ushered us into a “Post-Truth World.” Although the internet allows us to access information instantly, it also provides an easy platform for liars. The fact-checking website Snopes.com writes that:

The sharp increase in popularity of social media networks (primarily Facebook) has created a predatory secondary market among online publishers seeking to profitably exploit the large reach of those networks and their huge customer bases by spreading [fake news](http://www.snopes.com/info/news/facebookhoax.asp" \t "_blank) and outlandish rumors. Competition for social media’s large supply of willing eyeballs is fierce, and a number of frequent offenders regularly fabricate salacious and attention-grabbing tales simply to drive traffic (and revenue) to their sites. (<http://www.snopes.com/2016/01/14/fake-news-sites/>)

With this in mind, it seems increasingly important for students (and any other individuals seeking truth) to learn how to evaluate sources for truthfulness, angle, and academic and literary reputation.

**For our last paper, you will work with an essay of your choice that defines and explores any problem—social, environmental, psychological, tech-related, etc.** This problem can be specific to your future career or simply something you’re interested in. In your final paper, you will argue what you believe to be the best approach to solving/addressing this problem. I will ask you to refer to our assigned essays (that we read together, as a group) as you discuss your favored approach.

**For homework**: I’d like you to write a 500-word (around a page) introduction to your essay. Summarize the problem defined by your essay. Elaborate on why you chose the essay and how you feel about the problem. ***Please articulate why you consider your source a trustworthy source.*** If the essay comes from the list I provided, “Because it came from the list you provided” is not an acceptable answer. I want you to look for other reasons why this source seems reputable. Please feel free to reference your library visit. Finally, I would like you to brainstorm some connections you plan to make (and explore) between your choice essay and our classroom texts.

**Example Essays**

“Have Smart Phones Destroyed a Generation?” by Jean Twenge in *The Atlantic*

“What Is It about 20-Somethings?” by Robin Marantz Henig

“We are a Camera” by Nick Paumgarten

“We are all Confident Idiots” by David Dunning

Also check out: [www.tetw.org](http://www.tetw.org). This website is a treasure trove for well-written and interesting nonfiction writing.

Other Problems Worth Looking into:

* Gun-violence
* Climate Change
* Racism
* The problems that have led to the “Me too” movement
* The Ethics that Complicate Genetic Engineering
* The Problems that might Result from Automation