

7A—PEDAGOGY IN POLITICAL CONTEXT: FAKE NEWS, POST TRUTH, AND POPULISM #3

News Literacy & Relativism in “Post-Truth” Moments: Emerging Pedagogical Strategies for Teaching about Contextual Authority

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As news literacy initiatives challenge the increased prevalence of “post-truths,” they also complicate the concept of contextual authority, which is emphasized in the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy description of “Authority as Constructed and Contextual.” If authority is determined by a given community and thus varies from one context to another, what does this suggest about evaluating information and its credibility? Does teaching about the concept “Authority Is Constructed and Contextual” problematically reinforce absolute relativist perspectives? Alternatively, can this concept be understood through the lens of a “weak” relativism and thereby encourage students to exercise cultural sensitivity and to explore productive tensions between absolute empiricism and absolute relativism? Taking into consideration the present sociopolitical moment and the opportunities and challenges it presents to literacy education, the presenter, an academic librarian, will explore approaches to teaching about contextual authority that address the tensions between “post-truth” reasoning, social constructivism, and absolute empiricism.