

Method notes for political economic analysis

A supplement to the online course 'Self Determination in the Post Colonial World'

by Dr. Tim Anderson

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Suggestion: try these six segments slowly, one at a time.
They are meant to be integrated with the material of the SDPCW course.

1. Knowing and learning

Ontology	the study of reality / existence (how do we conceive of the universe?)
Epistemology	the study of knowledge (how do humans know?)
Methodology	the study of the process of obtaining knowledge (how do we learn?)

Epistemologies are often linked to methodologies, e.g.

Epistemology	associated methods
Idealism	self exploration, philosophy and logic
Empiricism	positivism, objectivism, scientific observation
Constructivism (interpretivism)	combines ideas with evidence, argumentative

Europe's 'Kantian synthesis': 'gathers the elements for cognition, and unites them to form a certain content'

Idealism

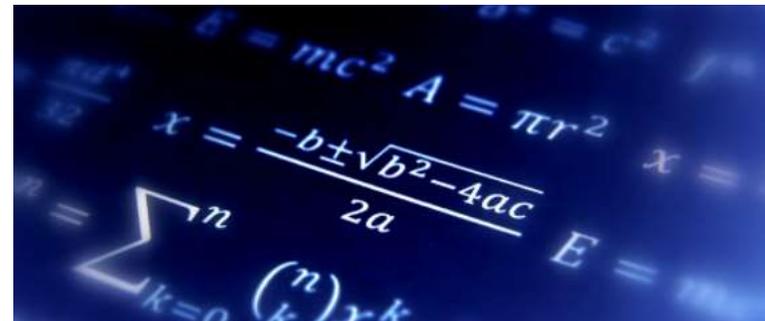
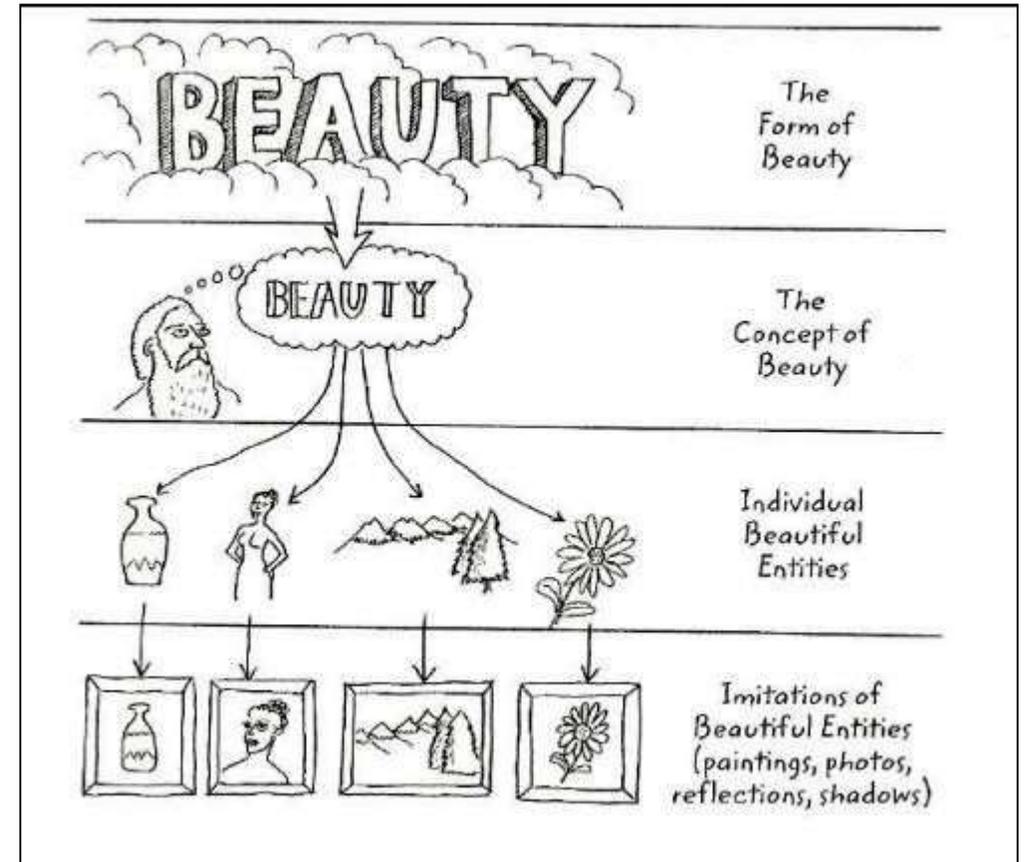
Plato's 'theory of forms': intangible forms or ideas are more real than the changing physical world, e.g. we cannot see 'justice' or 'beauty' but they are very real to us

Religion - textual authority: truth is found in scripture, sacred texts

Pure Logic - other forms of logical reasoning

Examples: mathematics, study of matters which do not depend on changing circumstances

Problems: dogma is often confronted with inconvenient experience, e.g. the earth moves around the sun (Galileo vs Church of Rome)



Empiricism

Reality is what we can observe with our five senses

Empiricist epistemology, **positivist** method - knowledge is 'objective' and can be built incrementally, e.g. particular scientific observations (medicine, astronomy)

Examples: hypotheses can be tested in situations where there are few additional factors to those under study (the 'dependent and the independent variables')

Problems: New factors can (i) arise or (ii) be detected and so force a reassessment of the framework of ideas behind the hypothesis

Rationalism & Empiricism

Empiricism

- Knowledge is based on experience and experimentation.
- Experimental science is the paradigm of knowledge.
- Experience and experiment rarely, if ever, produce certainty.
- Some empiricists believe that mathematics can be certain.

Rationalism

- Knowledge is based on the use of reason or logic.
- Mathematics is the paradigm of knowledge.
- Genuine knowledge is certain.
- Relation to experience:
 - Experience does not produce certainty and does not conform to reason.
 - Thus, experience is at best second-class knowledge.

competing western traditions

Positivist method - 'adding to a body of knowledge'

This approach is still used in much of the physical and medical sciences, but has less credence in the social sciences, where there are many uncontrolled and uncontrollable variables.

e.g.

1. a virus may be studied as to (a) the structure of its DNA code (b) its infectious capacity amongst humans (c) its likelihood of causing illness and death.

However:

2. social responses to war may depend upon (a) the motives of elites (b) the impact of misinformation campaigns (c) unity or disunity amongst those under attack (d) the capacity and alliances of those under attack (e) other variables.

Searches for social meaning often require re-conceptualisation; and perhaps a new 'paradigm' (conceptual overview).



Constructivism

The 'Kantian synthesis' brings together concepts and evidence, allowing for a 'constructivist' approach

Concepts are combined with evidence (experience) to suggest /argue general propositions

Constructivism also implies active engagement in the learning process.

In reading more complex social variables, which cannot be easily isolated, there is more often a need to reconceptualise the problem.

Constructivism

Constructivism — particularly in its "social" forms — suggests that the learner is much more actively involved in a **joint enterprise with the teacher of creating** ("constructing") **new meanings**. It is the importance of culture and context in forming understanding.

- Learning is not a purely internal process, nor is it a passive shaping of behaviours. Vygotsky favoured a concept of learning as a **"social construct which is mediated by language via social discourse."** (McMahon, 1997)
- Laurillard emphasises learning as an iterative process, involving discursive, adaptive, interactive, and reflexive qualities, **the main focus being on teacher-student relationship** since "academic knowledge consists in descriptions of the world, and therefore comes to be known through a discursive interaction between teacher and student".
- Traditional behaviourist/instructionist approaches strive for context independence, whereas a Social Constructivist paradigm views the context in which the learning occurs as central to the learning itself.
- One Social Constructivist notion is that of authentic or **"situated learning"**, where the student takes part in activities which are directly relevant to the application of learning and which take place within a culture similar to the applied setting.

The most common epistemology in western social sciences

But socio-political-economic theory is fragile and contested

e.g. breakdown of a theory, in changed circumstances

Economic theory of currency value: the value of a currency was once said to be determined by the 'demand for dollar denominated assets' (DDDA, i.e. exports and foreign investment), that is, the currency was supposed to reflect the 'fundamentals' of an economy, or the 'real economy'.

Problem: from the 1970s on we saw currencies traded for other reasons, such as hedging and speculation - adding volatility and unpredictability, the DDDA theory broke down.

the problem of complex, new social variables, even in a relatively 'technical' area

Social, political and economic **theory** is often less definitive and more contested than that of the physical sciences



2. Concepts, theory and evidence

Common constructivist approaches, 'arguments', in the social sciences:

A. The need to conceptualise

Abstractions allow us to suggest general knowledge from particular experience; e.g. "people who read a lot are generally more thoughtful"

B. The use of theory

Theory can bring together concepts into a coherent system; e.g. most versions of liberalism seek to universalise notions of individualism and individual freedom

C. The importance of evidence

Evidence 'grounds' ideas and, when able to be reproduced, helps communicate knowledge

Systematic evidence allows conceptual arguments to advance

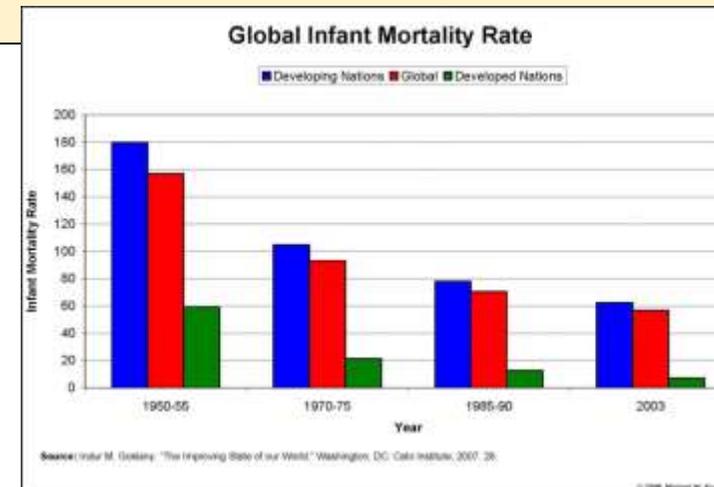
A. Foreign aid story

'Despite aid programs in health, [evidence shows] health indicators in [country x] remain poor.'
Might this be due to local factors, or corruption?

B. Retold with systematic evidence

An IMF commissioned study (including more than 100 countries) found that **bilateral aid** did not reduce infant mortality at all (Masud and Yontcheva 2005: 20). A later IMF study confirmed only that “doubling health aid” was associated with a 2% reduction in infant mortality (Mishra and Newhouse 2007) -- this was very small compared to the MDGs and suggests systematic bilateral aid failures.

Systematic evidence assists in better perspectives on systematic questions



Essay and thesis writing suggestions:

A. Defer judgement – until you have shown some study of the ideas and the evidence. Set up a question to address. Avoid rapid, pre-emptive judgement and leave open the possibility that you might actually learn something from research. Your conclusions are usually much less important than the process by which you arrive at them.

B. Conceptualise the problem – try to identify common themes behind particular experiences so that particular stories have greater social meaning. But don't make the mistake of assuming that a case study proves any general point (and don't let stories drive your essay); careful study of the wider evidence is required for that.

C. State your approach / method –state at the outset how you will approach a problem – i.e. which ideas will you use and which evidence? Stating your approach (even just one or two sentences) may also help you reflect.

D. Use evidence – the study of society necessarily involves some reference to actual social experience – unlike simple philosophy or religion. Always try to make use of some social experience to help demonstrate your arguments. This might be an example or, better, surveys, censuses or other systematic studies.

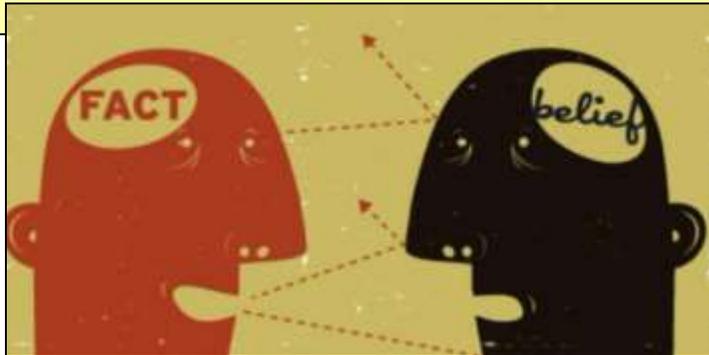
E. Justify your argument - it is not enough that it sounds good to you! Address alternative arguments.

Individualism in analytical bad habits

Those who say: "I told you so", "I predicted this" and "Mark my words" are generally branding themselves as childish egotists, not analysts.

Analysts engage in a process of reason and evidence, where they learn the craft of transparent explanation, not setting themselves up as *cognitariat* guru figures.

Similarly, avoid turning suspicions into knowledge. The latter requires considerably more evidence than the former. Confusing the two exposes immaturity or prejudice.



Apply reason and evidence

In a controversy, consider all sides, do not exclude anything;

Identify interests and look for relatively independent evidence;

Apply relevant principles (e.g. principles of non-intervention);

Avoid selective or personalised 'analysis' - anecdotes can illustrate but not demonstrate, or prove, social realities.

3. Sources & ideologies

A. Why 'primary, diverse & independent' sources?

'primary, diverse & independent' vs. secondary and 'reliable' (e.g. Wikipedia) - see the next slide

B. Reading only 'reliable' (or familiar) sources seems convenient but it is superficial and creates source dependence. An intelligent reading of diverse sources is the foundation of better understandings. We learn less by reading only 'reliable' or familiar sources.

C. There are **lessons in reading 'unreliable'**, partisan or hostile sources.

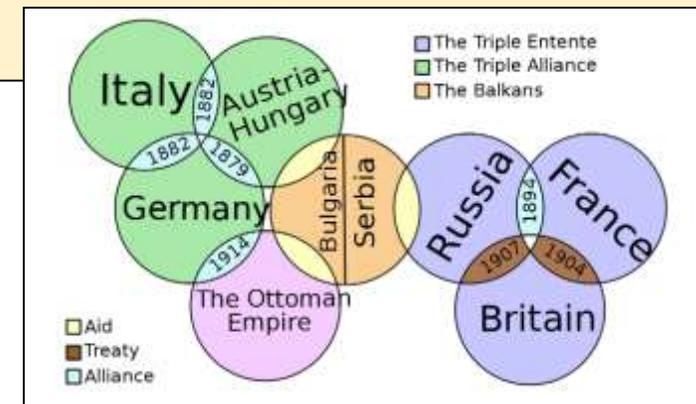
- Unfamiliar detail and perspectives
- Admissions 'against interest' (e.g. admissions to accusations)
- Material which helps inform our critiques
- Reading partisan sources requires distinguishing (i) headline spin, from (ii) useful detail, if any.

D. Those with little time to read should choose sources which themselves explain diverse perspectives.

Primary, diverse and independent (per academic conventions)

Primary	as close to the source as possible - key element of academic research this allows the research to go behind the interpretations of others and take responsibility for his/her use of theory and/or evidence
Diverse	in a controversy it is bets to see the different sides, including possible areas of agreement
Independent	sources that are relatively independent can help resolve controversies but recognising interest is the key to identifying independence <i>this sometimes requires detailed knowledge of the particular controversy</i>

WW1 involved a web of competing empires and independent peoples; meaning must be found in overarching perspectives (e.g. competition between empires)



Weaponised ideologies: the 'Human Rights' battlefield

Beware of high sounding rationales for intervention and war

Aggressors have mostly disguised their great crimes with 'good intentions', and so it is with 'human rights' claims against a target.

We should always measure stated aims and objectives against interest and action, especially when high aims are used as a pretext for intervention or war.

This requires an ability to identify 'interest', claims made with 'self-interest' and sources linked to 'interested parties'.

Anderson, Tim (2018) Syria: the human rights industry in 'humanitarian war', online: <https://counter-hegemonic-studies.site/humanitarian-war-rp-1-18/>

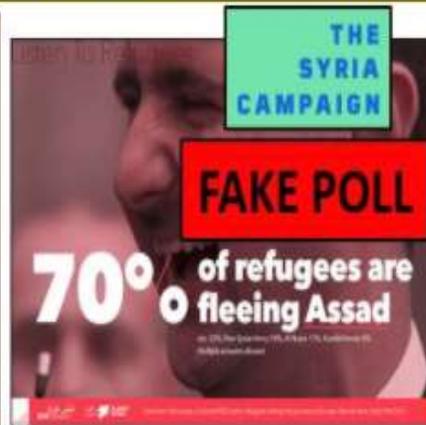


Primary sources: In this example a German survey group (contracted by a US-funded anti-Syria group 'The Syria Campaign') released a headline and summary that was not supported by the detail of its survey. Western media mostly repeated the headline, because it suited them.

How *The Syrian Campaign* faked its "70% of refugees are fleeing Assad" story

In this TSC survey of 889 Syrians in Germany:

- No question was even asked about 'fleeing Assad';
- 70% said the Syrian Army 'was responsible' for the fighting; but in this multiple option question 74% also chose anti-government armed groups;
- 77% said they feared arrest by the Syrian Army; but in this multiple option question 82% also selected anti-government armed groups.
- That is, more feared the jihadists than the Syrian Army



The TSC poll was **grossly unrepresentative** of Syrian refugees.

- 68% young men; 74% from jihadist-held areas; almost no women and children;
- Hardly anyone from Tartus, Latakia, Sweida, and very few from Damascus

The story: Headline of a poll commissioned by US group 'The Syria Campaign' suggests that most Syrian refugees in Germany were fleeing a 'bloodthirsty dictator'. However the poll itself does not support that story.

Comment:

1. Read the detail, both questions and answers
2. Polls: check for a sampling method & error

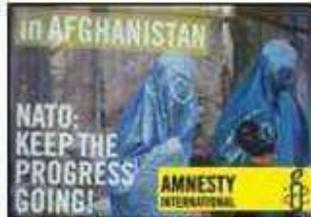
<https://www.globalresearch.ca/how-the-syrian-campaign-faked-its-70-fleeing-assad-refugee-poll/5546220>

Compromised sources: this example shows Amnesty International repeatedly supporting demonstrable false pretexts for the US interventions in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya. Why?



Amnesty International began in the 1960s as a letter writing group which supported prisoners of conscience. They said they were apolitical and against all violence.

Somewhere that changed, as Amnesty backed 'Nurse' Nayirah's fake 'incubator babies' story, used to support the 1990 Gulf War.



On the tenth anniversary of the invasion of Afghanistan, US State Dept. official Suzanne Nossel became head of Amnesty (USA) and Amnesty was praising the NATO occupation of that country.

NB. conflicts of interest

Amnesty backed false stories about Libya, that Gaddafi was using 'black mercenaries' to massacre civilians. After NATO bombed and destroyed Libya, Amnesty admitted those stories were false.



Comment:

1. Be wary of emotional pleas surrounding interventionist war
2. Subject all war claims to careful scrutiny
3. Have regard to the history of advocacy for war, especially conflicts of interest.

4. Systematic vs Anecdotal evidence

A. In social analysis, systematic evidence is always preferable to anecdotal evidence which can only illustrate (and not represent or prove) social realities.

B. Nevertheless, liberal culture and journalistic practice often elevate individual experience, including the fallacy that 'I was there' gives wider validity to some particular experience

C. Systematic social evidence can be found in (a) censuses, or total accounts (b) representative surveys (but not biased surveys) (c) other outcomes of systematic study.

Survey techniques have advanced in the last century

George Gallup showed, in 1936, that big polls could be very wrong -

The **Literary Digest poll** had picked the winner in every US presidential election since 1916 - it had thousands of staff - sometimes as many as 20 million were surveyed - ballots were mailed to names polled from automobile registration lists and telephone directories [spot the bias?]

the prevailing assumption was, the more you interview, the closer you get to the view of the whole population ('the truth')

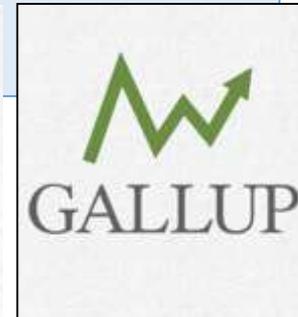
In 1935 Gallup interviewed 3,000 people, compared to The Literary Digest's 10 million

The Literary Digest predicted a Roosevelt loss with 43%, Gallup predicted a Roosevelt win with 54%

Roosevelt won with 61% - The Literary Digest went out of business

Q: What were the Literary Digest's sources of bias?

Peverill Squire (1988) 'Why the 1936 Literary Digest Poll Failed', *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, [Vol. 52, No. 1 \(Spring, 1988\)](#), pp. 125-133



The COVID sceptic trap: replace systematic with anecdotal evidence??

A. Systematic epidemiological evidence always has problems, but epidemiologists always begin with official data and then try to account for errors in those estimates. In the 2020 pandemic, COVID deaths were collated across more than 200 territories, making systematic bias far less likely.

B. Nevertheless, COVID19 sceptics and conspiracists, seizing on criticisms of official death data, rejected all official data and substituted anecdotal or individual accounts. **Fail.**



COVID-19 skeptics say there's an overcount. Doctors in the field say the opposite

Much the same logic applies to other forms of official data, e.g. electoral participation. Always *start with* systematic evidence.

Source: Worldometers (2021) <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>

Extreme Hunger in Venezuela?

Step One: observe reports of a social drama



Half of Venezuelan children not getting three square meals
UK Telegr

- Notice the interests and limitations of your sources, particularly as regards (i) power and (ii) language.
- Note also the ideological conflict behind the stories.

Work through a controversy, making use of Independent sources: In this example on food security in Venezuela, we systematically review competing stories, then look for independent sources

Step Two: check 'the other side', in this case government reports

The Venezuelan Government says food shortages are caused by (politicised) commercial hoarders, and that it is addressing the problem through social programs, such as school feeding. There is no general food crisis.



Government says: there is a politicised black market, hoarding and economic sabotage combine with inflation, foreign exchange problems.



Chavez Vive, 26 Sept 2016

Step Three: check for independent evidence - in this case what appears to be that is reported in media aligned to the state

FAO reconoce nuevamente a Venezuela por labor alimentaria

Telesur, 5 June 2015



- The FAO seems to say that Venezuelan food security is good and there is no need for aid
- Make sure you **check the date** of each report

La FAO desmiente las falsedades sobre Venezuela

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Con la declaración del representante en Venezuela de la FAO (Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura) en el sentido de que este país no requiere de ayuda humanitaria, el gobierno del presidente Nicolás Maduro gana una nueva batalla en la guerra mediática desatada por la derecha autóctona y por Estados Unidos contra el proceso bolivariano en curso desde hace ya casi 20 años.

Venezuela Recognized by FAO for Halving Malnutrition

By LUCAS KOERNER

Venezuela Analysis, 8 June 2015



Miguel Angel Ferrer

Telesur, 21 July 2016

Step Four: work backwards to the source, to see if that independent evidence was cited correctly

Venezuela doesn't need humanitarian aid: FAO envoy

Xinhua, 27 July 2016

Marcelo Resende, Venezuela's representative for the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), told a food supply meeting that the south American country "is not in a position for humanitarian aid." In April 2015, the FAO acknowledged Venezuela's fight against hunger, the eradication of poverty and guaranteeing food sovereignty.

- FAO report is confirmed in other sources
- However independent US analyst Mark Weisbrot (CEPR) says Venezuela must stabilise its controlled exchange rate and reduce inflation, rather than only relying on social programs

Venezuela: Dismantling a Weapon of Mass Destruction

Triple Crisis, 16 March 2016

Mark Weisbrot

Mark Weisbrot is co-director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research in Washington, D.C., and the president of Just Foreign Policy. He is also the author of the new book "Failed: What the 'Experts' Got Wrong About the Global Economy" (2015, Oxford University Press).

The government of Venezuela has often denounced an "economic war" against it, and of course this is part of the current situation. The primary weapon of mass destruction in this war is the black market for the dollar. It is no coincidence that the main source of information for

Venezuela: 'It's a Battle Between 2 Kinds of Health Care'



<http://www.telesurtv.net/english/news/Venezuela-Its-a-Battle-Between-2-Kinds-of-Health-Care-20160729-0027.html>

Approach political-economic controversies in a systematic way

5. Principles in critical reading

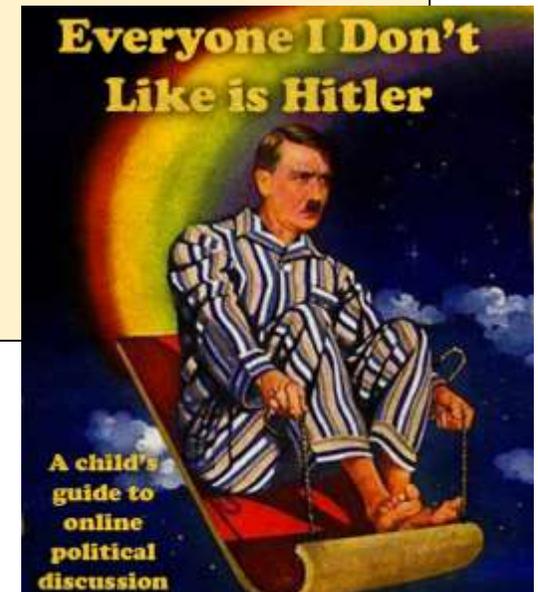
A. Researchers cannot simply dismiss all 'biased', unreliable or 'enemy' sources, as they may provide insights, e.g. 'admissions against interest' (like confessions in a criminal case).

B. However we should be cautious of the likely 'self-serving' character of biased sources, which impute bad behaviour to their opponents, and decent behaviour to themselves.

C. There are often lessons from biased or 'enemy' sources, e.g.:

- Admissions of their own crimes (valuable for resolving arguments);
- Recognition of accepted facts (valuable for citation);
- Alerting us to distinct claims or lines of reasoning;
- Even your worst enemy may, sometimes, say something correct!
- Values and method are required to sort 'the wheat from the chaff'.

Western political discussions are often full of extreme caricatures, where opponents are 'fascists', little 'Hitlers', etc. Avoid this childishness.



Social and ethical values should underpin 'critical analysis'

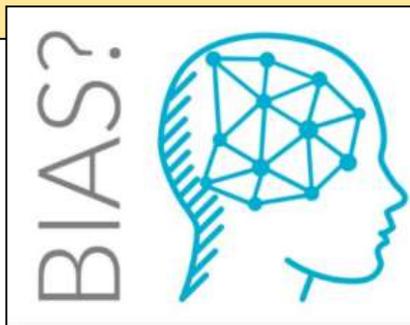
In the absence of strong social and ethical values, much western criticism simply adopts (consciously or unconsciously) liberal, individualistic values;

All serious researchers recognise that a biased source might sometimes be right;

Further, and notwithstanding the fact that public interest is often cited to back private agendas, every society has some decent social structures (e.g. public health) created by popular demand;

Social and ethical values, combined with an honest and systematic exploration involving reason and evidence, are necessary to disentangle controversies;

There is no such thing as 'always reliable' sources nor inadmissible sources. Indeed, evidence from opposing sources (e.g. **admissions against interest**) are often best to resolve controversies; as in law, such admissions must be distinguished from **self-serving statements**.



1. The act, declaration or omission of a party as to a relevant fact may be given in evidence against him.

2. Self-serving declarations, which are unsworn statements made by the declarant out of court and which are favorable to his interest are not admissible.

ISIS: the end of 'plausible deniability'



"I know major Arab allies who fund [ISIS]". **General Martin Dempsey, Chair US Joint Chiefs of Staff**

['it wasn't us, just our closest allies']

"Yeah, but do they embrace them? They fund them because the Free Syrian Army couldn't fight Assad. They were trying to beat Assad." – **US Senator Lindsey Graham**



"Wahhabi Salafism is igniting under the world really. And it is funded by Saudi and Qatari money" – **General Jonathan Shaw, former Assistant Chief of UK Defence Staff**

"The Turks ... the Saudis, the Emiratis ... [sent] thousands of tons of weapons into anyone who would fight against Assad ... [including] Al Nusra and Al Qaeda and ... this outfit called ISIL." – **US Vice-President Joe Biden**



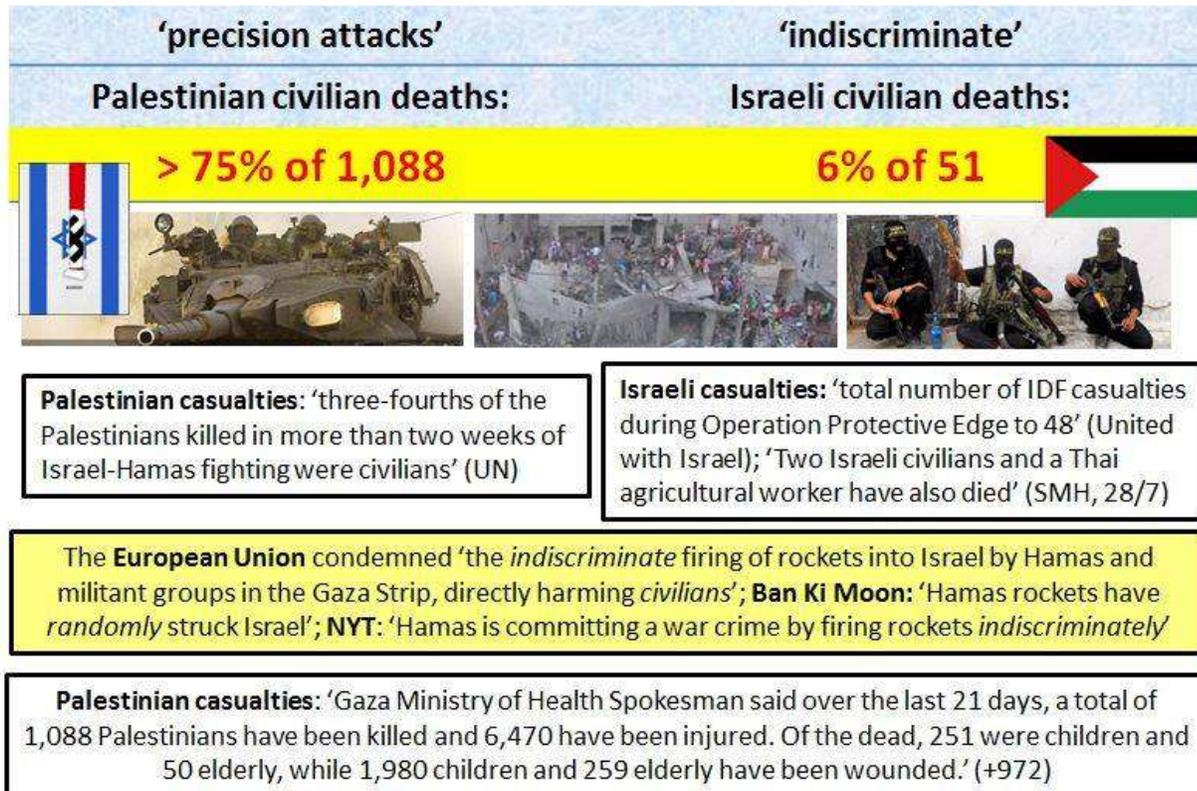
Admissions from biased sources are valuable in resolving controversies

Senior US and UK officials admit that their 'major allies' have armed and funded UNSC banned terrorist groups - ISIS and Nusra - groups which have created pretexts for direct interventions. Such admissions avert the need for extensive debate and evidence. However we should observe the 'spin' of these admissions.

Syria by admissions (2018) online:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DGsNOa80Rk8>

Independent sources OR admissions: In this example of a 2014 massacre in Gaza, we consider diverse sources. However independent evidence and admissions (from biased sources) allow us to form a better view.

NB: The data here is contemporaneous. Later reports say that up to 2,300 Palestinians were killed.



The story: Palestinian attacks on Israel are often criticised as being 'indiscriminate'. But are they?

Comment:

1. Identify independent evidence
2. Be wary of moral equivalence claims, carrying in-built assumptions
3. Consider both the **objectives** and the **actions** of the parties.

Reference: Tim Anderson (2018) 'The Future of Palestine', CCHS, online: <https://counter-hegemonic-studies.site/future-palestine-1/>

6. Wikipedia, social media and 'fact checkers'

A. Wikipedia method explicitly rejects original research and primary sources, instead it relies on "reliable, published secondary sources" - 'pre-digested' and anonymous information.

B. Wikipedia reflects a hegemonic-authoritative consensus, typically a compilation of Anglo-American corporate and state media. This 'consensus' is enforced by super-editors and lobbies.

C. By contrast, academic method typically stresses (i) more primary sources, (ii) diverse sources and (iii) independent enquiry.

D. Does this mean we should not read Wikipedia? No. It is very good for trivia and technical detail. However it is likely to be misleading in any serious controversy. Recognise its structural bias; and never cite it in any controversy, debate or academic writing.

Caution! the Google to Wikipedia railroad

In many cases a Google search will lead to a Wikipedia 'answer'

But what are these companies and when should we use and not use them?

Google: now a massive US-based conglomerate which owns many other companies, harvests data and hides its own ever changing processes. Creates hierarchies of sources.

Wikipedia: an apparently participatory online encyclopaedia which is, however, US-based and controlled by an inner group of super-editors, captured on major issues by powerful lobbies and reflecting 'truth' as presented by western corporate media. It might be good for technical information; but it is hopeless on controversies.

Moran, Mark E. (2020) 'The top 10 reasons students cannot cite or rely on Wikipedia', Finding Dulcinea, online: <http://www.findingdulcinea.com/news/education/2010/march/The-Top-10-Reasons-Students-Cannot-Cite-or-Rely-on-Wikipedia.html>



Anonymity, reliance on 'reputable' secondary sources and the open source character (open to lobby capture) lie at the root of Wikipedia's unreliability

Wikipedia's own page 'reliability of Wikipedia' begins with the acknowledgment that:

- "77% of all articles [are] written by 1% of its editors, a majority of whom are **anonymous**"

In 'the Phillip Cross affair' one virtually anonymous English editor made over 150,000 **Wikipedia** edits in 15 years (every single day between 29 August 2013 and 14 May 2018), mostly to denigrate anti-war advocates, including George Galloway, Craig Murray, OPCW whistle-blowers' evidence, etc. 'No problem' says Wikipedia boss Jimmy Wales.



Caught In The Cross Hairs – Media Lens And The Mystery Of The Wikipedia Editor

© 17th October 2018

 **The Philip Cross Affair**

May 18, 2018 in Uncategorized by craig

<https://www.medialens.org/2018/caught-in-the-cross-hairs-media-lens-and-the-mystery-of-the-wikipedia-editor/>



Media monopolies can present an illusion of independence and/or participation. **Facebook** is increasingly a US American view of the world, blocking information and views friendly to China, Russia, Iran, Cuba, Venezuela, Syria, etc.

Facebook: "To comply with these [US] sanctions, we remove accounts maintained by or on behalf of a sanctioned party as well as remove content posted by others that supports or represents the sanctioned group or individual". 15 Jan 2020

Facebook says posts cannot 'support' parties sanctioned by US law. That potentially means no favourable comment on any of the following:

Certain parties in the Balkans, Belarus, Burundi, Central African Republic, Certain parties in China, Cuba, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iran, Certain parties in Iraq, Certain parties in Lebanon, Certain parties in Mali, Certain parties in Nicaragua, North Korea, Russia, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Certain parties in Ukraine, Venezuela, Yemen, Zimbabwe. *PLUS* anyone doing business with any of these sanctioned parties. (OFAC 2020)

Facebook admits censoring posts supporting slain Iranian General Qassem Soleimani

By Zena Chamas

Posted Wed 15 Jan 2020 at 6:07am



<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-01-15/instagram-bans-iranians-from-posting-about-soleimani/11864410>

Twitter's guidance: notice how RT, CGTN and Xinhua are all branded 'state-affiliated media', but not VOA, the BBC and Australia's ABC?



The Voice of America ✓
@VOANews
Your source for news and information from around the world.
voanews.com Joined September 2008
241 Following 1.6M Followers



BBC News (World) ✓
@BBCWorld
News, features and analysis from the @BBCBreaking. UK news, @BBCNews
London, UK bbc.com/news
70 Following 30.1M Followers



ABC News ✓
@abcnews
Latest news updates (mostly automated) from an official @abcaustralia account.
Australia abc.net.au/news Joined
1,200 Following 1.7M Followers
Followed by ASIO, Christine Assange,



RT

RT, the global news network, broadcasts from Washington studios to over 100 countries.
RT.com Joined August 2009
659 Following 3M Followers



CGTN

CGTN is an international media organization providing accurate and timely news coverage as we
Beijing, China CGTN.com Joined
69 Following 13.7M Followers



NEW CHINA

We are public media for the public good. We will not yield to the pressure of ideology.
Headquartered in Beijing, PRC
64 Following 12.5M Followers

Self appointed 'fact checkers' are near useless, except to the extent that they may cite additional evidence

In this example the E.U. simply uses its official 'fact checker' to reinforce its foreign policy position. NB: observe the 'self-serving statement' rule.

Disinformation Review EU vs Disinfo

RUSSOPHOBIA IS THE REASON FOR THE DETERIORATED RELATIONS BETWEEN RUSSIA AND THE WEST

DISINFORMATION

IN FACT RELATIONS DETERIORATED DUE TO RUSSIA'S ILLEGAL ANNEXATION OF CRIMEA

DON'T BE DECEIVED QUESTION EVEN MORE

<https://euvsdisinfo.eu/>

Researchers must justify their own arguments and use of sources.

Most 'independent fact checkers' are paid by powerful corporations and states, which have their own interests (e.g. 'Snopes' gets funds from Facebook and other US corporations)

Some Further Reading:

Cosmo Howard & Michelle Brady (2015) Teaching social research methods after the critical turn: challenges and benefits of a constructivist pedagogy, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 18:5, 511-525, DOI: 10.1080/13645579.2015.1062625

Moran, Mark E. (2020) 'The top 10 reasons students cannot cite or rely on Wikipedia', *Finding Dulcinea*, online: <http://www.findingdulcinea.com/news/education/2010/march/The-Top-10-Reasons-Students-Cannot-Cite-or-Rely-on-Wikipedia.html>

Anderson, Tim (2020) 'Truth or Choice? the hegemonic-neoliberal destruction of knowledge', online: <https://counter-hegemonic-studies.site/hegemonic-neoliberal-knowledge1/>