Junk Science: 
Encouraging Critical Thinking in a 
Communication Research Methods Class

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Original ‘Junk Science’ Assignment

• Background
• Purpose
• Design
• Execution
• Afterthoughts
• Adapting the idea:
  – One shots
  – 50 mins
  – For-credit
  – Assignments
• **News Reports**
  – New York Times (Best)
  – PR Newswire (Meh)
  – Bloomington Alternative (Worst)
  – Coverage from a funding source (you decide)
• **Actual Study** in *Archives of General Psychiatry*
• **New Republic Article**
Other Sites for Inspiration

- Google a phrase like:
  - “New research shows”
  - “New study finds”
  - “Researchers have found”

- TimeHealthland
- NY Times Health
- NIH News in Health
- NHS Behind The Headlines (from UK – they actually look at the real research)
Other Useful Links

- **NPR Story** on scientific reporting and retractions
- **Parody news web site** about a scientific article (BRILLIANT and the comments are even better)
- **The Lay Scientist Blog**
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Presentation Available:
http://www.slideshare.net/roztedford