

**George A. Rawlyk Library****How to Evaluate Internet Sources****Why evaluating the free Internet is so important**

- Anyone can publish anything on the Internet
- Rarely is there any quality assurance eg. editors, fact-checkers, peer review, librarians
- Search engines often throw you into the "middle" of a site - loss of context

**Questions to ask when evaluating Internet resources****Who wrote or published the page? A person? An organization?**

- Is the author/publisher of the information clearly identifiable? If not, why do you think it is missing? e.g. a purposeful or accidental omission
- Is the author/publisher affiliated with an educational institution? A government department? A commercial company? A non-profit organization?
- Is there any way to determine the credibility/expertise of the author/ organization? What qualifications do the authors have?
- Is there someone to whom you can direct your questions/comments?
- Where are you? In the middle of a larger site? Explore the site by chopping off sections of the URL beginning on the right hand side. Each backslash ("/") denotes a new directory. Chop off one directory at a time.

**Why was the page/site created?**

- What type of site is it - scholarly, business, personal?
- Is the author trying to sell you something?
- Is the author trying to sway you to a particular point of view?
- Is the author trying to inform?
- Can you identify a particular point of view?
- Who is the site aimed at? What audience? e.g. scholars, children, general public, etc.
- What is the stated purpose/objective of the site? Are there unstated objectives?

**What information is given?**

- What is covered on the site?
- How accurate, valid, comprehensive, specific does the information appear to be?

- Is the page mainly content-oriented or mainly links to other sites?
- Is the information useful? Is it unique? Is there added value? e.g. graphics/sound/video, links to further references.
- If you are on a page within a larger site, can you find related information by looking at the site as a whole?
- Is there any relationship to the wider world of knowledge? Are there citations or references?

**How current is the information?**

- When was the site created?
- When was the site last updated?
- Are there any/many dead links on the site?