

Context Matters!

Why it's Important to Evaluate your Sources

- ◆ Becoming familiar with contextual information about a source can clarify the kind of evidence and arguments that source deploys
- ◆ Contextual information is especially useful when working with scholarship from different disciplines
 - ◆ e.g. If you're researching a film version of Hamlet, a film scholar will analyze the film in a way that's different from a literary scholar or a sociologist.

Questions to Keep in Mind

- ◇ Who wrote this (book, article)?
 - ◇ What discipline(s) are they affiliated with?
 - ◇ What kind of other work have they written/what is their scholarly focus?
- ◇ What year was the work published?
 - ◇ What journal/book series/publisher published this work?
 - ◇ What else have they published?
- ◇ Who is the audience for this work?

Where to find contextual information

- ◇ Catalog record for the source(s) you are working with
- ◇ University page/website of scholar who wrote the book or article
- ◇ About page of publisher or journal that published the source