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Trust Issues: Critically Examining the News with the Trust Indicators

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Objectives

• Learn about the Trust Project
• Explore integration of the Trust Project in instruction
• Discuss further possibilities of this framework
Introductions
• Launched in 2017
• Project of Santa Clara University’s Markkula Center, led by Sally Lehrman
• Partner with news companies and search engines/social media companies
• Developed “trust indicators” based on interviews with real people
TRUST PROJECT PARTNERS

About Us

Editorial Code of Conduct

The Globe and Mail’s long-standing tradition of journalistic integrity and credibility is essential to its reputation as Canada’s most trusted news source. This reputation is rooted in the conduct of the editorial staff. Unless all employees adhere to the highest standards of journalistic integrity, we cannot hope to sustain the trust we have inspired in our readers for generations.

JOURNALISTIC PRINCIPLES

The credibility of the content in The Globe and Mail on all platforms rests on solid research, clear, intelligent writing and maintaining a reputation for honesty, accuracy, objectivity and balance. To these ends, the following rules and principles apply:

- The Globe and Mail will seek to provide reasonable accounts of competing views on any controversy so as to enable readers to make up their own minds.
- It is unacceptable to invent or fudge a quote, source, statistic, detail or anything else pertaining to the news.
Trust Project Wins Conference Board Award

Recognition for exemplary effort to address fake news
The Trust Project: Home

Lint & Resources

- Trust Project Homepage
- Trust Indicators

The BBC Video

https://thetrustproject.org/thetrustproject.org

Instructional Materials

- Lesson Plan
- PowerPoint Presentation
- Trust Indicators Worksheet
- Worksheet as Google Form

https://libguides.scu.edu/Trust_Project
Warm up

Find a partner....

• Where do you really get your news from?

• How do you know if a source is credible?
Trust Indicators

- Best Practices
- Author/Reporter Expertise
- Type of Work
- Citations and References
- Methods
- Locally Sourced
- Diverse Voices
- Actionable Feedback
Best Practices

• What are the news outlet’s standards?
• Who funds it?
• Is there a mission statement?
• Is there any information about commitments to ethics, diverse voices, accuracy, making corrections and other standards?
Author/Reporter
Expertise

• Who wrote this?
• Can you find any relevant details or information about the journalist(s), their expertise, credentials, other stories they have worked on?
Type of Work

• What is this?
• Are there any labels to distinguish opinion, analysis and advertiser (or sponsored) content from news reports?
Citations and References

• What are the sources?

• For investigative or in-depth stories, is there access to the sources behind the facts and assertions?

Most Americans follow the news only superficially, and for that they should be envied and, probably, imitated. They might miss a lot of stories that matter, but they also miss thousands of stories that don’t, like most in each week’s Trump-related flood. It’s hard to sort through all the noise. This week alone, we learned that HUD officials (seemingly under pressure) spent $31,000 on a new dining set for Ben Carson, that Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke keeps bending ethics rules on travel, that E.P.A. chief Scott Pruitt has been flying first class on the public’s dime and spending thousands of dollars in short periods of time, that H.R. McMaster is reportedly on his way out, that Trump is imposing major tariffs on imports of steel, that Trump supports gun restrictions or maybe doesn’t; that White House communications director Hope Hicks will be quitting (announced a day after testifying before Congress), that Jared Kushner lost his top-secret security clearance, that Trump wants John Kelly to push Ivanka and Jared out of the White House, and that Jared Kushner’s family business received major loans from lenders who’d been meeting regularly with Kushner at the White House. Is all this good or bad for the White House? What’s worth noticing in the big picture? Let us sigh and begin.
Methods

• How was this story built?
• Also, for in-depth stories, is there information about why reporters chose to pursue a story and how they went about the process?


By Brent Lang | @BrentMLang

Want proof that journalism matters? Look no further than Harvey Weinstein. Were it not for The New York Times and The New Yorker, the indie mogul would still be hobnobbing at Oscar parties, attending movie premieres and, if allegations are to be believed, routinely abusing and harassing women.

Instead, Weinstein is facing multiple criminal investigations and possible jail time. He's been fired from the Weinstein Co. and drummed out of Hollywood. And he's got company. Since the Times published its first story on Weinstein's abuses, a slew of big-name media and entertainment personalities have been exposed as serial harassers or abusers. Charlie Rose, Matt Lauer, Brett Ratner and Kevin Spacey are just a few of the figures who are being forced to face the music, as other news organizations pick up where the Times and The New Yorker left off.
Locally Sourced

• Do you know when the story has local origin or expertise?
• Was the reporting done on the scene, with deep knowledge about the local situation or community?
Diverse Voices

• What are the newsroom’s efforts and commitment to bringing in diverse perspectives?

• Are certain voices, ethnicities, or political persuasions missing?
Actionable Feedback

• Can readers participate?
• Provide feedback that might alter or expand a story?
• Is the newsroom making efforts to engage the public’s help in setting coverage priorities, contributing to the reporting process, ensuring accuracy?
• Is contact information provided?

Aggressive turkeys lurking outside Concord hospital are becoming a real 'nuisance'

COMMENTS
SFGATE welcomes a free exchange of ideas in the Comments section. We encourage commenters to help our moderators by flagging comments that threaten violence in any way, are spam, or use vulgarities including racist epithets or other obscene terms toward a specific group. Please read our terms and conditions.

You must be signed in to comment

(20) Comments

Write your comment here
Group Exercise

- Identify a source for news
- As a group, select one article to use
- Complete the worksheet for each of the trust indicators
- Report back
Trust Indicators Worksheet

Your Names:

In the *Notes on your source:* describe how your news site did in each category. Imagine you were grading them, A-F, on how they did with that particular criteria. Explain the reason for your “Grade”.

1. **Best Practices:** What are the news outlet’s standards? Who funds it? Is there a mission statement? Is there any information about commitments to ethics, diverse voices, accuracy, making corrections and other standards?

   *Notes on your source:*
Debrief

• How many Trust Indicators were you able to find?

• What indicator was the hardest to find/not found at all?

• How might you apply this exercise to your everyday news consumption?
“This exercise made me pay more attention to where my news is coming from, and how where it is coming from and who it is coming from can affect the credibility of the article. I definitely will look more into mission statements of news organizations, and where their funding is coming from, as this could lead to some biases.”

~First-year composition student
Student Feedback -- They got it!

“Completing these exercises have[sic] helped to understand how difficult it is to make sure that the source is reliable. When I am working on research, I may not do all of the Trust Indicators, but I will try to find some of them such as author, the news outlet's mission statement, and its sources.”

~First-year composition student
“A lot of these are new to me. I never considered looking at the mission statement of the publisher to indicate what the article will be about.”

~First-year composition student
“Looks like the message about reviewing sources more critically really got through. And some of their research is already paying off in the their group presentations. Thanks for working with my class. It was very helpful.”
Discussion

- How might you adapt or use the Trust Indicators with your patron population?
Workshop Variations

• Use pre-selected articles related to the course content
• Apply/adapt trust indicators to scholarly sources
• Provide a specific topic for students to search for
• Have students search for various topics on a current event
Sample Assignments

• Argument Analysis of a Hero in Today's News

  • Instructor provides students with four memes and one news article about the memes. Students choose one of the four memes, and find at least 5 other news articles related to the issue in the meme, and analyze the argument the meme is making. In the course of 5-6 pages, students analyze the meme's argument, analyze the news sources using the Trust Indicators, and support/challenge the meme's argument with the sources to determine the veracity of the meme's position.
Sample Assignments

• Annotated Bibliography
  • Students address each of the Trust Indicators in the annotation of each source in an annotated bibliography on a topic related to the course theme. They group sources into those they would use in a research paper and those they would not use, based on the Trust Indicators. Students must include at least two sources they would not use.
Tips

• Might require students to pick different sources
• Spend some time discussing the difference between a platform (Twitter, Facebook, etc.) and a journalistic outlet
• Emphasize journalistic ethics
• Discuss critical analysis skills as politically neutral
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