

cmst 331

research in the wild

Assignment: Your first writing assignment is a 2-page comparison and critique of how a popular press article about research represents actual research findings. This is primarily an exercise to get your creative juices flowing, give me a baseline idea of your writing and thinking, and enable me to give you feedback without any grade penalty. Therefore, this is a pass/fail assignment. Meet the components of the assignment (length, objectives, etc.) and you get full credit.

Objectives:

- To compare popular representations of research with actual peer reviewed scholarly research
- To analyze rhetorical and persuasive choices of popular writers
- To write a clear and succinct response that summarizes observations, comparisons, and critiques

Role/reader: In this assignment you are an emerging scholar, writing to a reader who is curious about how journalists write about research and wants to know if they can trust science and health writing in the news. Your reader is reasonably intelligent but has never read published research.

Directions:

1. Choose ONE of the following sets of articles (available on BBLearn):

- Levinson, S. (2013). A big butt is a healthy butt: Women with big butts are smarter and healthier. Retrieved from <http://elitedaily.com/news/world/big-butt-healthy-butt-study-says-women-big-butts-healthier/>

Manolopoulos, K. N., Karpe, F., & Frayn, K. N. (2010). Gluteofemoral body fat as a determinant of metabolic health. *International Journal of Obesity*, 34, 949-959.
Available here: <http://www.nature.com/ijo/journal/v34/n6/full/ijo2009286a.html>

- Freeman, S. (2016, January). Got a decision to make? You may want to take a cold shower first: We're more likely to take risks and gamble when we're turned on. Retrieved from: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-3417319/Got-decision-make-want-cold-shower-likely-make-risky-decisions-turned-on.html>

Skakoon-Sparling, S., Cramer, K. M., & Shuper, P. A. (2016). The impact of sexual arousal on sexual risk-taking and decision-making in men and women. *Archives of sexual behavior*, 45(1), 33-42.

Available on BBLearn.

2. Read your chosen articles. Compare/Contrast. What strikes you as you compare the news story to the research article? What's interesting? What's missing? What's represented well? What sounds suspect?
3. Translate your new-found knowledge into a form that is accessible to your reader.

Due Dates:

- Due on BBLearn/Turnitin AND hard copy in class Thursday, 2/4 by 3:30 p.m.

Points Possible: 50