



Connecting Popular Media with Scholarly Sources



Frame(s): Authority is Constructed and Contextual	Level: 100	Learning Objective: Students can distinguish popular media from scholarly sources.
Duration: 50-75 Minutes	Discipline: Journalism, Communications (Adaptable)	Learning Outcomes for Lesson: Students will articulate whether a popular article accurately represents the findings of scholarly studies.

LESSON PLAN:

Instruction (5-10 Minutes)

- Students are given a popular magazine blurb describing the findings of a recent research article

Hands on group activity (20-30 minutes)

- Students divide into groups of two or three to identify and locate the original study that is being reported on in a popular media report. This activity can include reports of research that can be located freely on the web, in library databases or obtainable by interlibrary loan. Examples will be located ahead of time to represent the topics being discussed in the course, and also to demonstrate the full range of availability.
- Students will receive a worksheet with the following questions:
 - ⇒ In order to find the research discussed in each of these blurbs, what do we need to know? What DO you know from reading the blurb?
 - ⇒ Where was the study published? When? Do you know the name of the author/researcher?
 - ⇒ Have you ever heard of the journal? Who do you think is its audience? How does one access this journal?
 - ⇒ What other information can you glean from the blurb?

Reporting Back (15-20 minutes)

- Students will report on how they found their research, and how they will go about finding the full text of the original research. Students will demonstrate using the library databases as well as setting up and ordering an interlibrary loan.
- Some additional questions to explore:
 - ⇒ How would you find additional articles on the topic of the blurb?
 - ⇒ What terms would you use to find additional articles on your same topic?
 - ⇒ What would be the best place to find additional articles on your topic?
 - ⇒ Are there any additional places that you feel would fit your needs?

Wrap up (10 minutes)

- What challenges did students encounter?
- Did the students feel that the blurbs represented the findings of the study accurately?
- How would they rewrite the blurbs if they had to do so?
- Were students surprised that the blurbs were more “optimistic” than the research studies?

Habits Addressed by this Lesson

- Maintain an open mind when encountering different perspectives, understand that knowledge is produced and some information sources might have a particular bias, as might the information seeker.