

12.1. RELIABLE AND UNRELIABLE SOURCES OF INFORMATION

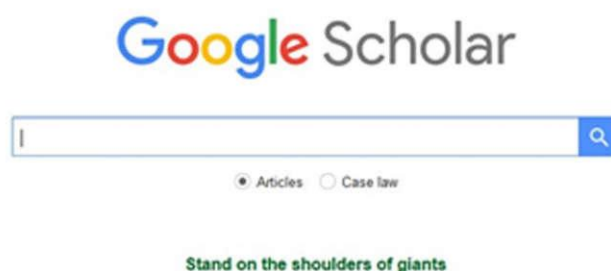
Admittedly, all of us too often use sources that are unreliable or non-academic. This primarily refers to Wikipedia, which is useful as a basic source of information or an introduction to a certain issue, but it is not reliable enough because it does not have a central instance that controls it, the authors are anonymous, data and posts are freely edited.

Therefore, claims and information that are inaccurate or, even more often, biased and unreliable are often encountered. In addition to Wikipedia, my students often quote or put links to websites that are also unreliable, because they did not read any institution or a reliable scientist or journalist and a newspaper, but simply individual sites that write "everything and anything". In writing, in published work, especially academic work, these sources should be avoided and you should always strive to rely on reliable and verified sources.

In this presentation, I will mention several reliable and trusted sources of information, and also offer a few comments and suggestions on how to use them efficiently. As an illustration, I will refer to examples that I'm familiar with, such as Wikipedia entries on a Serbian renowned scientist Nikola Tesla, and also examine reliable sources about the issue of Football hooliganism in Serbia. Of course, virtually any topics can serve as an illustration and can be researched in this way.

So, which are reliable and verified academic sources?

First and foremost, books and articles. The books can be found on [Google Books](#). Many of those can be searched through [Advanced google book search](#) option. Articles can be searched through [Google scholar](#) and [Academia.edu](#).



Unreliable sources of information: Wikipedia - The Curious Case of Nikola Tesla

One way to exemplify the shortcomings and risks of Wikipedia is to compare **various entries** about the famous scientist **Nikola Tesla**. As Wikipedia is developed through personal contributions and writing, it is unsurprising to find articles on the same topic differing significantly in different languages. As you might know, Tesla was born in a Serbian-Orthodox family in the then Habsburg Empire, at the territory of the present-day Croatia, so both Serbs and Croats claim him as their own. In addition, he spent most of his life in the USA, so he could be also considered an American as well. This is reflected in Wikipedia.

Wikipedia entry on Tesla in **English** describes him as *Serbian-American* engineer:

Nikola Tesla

Article Talk

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

For other uses, see Nikola Tesla (disambiguation).

Nikola Tesla (/ˈtɛslə/ *TESS-lə*; Serbian Cyrillic: Никола Тесла,^[2] pronounced [n̩ikola t̩ɛsla];^[a] 10 July [O.S. 28 June] 1856 – 7 January 1943) was a **Serbian-American**^{[5][6][7]} inventor, **electrical engineer**, **mechanical engineer**, and **futurist** best known for his contributions to the design of the modern **alternating current** (AC) **electricity supply system**.^[8]

The same designation is found in the **Serbian** entry of this article, but with explicit claim about Tesla being a Serb and declaring himself as such:

Nikola Tesla

Članak Razgovor Latinica ▾

S Vikipedije, slobodne enciklopedije

Za druge upotrebe pogledajte stranicu Nikola Tesla (višeznačna odrednica).

Nikola Tesla (Smiljan, 10. jul 1856 — Njujork, 7. januar 1943) bio je srpski i američki^{[1][2][3]} **pronalazač**, inženjer **elektrotehnike** i **mašinstva** i **futurista**, najpoznatiji po svom doprinosu u projektovanju modernog sistema napajanja **naizmeničnom strujom**.

Jedini boravak Nikole Tesle u Beogradu bio je od 1. — 3. juna 1892. godine.^{[27][28]} Došao je na poziv Đorđa Stanojevića u Beograd 1. juna.^[29] Sledećeg dana je primljen u audijenciju kod kralja Aleksandra Obrenovića kojom prilikom je odlikovan ordenom Svetog Save. Potom je Tesla održao čuveni pozdravni govor u današnjoj zgradi rektorata, studentima i profesorima beogradske Velike škole.


Ja sam, kao što vidite i čujete ostao Srbin i preko mora, gde se ispitivanjima bavim. To isto treba da budete i vi i da svojim znanjem i radom podižete slavu Srpstva u svetu.

— početak Teslinog govora u Velikoj školi

However, the **Croatian** entry on Wikipedia describes Tesla as a Serb from Croatia, only to complicate things further with some information about his Croatian origin and self-designation:

Nikola Tesla

Stranica [Razgovor](#)

 Ovo je glavno značenje pojma **Nikola Tesla**. Za TV seriju iz 1977. pogledajte [Nikola Tesla \(Nikola Tesla \(Smiljan, 10. srpnja 1856. – New York, 7. siječnja 1943.\)\)](#), bio je hrvatsko-američki izumitelj i inženjer srpskog podrijetla, koji je djelovao na polju elektrotehnike i strojarstva te futurist

Životopis

Nikola Tesla rođen je 9./10. srpnja 1856. u mjestu Smiljan kod Gospića. Tesla je bio srpskog^{[1][2]} ili hrvatskog podrijetla (Teslin dnevnik);^[3] njegov otac Miliutin bio je pravoslavni svećenik, a njegova majka Georgina Mandić (zvana Đuka) bila je bez naobrazbe, ali vrlo inteligentna žena.

Teze o hrvatskom porijeklu

Temeljem određenih nalaza su izronile i teze o hrvatskom podrijetlu Nikole Tesle.^[4] Prema tim materijalima, koje je našla prof. Ljubica Štefan, o porijeklu prezimena Tesla je govorio sam Tesla kad je u svom dnevniku pisao da je njegov djed taj nadimak dobio jer je "imao isturene prednje zube pa ga je narod prozvao Tesla prema alatki kojom se obrađuje drvo i otud i moje sadašnje prezime Tesla".^[4] U tim tekstovima je stajalo "Drago mi je što me i Hrvati smatraju svojim jer su moji preci hrvatski koljenovići Dreganići iz Zadra. Kao hrvatski plemići u 16. stoljeću došli su u Liku i tu ostali. U Liku su moji prepriči došli preko Novog Vinodola. Preci moje majke, Kallinići, također su hrvatski plemići iz Novog Vinodola. Moj pradjed stjecajem okolnosti morao je otići u Bosansku krajinu (turska Hrvatska) i tamo se oženio pravoslavnom djevojkom i prešao na pravoslavlje. On je imao isturene prednje zube pa ga je narod prozvao Tesla prema alatki kojom se obrađuje drvo i otud i moje sadašnje prezime Tesla. To je zapravo nadimak. Moj djed je bio časnik u ličkoj regimenti, a moj otac pravoslavni prota".^{[4][3]}



Točnost podataka u ovom članku je osporena. (Rasprava)

Ne postavljajte ovaj prediožak ako niste pokušali ispraviti sporne dijelove teksta i napisati obrazloženje na stranici za razgovor!

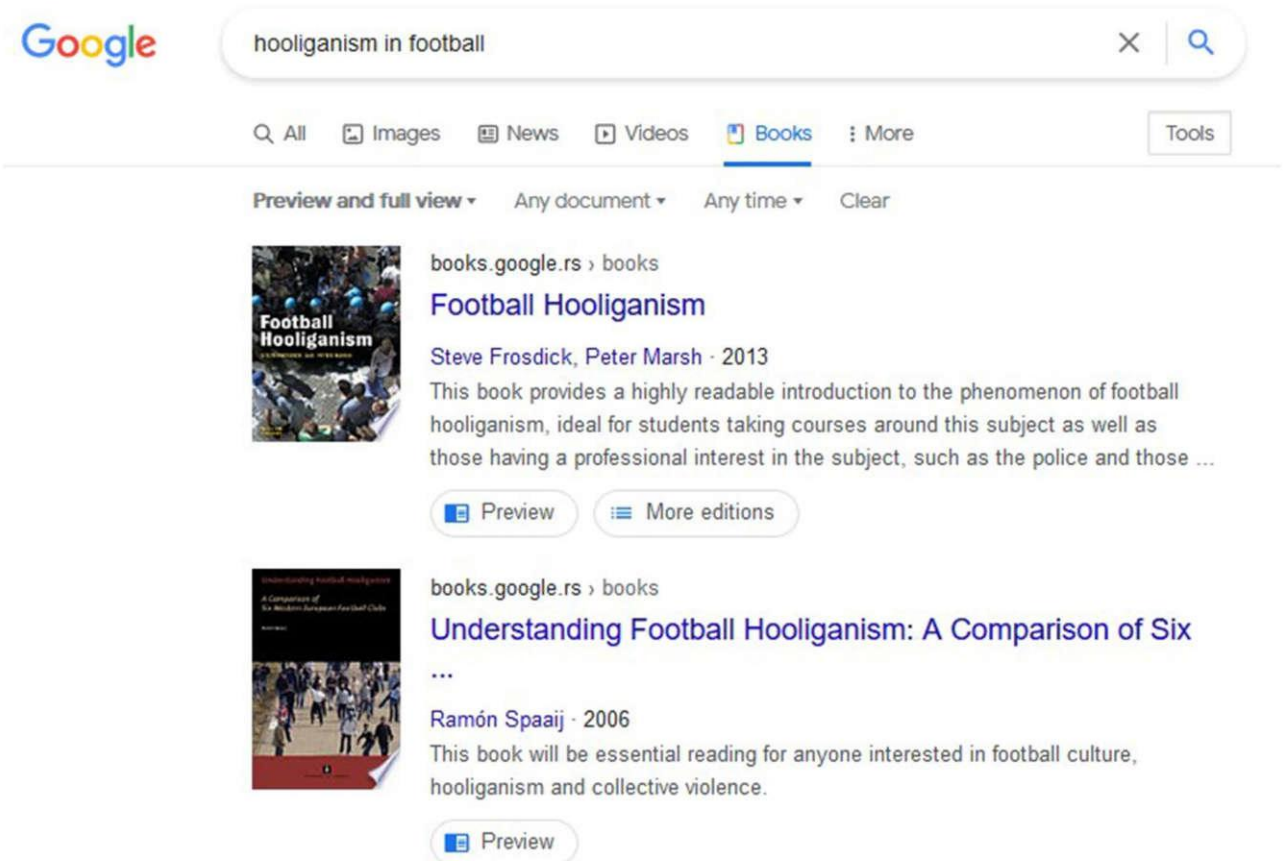
No svakako tezu o hrvatskom porijeklu podržava i Talijanska enciklopedija znanosti, književnosti i umjetnosti "Treccani";^[5] to je talijansko istraživanje i nove povijesno-znanstvene spoznaje Republika Italija nagradila zlatnom medaljom za kulturu i umjetnost 1998.^[6]

Moreover, as Wikipedia is updated frequently, it is possible that this content changes rather frequently. All this makes it an excellent, useful tool for initial information, for introducing yourself into a topic for the first time. But, bear in mind that this is not a proper academic source, and that it is best to double-check and additionally verify information you found on Wikipedia before using it as a source, and to search the original source of the information provided there.

If you enter the search term *hooliganism in football* into **Google Books**, you get a huge number of hits.

Practical tip *Let the search engine give you results by relevance.*

Pay attention to books that say *Preview*, because they can be browsed and read to some extent. In the continuation of this presentation, we will talk and test some good ways to get verified and reliable information. Also, in these books you can search for certain phrases and so, even though you do not have access to the whole book, identify where everything is mentioned in a term that is relevant to your topic. Here are some slides to illustrate this:



The screenshot shows a Google search for "hooliganism in football" on the Google Books platform. The search bar contains the text "hooliganism in football". Below the search bar, there are navigation options: "All", "Images", "News", "Videos", "Books" (which is selected), and "More". There is also a "Tools" button on the right. Below the navigation, there are filters: "Preview and full view", "Any document", "Any time", and "Clear".

The first result is for the book "Football Hooliganism" by Steve Frosdick and Peter Marsh, published in 2013. The book cover shows a group of people, some of whom appear to be hooligans. The description states: "This book provides a highly readable introduction to the phenomenon of football hooliganism, ideal for students taking courses around this subject as well as those having a professional interest in the subject, such as the police and those ...". There are buttons for "Preview" and "More editions".

The second result is for the book "Understanding Football Hooliganism: A Comparison of Six ..." by Ramón Spaaij, published in 2006. The book cover shows a group of people, some of whom appear to be hooligans. The description states: "This book will be essential reading for anyone interested in football culture, hooliganism and collective violence." There is a button for "Preview".

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