



# Critical Analysis of Texts

Citations & Hermeneutics

# This Lesson (4a):

1. When to cite?
2. Critical analysis of texts
3. Confirmation Bias

# When to cite?

One of the issues many students have with citing, is when to cite and when not to cite.

There are some general citation rules to help you make the decision whether or not an intext citation is required:

# When to cite?

CITATION NEEDED	NO CITATION NEEDED
Quote, paraphrase or reference to someone or some group	General knowledge
A <b>significant</b> claim which is not well-known	Personal opinion or speculation
A claim which disputes accepted facts	Widely-known historical facts or dates
A claim which references a specific person or group	General comments about readily observable phenomena
A recent, or new significant discovery	Any claim which is obvious to reasonable people

# When to cite?

If you do not cite properly in your papers, you may be accused of:

(a) Plagiarism

Or

(b) Lacking academic integrity

These are not frivolous charges! Many academics have lost their jobs for failing to cite properly and fairly.

# Fairness in Academic Writing

Academic integrity means, among other things, being fair.

One of the main obstacles to fairness in academic writing (and especially in journalism) is called:

**Confirmation bias**



# Confirmation Bias

“Confirmation bias” means supporting only those facts or opinions which support your own. It includes:

1. Selectively choosing only those sources which support your point, while ignoring sources which challenge it.
2. Failing to include any controversies or differences of opinion to your own.
3. Interpreting data in a way that supports your own position, while ignoring interpretations which may challenge your position.

# Confirmation Bias: Case Study

Consider the following: **“More youth are opting out of college than ever before. Clearly, the cost of postsecondary education is too high.”**

It *may* be the case that many youths are opting out of postsecondary education because of the high cost. The data *might* support that conclusion, but it may also support many other conclusions, including the opposite conclusion: postsecondary education is not too expensive, but more youths are opting for trades and apprenticeships.

More data is needed in order to support either one of these claims.