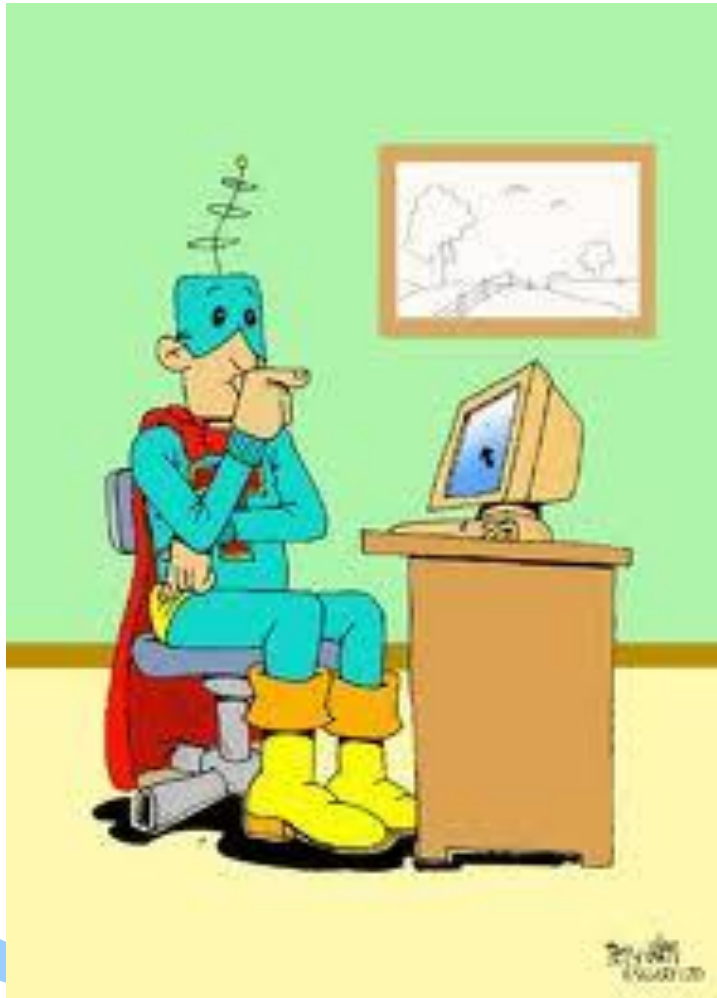# Scared?

Frustrated?

Don't Know What to do Next?

"So what are you writing today?"

"I couldn't really think of anything, so I am drawing some Martians attacking Indianapolis."

Tap into Your Super Powers!!

Have a Little Faith in Yourself!

"I've got a cape. I think I can make it."

"I've got a cape. I think I can make it."

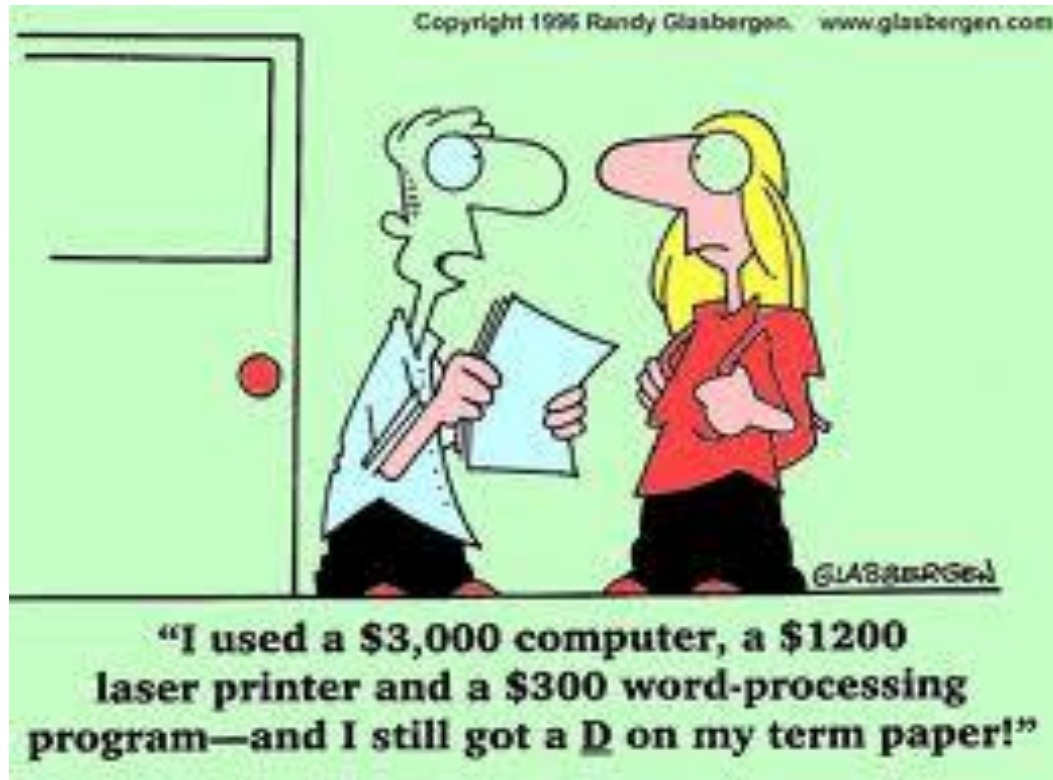"Granted it's not much of a superpower. But the flies seem to like it."

You Can Do It!!!

Entering the World of Research

It's All About You!

"I used a $3000 computer, a $1200 laser printer and $300 word-processing program – and I still got a <u>D</u> on my term paper!"

What Should Your Bibliography Research Include?

- Title

- Introduction

- Background Information

- Accomplishments

- Literary Analysis (Argument)

- Conclusion
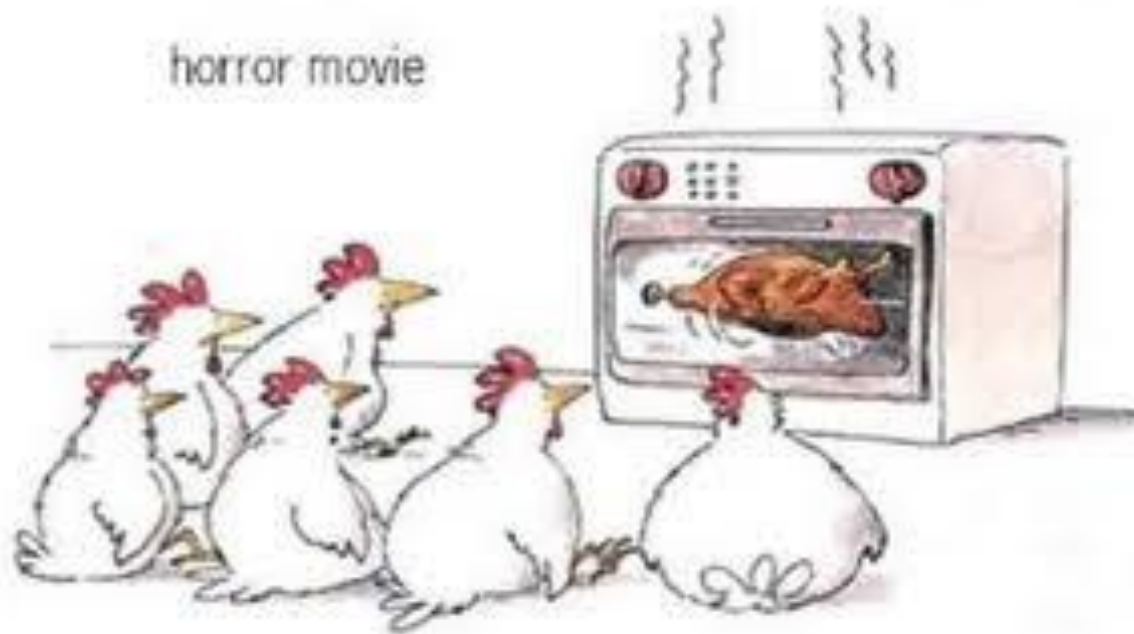
"Jimmy says you're a poopyhead. Do you have a rebuttal?"

How Is It "Literary"?

- Usually, a literary analysis will involve a discussion of a text *as writing*, thus the term literary, which means "having to do with letters"

- This will involve the use of certain concepts that are very specifically associated with literature
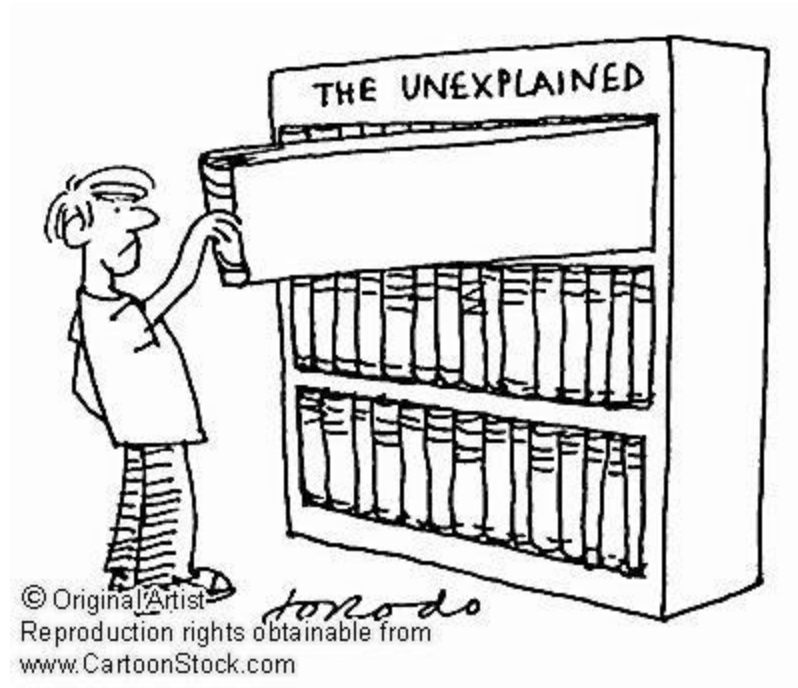
Like a Review of a Movie…

horror movie

Horror Movie

Restaurant…

"Just because I am eating alone doesn't mean you should suggest the "loser" special…But I'll take it."

Or a Book.

The Unexplained

In Other Words:

- A Literary Analysis is an evaluation of a piece of literature…. just like you would evaluate a meal at a restaurant, a new CD, or a movie… but it uses published critics to support your ideas.

With a lot of you thrown in as well!

"Yes, that was very loud, but I said I wanted to hear your HEART!"

Therefore…

- You need to read about your selected author and his work.
- You need to note any recurring themes or points of interest.
- You need to develop your own opinions about the work.
- You need to design a thesis statement that explains what specific characteristics about the author and his literary style you are going to discuss.
- You need to find and quote other professional, published critics who have also read this piece of literature, evaluated it, and agree with your assessment.

"When you say you expect excellent work, do you mean from me?"

Important Literary Concepts

A.K.A. Stuff You Will Write About

- *The Basics*
  - Plot
  - Setting
  - Narration/point of view
  - Characterization
  - Symbol
  - Metaphor
  - Genre
  - Irony/ambiguity

- *Other key concepts*
  - Historical context
  - Social, political, economic contexts
  - Ideology
  - Multiple voices
  - Various critical orientations
  - Literary theory

Use Sophisticated Language!!

"I used to hate writing assignments, but now I enjoy them."
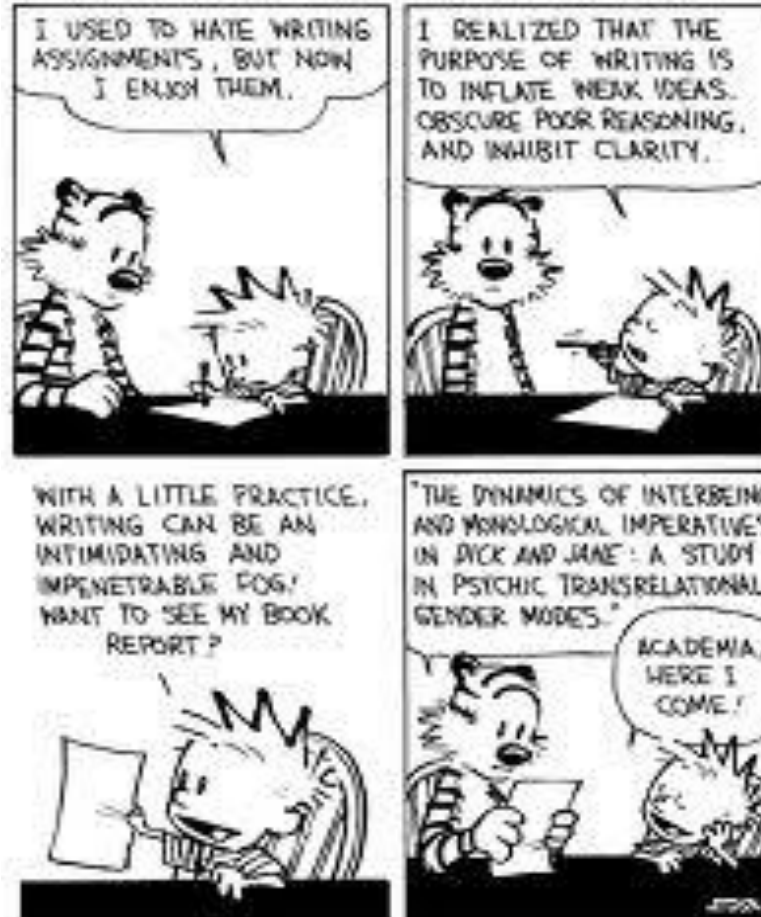
"With a little practice, writing can be intimidating and impenetrable fog! Want to see my book report?"

"I realized that the purpose of writing is to inflate weak ideas, obscure poor reasoning, and inhibit clarity."

"The Dynamics of Interbeing and Monological Imperatives in *Dick and Jane*: A Study in Psychic Transrelational Gender Modes."

"Academia, here I come!"

Develop Your Own Point of View!
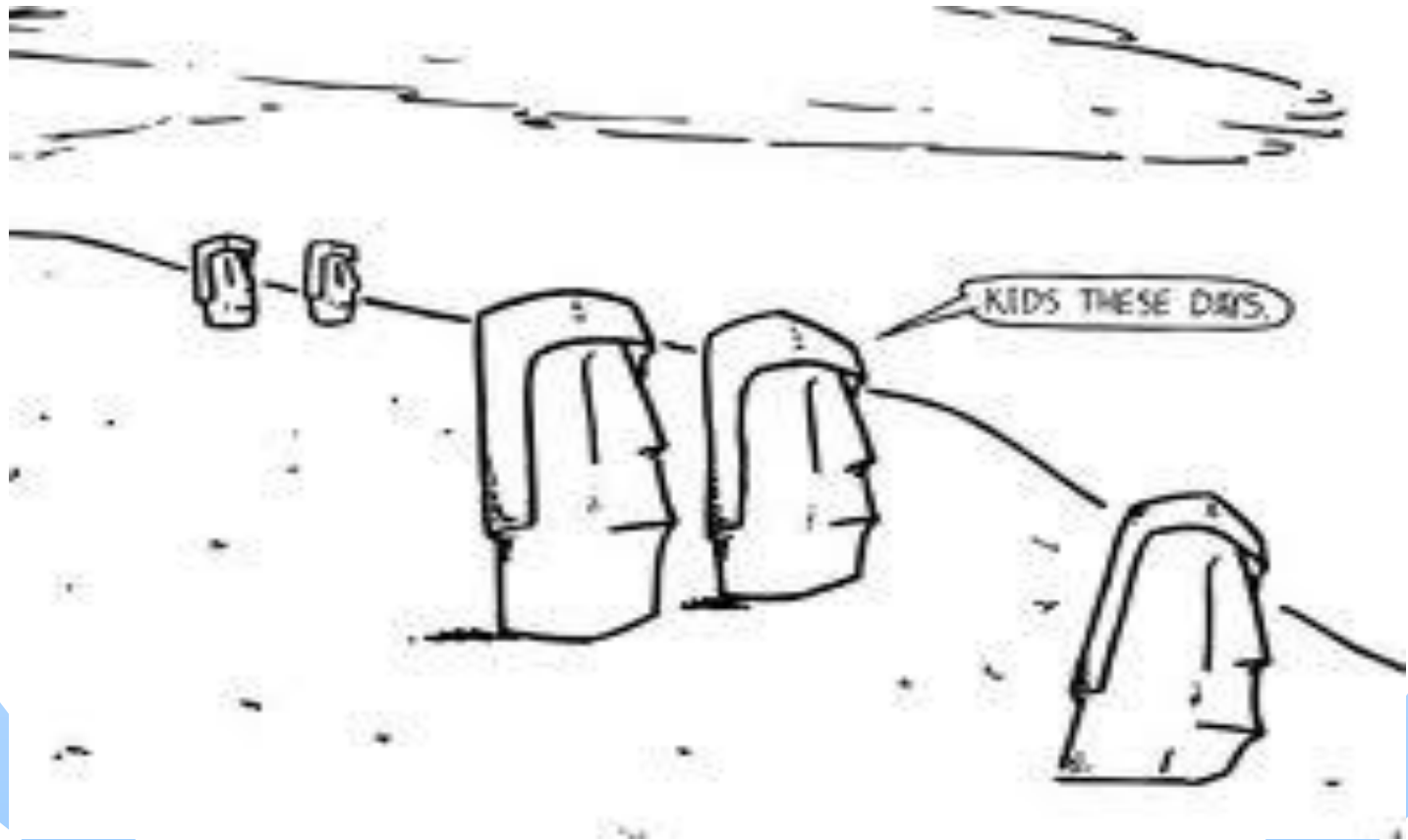
Kids these days.

How Can I Learn More?

- There are various handbooks of literary terms available in most libraries.

- There are numerous introductions to literary criticism and theory that are widely available.

- Example: *A Handbook to Literature.* Harmon/Holman

Explore the Library

"It's a library, honey– kind of an early version of the world wide web."

What is an Analysis?

- An analysis of a literary work may discuss
  - How the various components of an individual work relate to one another
  - How two separate literary works deal with similar concepts or forms
  - How concepts and forms in literary works relate to larger aesthetic, political, social, economic, or religious contexts

# What Makes Your Author and his Work Worthy of Being Called a "Classic"?

(How is it unique?)

How is a Literary Analysis an argument?

- When writing a literary analysis, you will focus on specific attribute(s) of the text(s).

- When discussing these attributes, you will want to make sure that you are making a specific, arguable point (thesis) about these attributes.

- You will defend this point with reasons and evidence drawn from the text. (Much like a lawyer!)

You are the judge and jury!
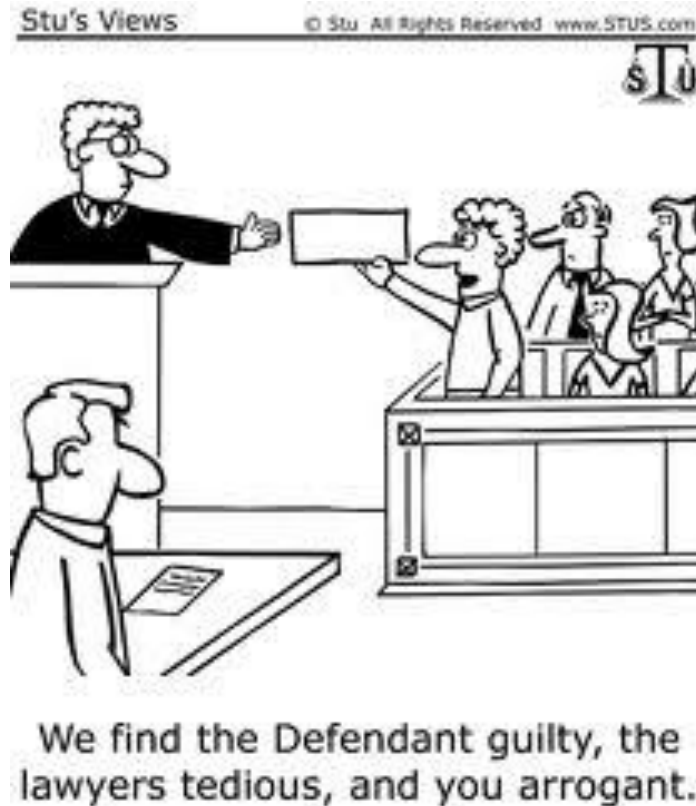
"We find the Defendant guilty, the lawyers tedious, and you arrogant."

Which is the best thesis statement?

- *Moby-Dick* is about the problem of evil.

- *Moby-Dick* is boring and pointless.

- *Moby-Dick* is about a big, white whale.

- The use of "whiteness" in *Moby-Dick* illustrates the uncertainty about the meaning of life that Ishmael expresses throughout the novel.

How do I support a thesis statement?

- Examples from the text:
    - Direct quotations
    - Summaries of scenes
    - Paraphrase
- Other critics' opinions
- Historical and social context

Always remember to read carefully and highlight useful passages and quotes!

"It doesn't matter that your thesis is on extra sensory perception, you can't cite mindreading in your references."

Sources

Biographical research is comprised of a many sources.

What Kind of Sources Do I Use?

- A book or article that discusses the text you are discussing

- A book or article that discusses a theory related to the argument you are making

- A book or article that discusses the social and historical context of the text you are discussing

The Librarians are There to Help You!!

"I should email the librarian. It would be barbaric to walk down the hall to the reference desk."

How Do I Find These Sources?

- MLA International Bibliography
- Dictionary of Literary Biography
- Discipline-specific sources
  - Example: America: History and Life for American literature
- Internet (IPL)
- Other search engines
- A bibliography that is part of your text

Soon You Will Have More Than You Need!

BUT….. Your Sources Must Be Valid…

Important to Remember!

- Wikipedia is not allowed…but it can lead you to good sources.

- For a source to be valid, it must have an author's name (first and last), have a webmaster, or be a nationally recognized publication with an editor.

Integrating Sources

- When you use multiple sources, be sure to show how they relate to your thesis
- Don't overuse any one source, or for that matter, any of your sources in general
- Remember that this is your paper, your argument—the sources are just helping you out
- If the source does not identify the author or editor …Do Not Use It!

Never, never, never plagiarize!

Plagiarism (Even Accidental) = Automatic Failure for the Assignment

Your term paper on "The Growing Problem of Plagiarism in Society" is eye-opening…
especially since it's the third time I've seen it…"
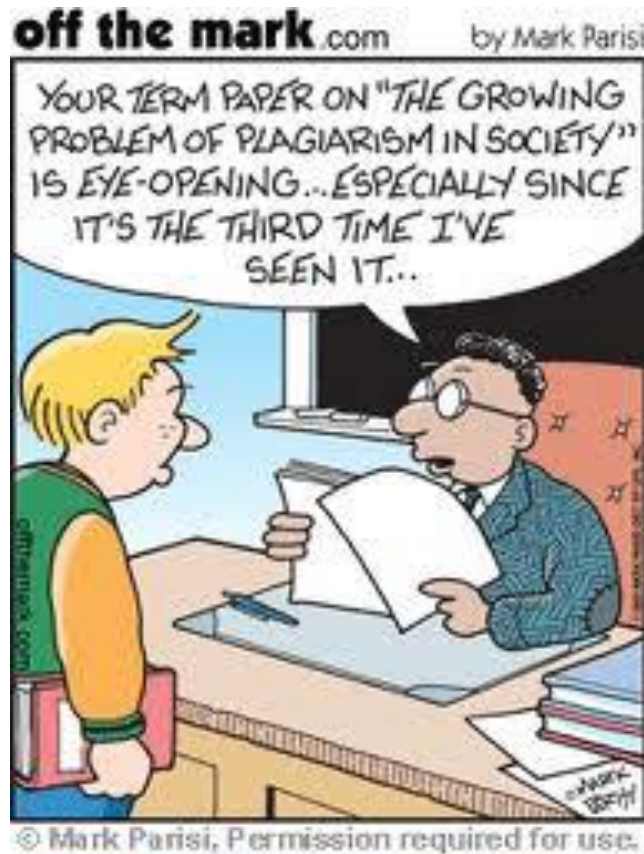
"'C-minus?' – Do you know how long it took me to find and download this term paper?"

"Not a bad term paper, except that I don't think Chaucer ever wrote 'Ye Traveling Salesman's Tale.'"

Your Bibliography Research Requirements

- Cover/Title Page

- Outline

- 15 Note Cards

- 3 Source Cards

- Bibliography/Citation Page

- Website Evaluation Forms

- Typed paper 3-4 pages in length including in text notations

- Oral Presentation of Your Research

And Yes, I Do Read Each and Every Paper!

"I call it, 'Research Paper Lite.' It contains a third fewer facts, but you'd never know it."

Please Use a Flash drive and Make Numerous Copies.

"As Dave is finishing up the last page of "the" big term paper, his hard drive decides to take a sick day."

Hey there!
Have you evaluated?

Is that *site*

good enough to *cite*?

It's okay to be confused!

- There are billions of websites out there
- Many of them are not worthy of your time and don't belong in your bibliographies!
- Sometimes it's very hard to tell treasure from trash
- Sometimes Web developers don't want you to understand the difference

Remember:
Anyone can publish anything
on the Web!

It is your job, as a researcher, to look for quality!

Think of CARRDSS

- **C**REDIBILITY / AUTHORITY

- **A**CCURACY

- **R**ELIABILITY

- **R**ELEVANCE

- **D**ATE

- **S**OURCES BEHIND THE TEXT

- **S**COPE AND PURPOSE

CREDIBILITY / AUTHORITY :

Who is the author?

What are his or her credentials? Education? Experience? Affiliation?

Does the author's experience really qualify him or her as an expert?

Does he or she offer first-hand credibility? (For instance, a Vietnam veteran or a witness to Woodstock?)

Who actually published this page?

Is this a personal page or is it part of the site belonging to a major institution? (Clues pointing to a personal page: ~ tilde, %, users, members)

Is the page hosted by a free server like AOL, Tripod, Geocities?

Look for credibility clues!

- Words and phrases to look for:
  - *About us, Who Am I, FAQs, For More, Company Information, Profiles, Our Staff, Home*

- E-mail the author
  - If you have no information other than an e-mail link, write a polite e-mail asking for more information.

More credibility clues (What do others think?)

Do a ***link check***

- In [Google](#) or [AltaVista](#) type

  link:siteaddress

- Your results will show which other sites have chosen to link to this page. If respectable institutions have linked to a site, that provides a clue about the site's credibility.

Does the site appear in major subject directories like Librarian's Index to the Internet (lii.org)?

Truncate the URL

Delete characters in the address line up to the next slash mark to see if a main page offers more information about who is responsible for publishing the page you are interested in.

Go from:

· http://www.statecollege.edu/history/middleages/chaucer/smith.htm
· http://www.statecollege.edu/history/middleages/chaucer
· http://www.statecollege.edu/history/middleages
· http://www.statecollege.edu/history
· http://www.statecollege.edu

Still more credibility clues

If you have an author's name but no further information about credentials,

- Search the name in quotation marks in a search engine or online database
- On the Web, include words like *profile*, *resume*, or *C.V.* (curriculum vitae--an academic resume) to narrow your name search
- You might also include the name of a college or association you can connect with the person
- Search the name in biographical sources on- and offline
- Ask your teacher-librarian for help

ACCURACY:

- Can facts, statistics, or other information be verified through other sources?

- Based on your knowledge, does the information seem accurate? Is the information inconsistent with information you learned from other sources?

- Is the information second hand? Has it been altered?

- Do there appear to be errors on the page (spelling, grammar, facts)?

Practice checking for accuracy with a few of these sites!

- Online Confessions [Absolution Online](#)
- Afterlife Telegrams [Afterlife Telegrams](#)
- Facts About Series [Facts About...](#)
- Republic of Cascadia: Bureau of Sasquatch Affairs
- http://zapatopi.net/bsa.html
- Bonsai Kittens [Bonsai Kittens](#)
- Boilerplate: History of a Victorian Robot [Boilerplate: History of a Victorian Robot](#)
- New Zealand GolfCross [Golf Cross](#)

RELIABILITY:

Does the source present a particular view or bias?

Is the page affiliated with an organization that has a particular political or social agenda?

Is the page selling a product?

Can you find other material to offer balance so that you can see the bigger picture?

Was the information found in a *paid placement* or *sponsored result* from the search engine?

Information is seldom neutral. Sometimes a bias is useful for persuasive essays or debates. *Understanding bias is important*.
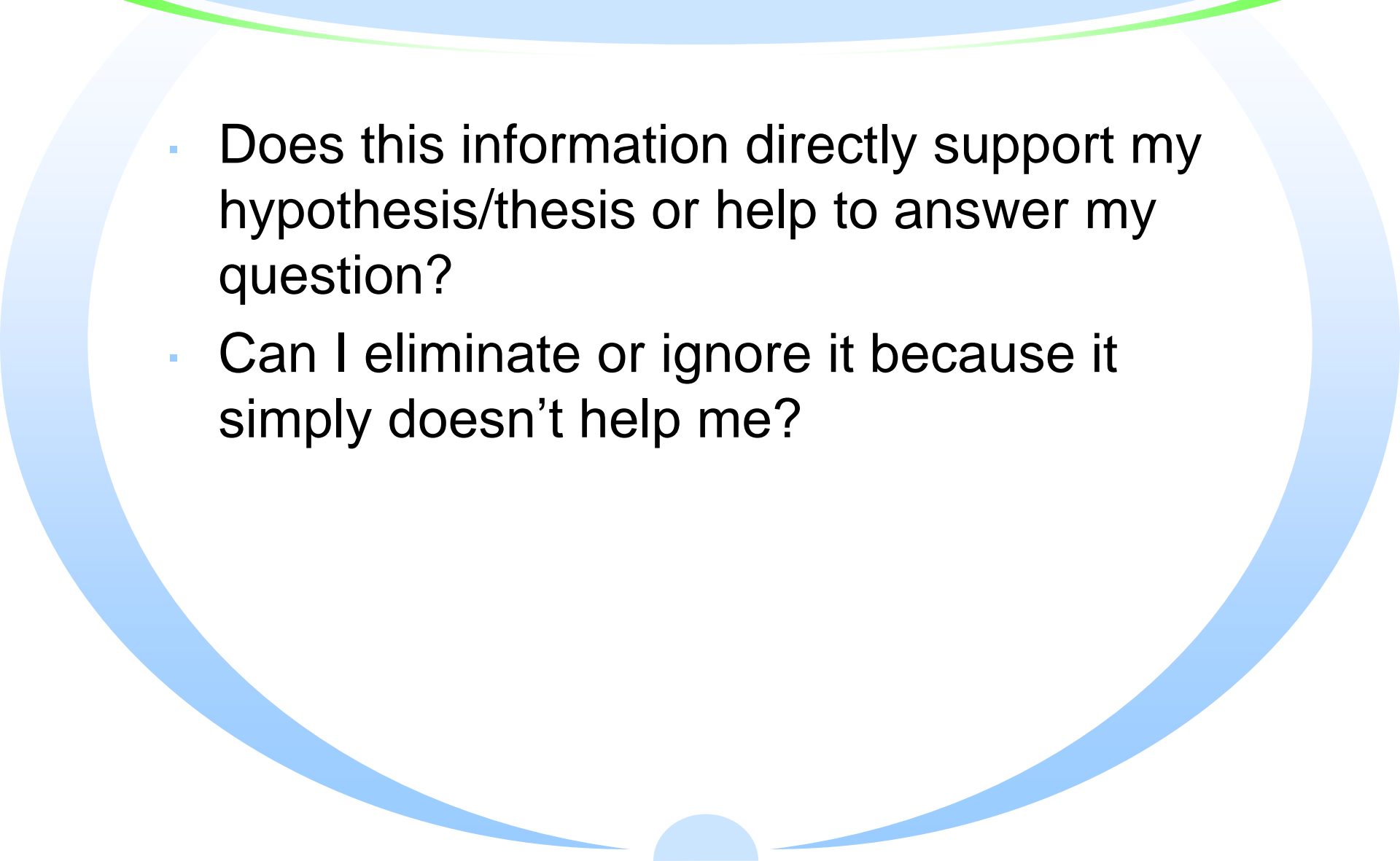
Considering Bias

Multnomah County Library's Social Issues page offers links to sites on all sides of major issues:
http://www.multcolib.org/homework/sochc.html

RELEVANCE:

- Does this information directly support my hypothesis/thesis or help to answer my question?

- Can I eliminate or ignore it because it simply doesn't help me?

DATE:

- When was this information created?
- When was it revised?
- Are these dates meaningful in terms of your information needs?
- Has the author of the page stopped maintaining it?
- (Be suspicious of undated material.)

SOURCES BEHIND THE TEXT:

- Did the author bother to document his or her sources? use reliable, credible sources?

- Were those references popular, scholarly, reputable?

- Are those sources real? Have you or your librarian heard of or been able to verify them?

- Is the material reproduced (accurately) from another publication?

- What kind of links did the author choose?

- Are the hyperlinks reliable, valuable?

- Do the links work?
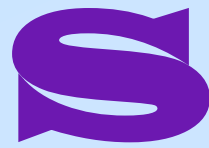
SCOPE / PURPOSE:

Does this source address my hypothesis/thesis/question in a comprehensive or peripheral way?

- Is it a scholarly or popular treatment?
- Is it material I can read and understand?
  - Is it too simple? Is it too challenging?
- Who is the intended audience?
- Why was this page created? To inform or explain? To persuade? To sell?

What can you learn from a URL?

- You can use the end, or suffix of a domain name to help you judge the validity of the information and the potential bias of a website.

- This strategy is only a guideline. People can easily purchase domains that do not reflect their actual purpose.

URLs as clues to content

- .com=commercial sites (vary in their credibility)
- .gov=U.S. government site
- .org=organization, often non-profit. Some have strong bias and agendas
- .edu=school or university site (is it K-12? By a student? By a scholar?)
- .store=retail business
- .int=international institution

- .ac=educational institution (like .edu)
- .mil=U.S. military site
- .net=networked service provider, Internet administrative site
- .museum=museum
- .name=individual Internet user
- .biz=a business
- .pro=professional's site
- ~=personal site

What do their URLs reveal about these sites?

- http://personal.statecollege.edu/~ejv114/
- http://www.fi.edu/wright/index.html
- http://www.house.gov/house/Legproc.html
- http://aolmembers.com/joyciev328/civalwarsong

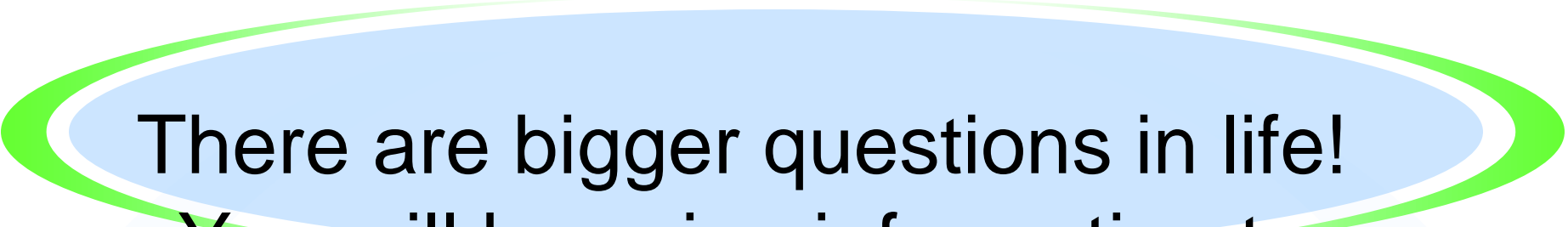# Remember, the *free* Web is not your only choice?

- Did you use print sources?

- Did you search subscription databases?

- Did you check with your teacher-librarian for advice?

Evaluating Blogs

- Who is the blogger? This may be challenge with so many blogs offering spotty or nonexistent "about" pages. That may be a clue in itself.

- What sorts of materials is the blogger reading or citing? Does this blogger have influence? Who and how many people link to the blog? Who is commenting? Does this blog appear to be part of a community? The best blogs are likely to be hubs for folks who share interests with the blogger.

- Is this content covered in any depth, with any authority? How sophisticated is the language, the spelling?

- Is this blog alive? It there a substantial archive? How current are the posts?

- At what point in a story's lifetime did the post appear? Examining a story's date may offer clues as to the reliability of a blog entry.

- Is the site upfront about its bias? Does it recognize/discuss other points of view? (For certain information tasks–an essay or debate or student blog–bias may be very useful. You need to recognize it. If the blogger is not a traditional "expert," is this a first-hand view that would be valuable to your research?

- Is it a unique perspective?

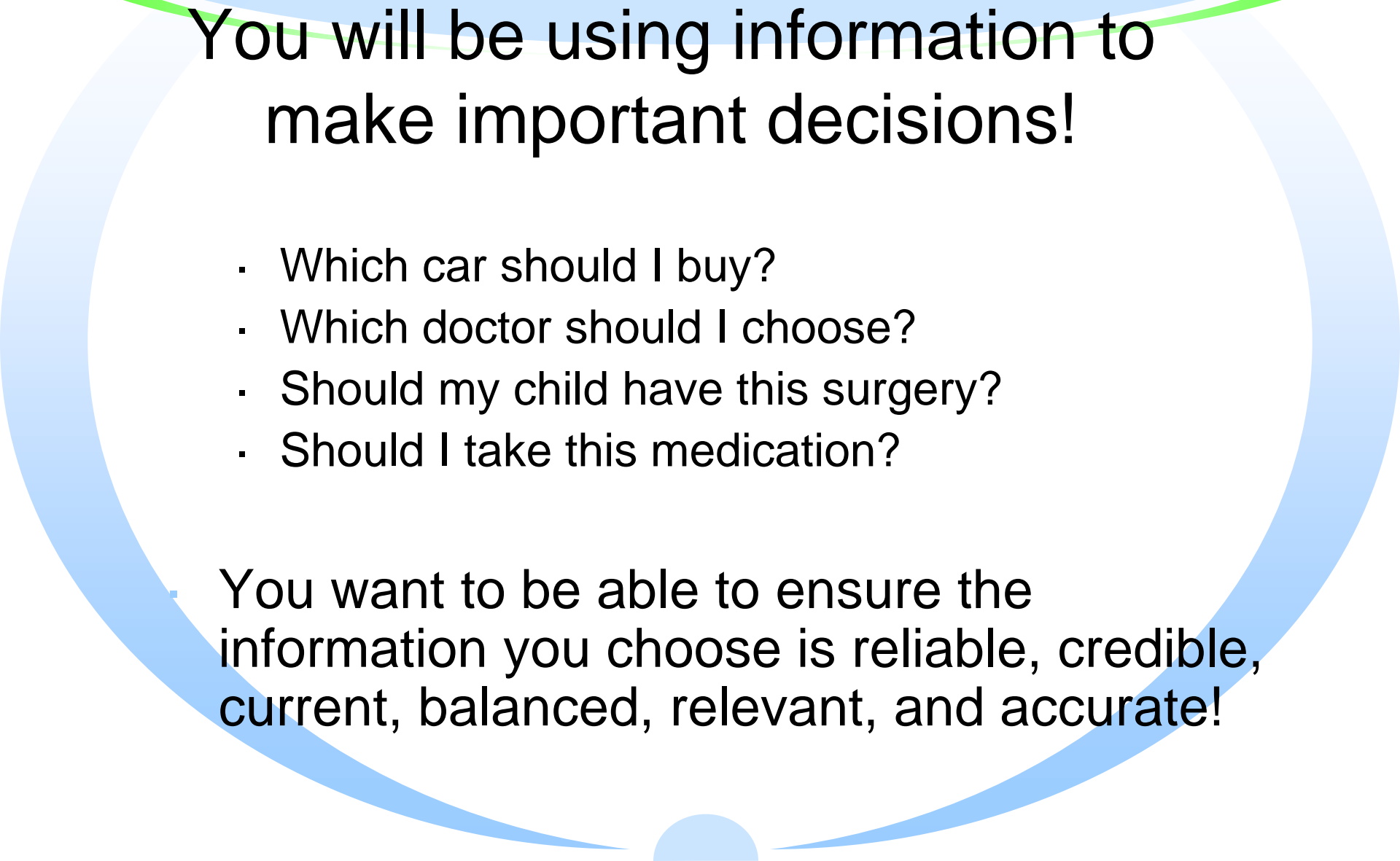- Tools like Technorati and Blogpulse can help you assess the influence of a blog.

So, why should we care about all of this?

There are bigger questions in life! You will be using information to make important decisions!

- Which car should I buy?
- Which doctor should I choose?
- Should my child have this surgery?
- Should I take this medication?

You want to be able to ensure the information you choose is reliable, credible, current, balanced, relevant, and accurate!

Just as you evaluate your sources . . .

Your teacher will evaluate your work based on the quality of the sources you select.

Evaluate carefully. Don't settle for *good enough*!

Quality always counts!

The End!

YES!!!

You finished your paper!

Only 1,487 more to go till graduation!