



Detecting Bull: How to Identify Bias and Junk Journalism in Print, Broadcast and on the Wild Web

John H McManus

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Designed for university and advanced high school classes, this book helps students think critically and systematically about news and purportedly factual information in any medium from face-to-face to Facebook to Fox, from the Huffington Post to the Washington Post. With easy-to-remember mnemonics, the book builds habits of mind to serve the student long after the class has ended. Detecting Bull explores the nature of truth and bias -- individual, corporate and audience. It rejects objectivity as an impossible method of inquiry that obscures more than it reveals. In its place, the book advocates a more demanding, but reachable standard, empiricism. As news moves from paper to pixels, the book explains the "language" of images and video. Four theories of news selection are examined to show why some events make headlines and others receive little or no coverage. The book exposes many of the tricks of the misinformation trade and ends with a full chapter on using the full power of the Web to check facts and separate the reliable from the rest. An appendix shows students how to grade news from A to F.

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