

# Source criticism 101



## Who is behind what you are reading or watching?

- Is there any information about whoever created the material?
- Google the name of the creator(s) - what are others saying about them?
- If you are reading a newspaper article - is it a news article or an opinion piece (e.g. an editorial)? Are the sources clearly stated?
- If a corporation is behind the material - what do they sell? Do they have an interest in providing biased information?
- If a political party is providing the material - what does the opposition have to say about the same issue?
- If an organization is behind the material - what is their aim? Do they have an interest in providing biased information?
- If a private citizen is behind the material - did they provide you with sources to double-check the information?

## What are they hiding? What are we told?

- Texts: In what way is the text written? Do we get different perspectives or just one single viewpoint without information about counter-arguments?
- Images: Try to imagine what could have been edited or omitted. What could be happening outside the picture? What could have been edited in Photoshop?
- Video: How is the material edited? Does it consist of short clips or longer, unedited takes, showing us more of what happened? Is there a narrator telling us how to feel and interpret the video or can we decide for ourselves? Is there music or added sounds intended to affect our emotions?

## What are the sources behind your source?

- Does the material have credible sources, dubious sources, or no sources at all? Double-check the most central or shocking facts to make sure the sources really support them.