

Verified: How to think straight, get duped less, and make better decisions about what to believe online.

By Mike Caulfield & Sam Wineburg. (2023), 266 pages, ISBN: 9780226822068. \$14

Subject: How to be a better teacher

Useful for: Useful for teachers who are interested in information literacy and disinformation.

Format: Chapters with index, with takeaways at the end of each chapter.

Reviewer's Comments:

This book aims to equip readers with the skills necessary to navigate the vast and often deceptive information landscape of the internet.

The book is designed to be an accessible and practical toolkit for evaluating online information quickly and effectively. It emphasizes the importance of lateral reading—using the web to verify the web—and other techniques to determine the credibility of sources. Readers will learn how to identify red flags, assess the reliability of news stories, and recognize the tactics used by scammers and purveyors of misinformation.

Verified includes a variety of real-world examples and exercises to help readers practice and internalize these skills. It covers topics such as the credibility of URLs, the nuances of Google search results, and the importance of peer-reviewed sources. The book also addresses the challenges posed by deepfakes, stealth advertising, and emotionally manipulative content.

Three to five takeaways are included at the end of every chapter and provide a quick summary of the actionable steps you should take when encountering information on the web.

This book includes many examples from current news and internet events that reinforce the lessons and methods outlined by the authors. By building on Caulfield's SIFT technique and the lateral reading method used by top fact checkers, the authors claim that a reasonable fact check can be done in less than a minute.

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This approach is designed to help individuals navigate the vast sea of information available online, discerning credible sources from misinformation. SIFT is an acronym that stands for Stop, Investigate the source, Find better coverage, and Trace claims, quotes, and media to the original context.

With the rise of AI generated content on top of the prevalence of disinformation that is common on the social internet, this book is a great tool for law librarians to use in their daily lives as well as teach to our students.

Reviewed by: Aimee Self Pittman, Louisiana State University Law Center, in 2024.