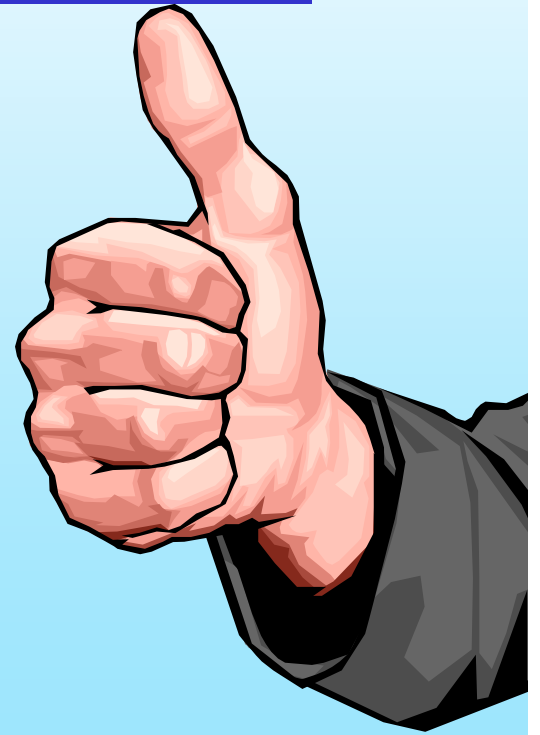


# Evaluating Web Sites

**Prepared by Lapeer East  
High School Library**  
March '03, Rev. March '04



**WARNING!**

**ANYONE**

**can publish**

**ANYTHING**

**on the Internet.**

# QUESTIONS TO ASK

- WHO?
- WHAT?
- WHERE?
- WHEN?
- WHY?



# WHO?

- **Who is responsible for this page?**
- **Is there a way to contact the authors by e-mail, phone, or snail mail?**
- **Is the page sponsored by an organization?**
- **Is the author qualified?**

# The URL

protocol://server-name.domain-name/directory/filename

- **Protocol – means of access**

[http://](#) or [ftp://](#) or [telnet://](#) or [gopher://](#)

- **Machine address (server name)**

[http://www.harvard.edu/](#)

- **Domain name (may include country code)**

[http://www.harvard.edu](#)

- **Directories and file names**

[http://www.harvard.edu/campus/](#)

# Domain Codes

- **com = Comercial or profit organizations**  
<http://www.amazon.com>
- **org = non-profit organizations**  
<http://www.salvationarmy.org/>
- **net = a network**  
<http://www.ncaasoccer.net/>
- **gov = government agency**  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov>

# Domain Codes

- **k12 = schools**

<http://www.philsch.k12.pa.us/>

- **edu = universities (also ac)**

<http://www.harvard.edu/>

- **New codes:**

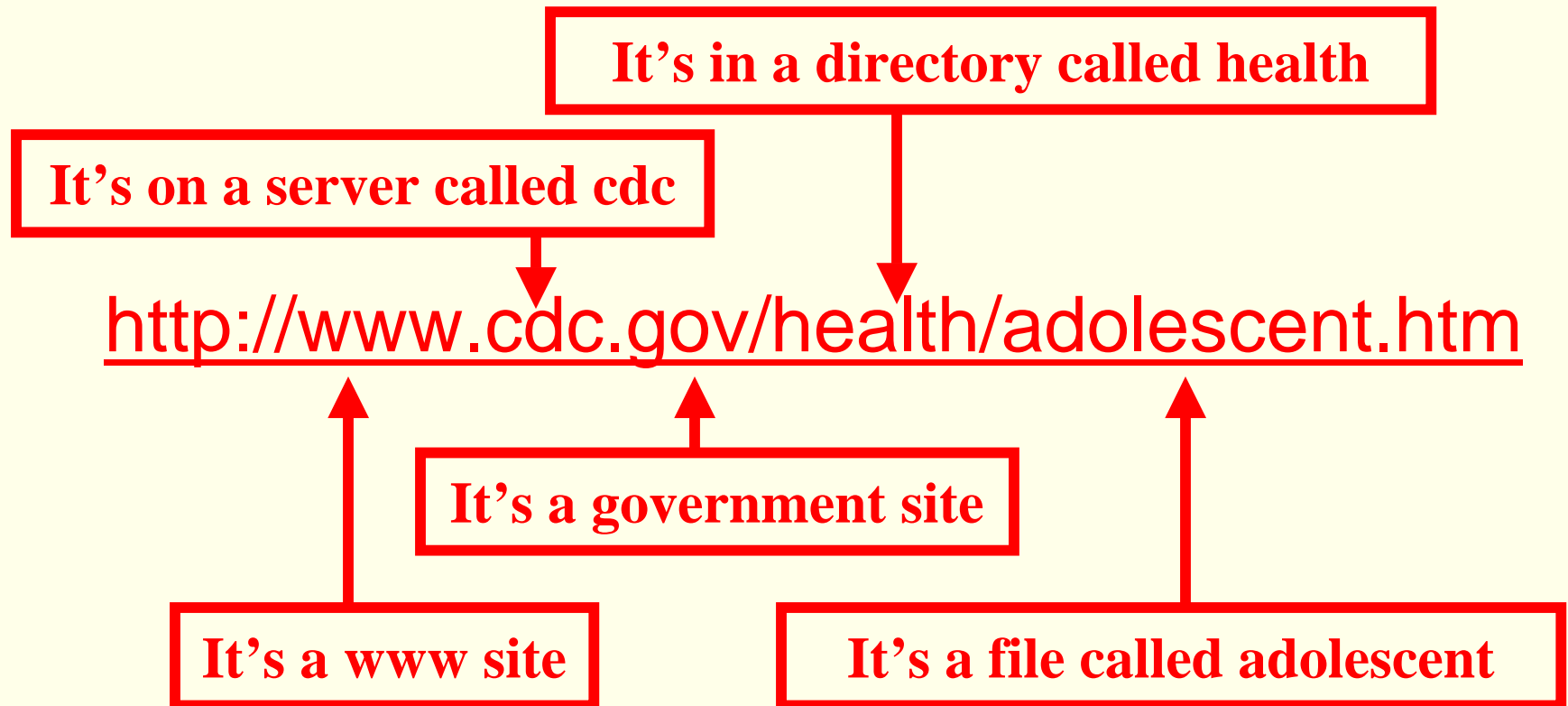
**.biz, .info., .tv, .name,  
.museum, .name**

▪

# Country Codes

- **Au = Australia**
- **Ca = Canada**
- **De = Germany**
- **Fr = France**
- **Uk = United kingdom**

# What do you know about this Web site?



# Tips & Tricks

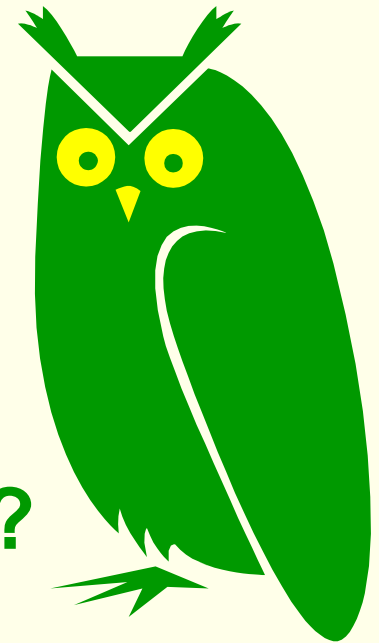
- Most Web servers use the tilde (~) to represent the personal directories of individuals.
- Home pages often have URLs ending in:
  - /welcome.html
  - /index.html
  - /default.html

# WHO?

**You may be able to find out who owns  
a Web site by going to the  
Whois Database**

<http://www.netsol.com/cgi-bin/whois/whois>

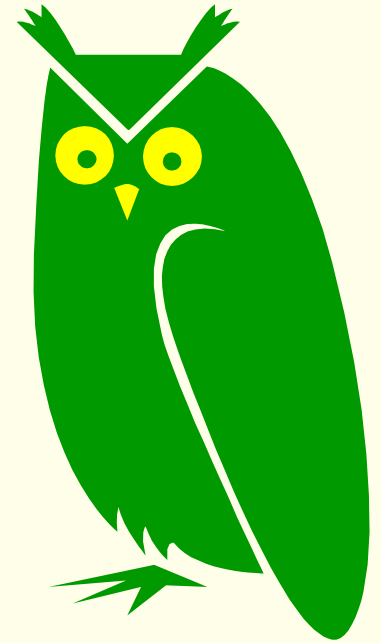
# Who?



## Who owns the lapeer.org Web site?

Registrant: Lapeer County Library ([LAPEER3-DOM](#))  
201 Village West Drive Lapeer MI,48446 US  
Domain Name: LAPEER.ORG  
Administrative Contact: Clark, Phyllis ([CP308-ORG](#))  
Lapeer County Library  
201 Village West Drive Lapeer,, MI 48446 US  
(810)664-9521

# Who?



MartinLutherKing.org seems like a good site to use for information about Martin Luther King Jr.

<http://martinlutherking.org/>

As you examine the site, however, you find very negative and misleading information. Why? Who owns this site?

# WHO?

- **Good example:**

<http://coombs.anu.edu.au/WWWVL-AsianStudies.html>

- **Questionable example:**

<http://www.geocities.com/Yosemite/5000/tips.html>

# WHAT?

- What do the “experts” say?
- Does this site agree with others?
- Does the information sound logical and reasonable?
- What do other Web authors think of this site?

# WHAT?

- What other Web sites link to this page?
- Using AltaVista, type **link:** into the search box. Paste the URL after the colon. Click the search button for a list of sites that link to the page.
- Using Google's Advanced Search, find sites that link to the page.

# WHAT?

- Do reputable Web directories list the site?
- Check:

Librarians' Index to the Internet

Infomine

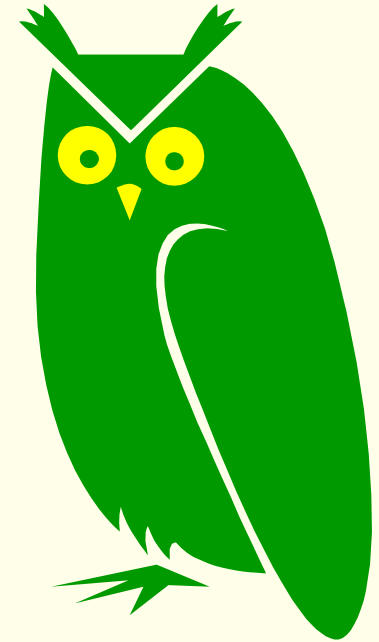
About.com

Academic Info

What?

What sites link to Keith  
Stanger's Web site?

<http://keithstanger.com/>



# WHAT?

- Good example:

<http://www.ushmm.org/>

- Questionable example:

<http://pubweb.acns.nwu.edu/~abutz/>

# WHERE?

- **Where did this information come from?**
- **Did the authors do research?**
- **Did the authors use other sources?**
- **Is this information designed for students? The public? Other researchers?**

# Where?

Where does the Food Research and Action Center get the information that appears on its Web site?

<http://www.frac.org/>



# WHERE?

- **Good Example:**

<http://www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/online/af/htmlsite/>

- **Questionable Example:**

<http://pubweb.acns.nwu.edu/~abutz/di/intro.html>

# WHEN?

- **Is there a date on the page?**
- **When was the page last updated?  
How often is it updated?**
- **Can you tell if the information is  
current or out of date?**
- **Are there dead links on the page?**



# When?

- When was the Food and Nutrition Center's Web site last updated?
- How often is it updated?

<http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/>

# WHY?

- **Why is this page here? Is the purpose stated?**
- **Does the page have an “About This Site” link?**
- **Are the authors trying to sell you something? Convince you to think a certain way? Vote a certain way?**
- **Does the page have a bias?**



## Why?

- Why are these sites on the Web?

- Mexico Travel Guide

<http://www.go2mexico.com/>

- Mesoamerican Civilizations

<http://www.saxakali.com/historymam5.htm>

# WHY?

- **Good Example:**

<http://www.cancer.org/>

- **Questionable Example:**

<http://www.all-natural.com/add.html>

# Other Things

- Does the page have typos or misspellings?
- Is the page easy to use and well organized?
- Do the links from the page work?
- Is it easy to find things on the site?
- Is there a help page?

# Other Things

- **Physical appearance**
- **Printable versions**
- **Downloadable files**
- **FAQs**
- **Access for special needs users**
- **Links to software needed to view page**

# Resources

- **Evaluating Web Sites**

<http://www.lib.lfc.edu/internetsearch/evalweb.html>

- **Internet Detective Tutorial**

<http://www.sosig.ac.uk/desire/internet-detective.html>

- **The Good, the Bad, & the Ugly**

<http://lib.nmsu.edu/instruction/eval.html>

# Try it!

- **Hoax? Scholarly Research? Personal Opinion? You Decide!**

<http://www.library.ucla.edu/libraries/college/help/hoax/index.htm>

- **The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Examples:**

<http://lib.nmsu.edu/instruction/evalexpl.html>

*The End*