## QUESTIONS TO ASK WEB SEARCH RESULTS

WHAT'S AT STAKE? HOW RELIABLE DOES MY INFORMATION HAVE TO BE?

o "Good enough" is good enough 

Involves money, laws, health 

Acceptable to my instructor

WHAT CAN THE URLS TELL YOU, IN THE SEARCH RESULTS LIST?

- o Who "published" it? Look at the URL up to first /
- o Is it a personal page? Look for ~ % members aol geocities users
- o What type of organization is behind it? Would limiting to certain types help? site:org OR site:gov
- o non-profit (**org**) univ/college (**edu**) gov/t (**gov**, **mil**, **us**) a business (**com**) foreign (**uk**, **jp**, etc.)

## WHAT CAN THE PERIMETER OF THE PAGE TELL ME?

- o Who or what agency is the **author**?
- o What **values** do they stand for?
- o What are their **credentials**? What right to offer an opinion? Why believe them?
- o What is their **bias**?
  - "About us" "Sponsors" "Philosophy" "Biography" "Who am I" No background info If none of the above, truncate back the URL one / at a time.
- o Is it current/recent enough?

Last updated date old Date in a news site too old Date in URL may help No date

DOES THE CONTENT APPEAR GOOD QUALITY?

- o Are **sources documented** in footnotes, or links outside that work?
- o Links to more information? Any dead links?
- o Links to **other points of view**?
- o Black/violent background or other evidence of **hype/trash/ranting**?

## WHAT DO OTHERS SAY ABOUT THE PAGE?

- o Who links to it? Who owns it? Paste the URL into http://alexa.com
- o Google the author's name and see what company you're in

WHY WAS IT PUT ON THE WEB? WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PAGE?

inform with facts/data? share/disclose? entice/sell? explain/persuade? dupe/rant/satire?

## OTHER SEARCH ENGINES FOR SECOND OPINIONS:

- o search.yahoo.com
- o ask.com

TRY IN SUBJECT DIRECTORIES – SMALLER, CHOSEN BY HUMANS, NOT COMPUTER ROBOT PROGRAMS

- o **Infomine** (http://infomine.ucr.edu)
- o **Librarians' Internet Index** (http://lii.org)
- o Google Directory (http://directory.google.com)



This document Copyright © 2012 The Regents of the University of California is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 3.0 Unported License. Permissions beyond the scope of this license may be available at <a href="http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/contact.html">http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/contact.html</a>. Created by Joe Barker, Teaching Library, May 2007.