Assessing the Quality of Information

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Information Quality

- Criteria for evaluating a web site
  - **Affiliation**: The organization sponsoring the site
  - **Authority**: The site’s author(s)
  - **References**: What kind of references are cited within the information?
  - **Timeliness**: When was the web site last updated?
  - **Objectivity**: Is the web site objective and balanced? Is there a lot of advertising?
  - **Design**: Is the web site well-designed? Do its links work?
Affiliation?

- Is this an official web site or only one person’s opinion?
- Does the organization have a stake in the issue?
- Does the organization have a political or philosophical agenda?

- The domain name in the web site URL sometimes will tell you something about the organization.
  - .edu  An educational institution  (Wofford:  www.wofford.edu)
  - .org  Nonprofit and trade organizations  (AMA:  www.ama-assn.org)
  - .gov  Government  (US Senate:  www.senate.gov)
  - .com  Businesses  (Ford Motor Company:  www.ford.com)
Author?

- Is he/she an authority on the subject?
- Is there a reason to trust what is written?
  - Their position
  - Their biographical information

References?

- Does the article contain references to the literature?
- Does the article contain links to other reliable sources?
**Timeliness?**

- When was the article last updated?
- This may be obvious
- Or there may be no information at all.

**Objectivity?**

- Is there a lot of advertising?
- Is the information and language balanced?
Compare these

http://www.telemedicine.org/sundam/sundam2.4.2.html


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Evaluate these

- [http://climatechangeskeptic.blogspot.com/](http://climatechangeskeptic.blogspot.com/)

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