

Short Conversations

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Facts

A	In 1964 the birth rate in Taiwan was at an all-time low at 3.6% per day.	1
B	What?	2
A	What do you mean 'what'?	3
B	That's rubbish!	4
A	What's rubbish?	5
B	What you just said. That's rubbish. Where did you get your 'facts' from?	6
A	It's not rubbish. And if you must know, I got them from the internet.	7
B	Oh well in that case it must be true.	8
A	What do you mean by that?	9
B	Well everyone knows that whatever you read on the internet is true!	10
A	I'll have you know I got my statistics from a very reliable source.	11
B	Oh yeah? Where? What's ... what's the URL?	12
A	Um, it's my friend Eric's website ...	13
B	Your friend Eric's website!? I mean where did your friend Eric get these sources of information then?	14
A	I don't know.	15
B	You mean he didn't give a reference?	16
A	Mm. No ... uh I but I know he copied them from somewhere.	17
B	Well that's very convincing isn't it! Your friend Eric just copied it from 'somewhere' and then you copy it from Eric. I mean what makes you think that's a reliable source of information?	18
A	Eric's my friend. He never lies!	19

B	Yes he does!	20
A	Oh how do you know?	21
B	Well, if these so called facts are on Eric's website and you say he copied them but didn't give a reference, then he's lying.	22
A	How?	23
B	Because he didn't give a reference. And if anyone goes and read Eric's website, they'll think that he was the one that did all the research for those facts, which in fact he didn't. Huh? He just copied it from somewhere else and didn't give the person who did any of the work any credit at all! That's actually illegal. And he's lying because he's making people believe that he did the research.	24
A	Oh I see. Uh ... so ... has that got to do with intellectual property rights?	25
B	Yes! Exactly. Apart from breaking the law and stealing someone else's ideas, your friend Eric just isn't believable.	26
A	Why not?	27
B	Well did he give details about the research, about those facts?	28
A	Uh ... No.	29
B	Did he do any of the research himself?	30
A	No. He dropped out of school and works in 7-11.	31
B	OK ... If you compare Eric's facts with those of a researcher or professor who has been published in a top academic journal, er which one would you believe?	32
A	Well, I guess I'd be more likely to believe in the people who've had their work published or I guess have a reputation in the field.	33
B	Right.	34
A	OK OK, I see your point. Don't believe everything you read, it's important to reference and make sure your source of information is believable and reputable.	35
B	Mm hm.	36
A	Great! I guess that means I'll have to spend all night rewriting my presentation then. Thanks.	37
B	You're welcome!	38

