

LECTURE 5

MINING WEB

CONTENT II

LEK HSIANG HUI

OUTLINE

Document Object Model (DOM)

XPath

CSS Selectors

Extracting Content using HTML Parser

sws.comp.nus.edu.sg/ x +
https://sws.comp.nus.edu.sg

NUS SOC Summer Workshop 2021

HOME STRUCTURE CLUSTERS APPLICATION PAST PROJECTS MEDIA ROOM

INTRODUCTION

The National University of Singapore (NUS) School of Computing (SOC) Summer Workshop 2021 is the third edition of the Summer Workshop organized by NUS, School of Computing.

This year's workshop will mark the return of the popular programme as 2020's workshop was cancelled amid the COVID-19 pandemic. It will be held online entirely in view of the on-going global pandemic.

Our highly-interactive programme aims to integrate theory into practice. In addition to providing a deep focus in high-demand computing fields (e.g. Analytics, Artificial Intelligence, FinTech, Media and IoT), it highlights the real-life relevance of these specialised knowledge through hands-on application.

Students gain valuable industry insights and knowledge through lectures and have opportunities to hone and flex their computing skills through projects.

You may also check out the previous runs of the Summer Workshop via the [links here!](#)

[Promotional Slides](#) [Publicity Poster](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Phase 1 Details

28 April 2021

Recap: Extracting contents from HTML source

Suppose we want to extract the contents under the INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The National University of Singapore (NUS) School of Computing (SOC) Summer Workshop 2021 is the third edition of the Summer Workshop organized by NUS, School of Computing.

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[Promotional Slides](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS**

First figure out the rough position in the page using the web browser's **Inspect Element** feature

Then find it **View Source** window (because the browser might clean up the page slightly such as removing unnecessary spaces)

```
<div id="WE58213e9ec9" class="BaseDiv RNone OEWELink OESK_WELink_Default" style="z-index:9" onclick="return OE.Navigate.open(event, 'Application.htm',1)"></div>
<div id="WEff7a17cecb" class="BaseDiv RNone OEWELink OESK_WELink_Default" style="z-index:14" onclick="return OE.Navigate.open(event, 'Past20Projects.htm',1)"></div>
<div id="WEc1772a2c2d" class="BaseDiv RBoth OEWEText OESK_WEText_Default" style="z-index:1023"></div>
<div id="WEcc664a539a" class="BaseDiv RBoth OEWEText OESK_WEText_Default" style="z-index:1024">
  <div class="OESZ OESZ_DivContent OESZG_WEcc664a539a">
    <span class="ContentBox">
    </span>
  </div>
</div>
<div id="WEebd4b65a56" class="BaseDiv RBoth OEWEGalleryCarrousel1 OESK_WEGalleryCarrousel1_Sede4581" style="z-index:1022"></div>
<div id="WEdba8777f57" class="BaseDiv RBoth OEWEText OESK_WEText_Default" style="z-index:1025"></div>
<div id="WE66d407dda4" class="BaseDiv RKeepRatio OEWEImage OESK_WEImage_Default OEGo" style="z-index:1027"></div>
```

Write the regular expression:

```
<div id="WEcc664a539a".*?>
.*?<span.*?>(.*)</span>.*?</div>
```

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL `https://sws.comp.nus.edu.sg`. The page has an orange header with the word "INTRODUCTION" in red. Below the header, there is a blue overlay with a white text box containing a regular expression. The page content includes a paragraph about FinTech, Media and IoT, and a section for students to gain industry insights. There are also two icons: a presentation slide icon labeled "Promotional Slides" and a poster icon labeled "Publicity Poster". The footer has the word "ANNOUNCEMENTS" in red. The browser's developer tools are open at the bottom, showing the HTML structure and CSS styles. The HTML structure shows a `<div id="WEcc664a539a">` element containing a `` element. The CSS styles show the `display: inline-block;` property for the `span` element.

Problem is that if the web developer were to write the HTML as:

```
<div ... id="WEcc664a539a".*?>
.*?<span.*?> (.*)</span>.*?</div>
```

If there are additional attributes before `id`, the scraper will break

The screenshot shows a web browser with the URL `https://sws.comp.nus.edu.sg`. The page has a header with the word "INTRODUCTION" and a footer with "ANNOUNCEMENTS**". A large blue overlay is positioned in the center of the page, containing the text "Problem is that if the web developer were to write the HTML as:" followed by a code snippet: `<div ... id="WEcc664a539a".*?>.*?<span.*?> (.*).*?</div>`. A red arrow points from the code snippet to the HTML structure in the browser's developer tools. The developer tools show a list of HTML elements, with the selected element being a `span` with class `ContentBox` inside a `div` with id `WEcc664a539a`. The right sidebar shows the "Layout" tab with a box model diagram.

```
import re
import requests
```

```
page = requests.get("https://sw
```

The page will look exactly same as before but this scraper will no longer work!

```
html3 = page.content.decode("utf-8")
```

```
#. by default does not match for newline characters
```

```
#re.DOTALL - will make . match even for newline
```

```
pattern3 = '<div
    id="WEcc664a539a".*?>.*?<span.*?>(.*?)</span>.*?</div>'
results = re.search(pattern3, html3, re.DOTALL)
```

```
extracted_text = results.group(1)
```

```
#remove some html
```

```
#\\1 - refers to group 1
```

```
extracted_text = re.sub("<br />", "\\n", extracted_text)
```

```
extracted_text = re.sub("&nbsp;", " ", extracted_text)
```

```
extracted_text = re.sub("<.*?>(.*?)</.*?>", "\\1",
    extracted_text)
```

FLAW OF STRING-BASED APPROACH OF WEB SCRAPING

Too easily affected by the way how the HTML is written

- Minor changes (e.g. newlines, spaces, capitalization, shifting of attributes ordering, etc) might break the scraper
- Even when the page is still a totally valid page and might look exactly the same

RECAP: TECHNIQUES FOR WEB SCRAPING

The following are some of the techniques for doing web scraping:

- Extracting content from HTML source
- **Extracting content using a HTML parser**
- Web Scraping using APIs
- Scraping using an actual browser/headless browser

We will look at another approach which is more robust against this situation

DOCUMENT OBJECT MODEL (DOM)

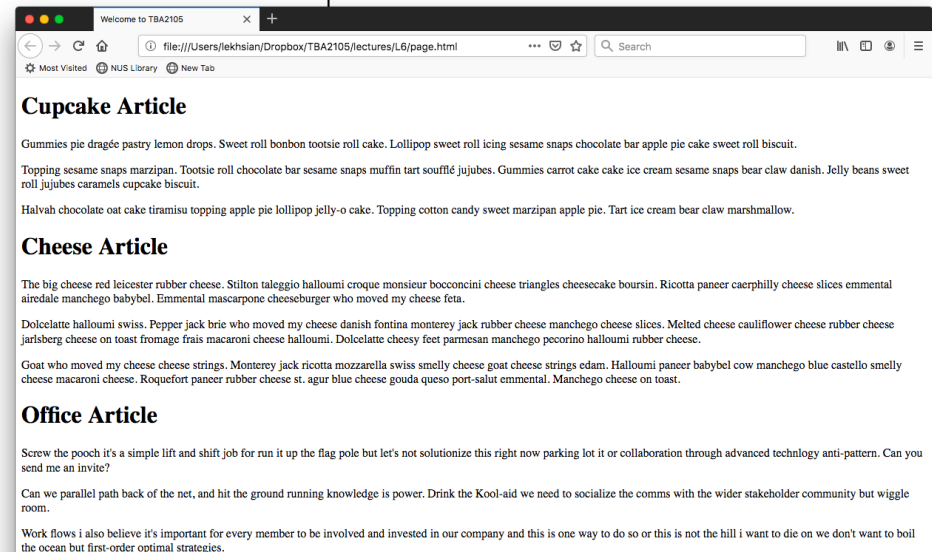


```

<html>
  <head>
    <meta charset="UTF-8" />
    <meta name="description" content="..." />
    <meta http-equiv="X-UA-Compatible" content="ie=edge" />
    <title>Welcome to SWS3023</title>
  </head>
  <body>
    <div class="article" id="a0042">
      <h1>Cupcake Article</h1>
      <div class="header">...</div>
      <p>...</p>
      <p>...</p>
    </div>
    <div class="article" id="a0043">
      <h1>Cheese Article</h1>
      <div class="header">...</div>
      <p>...</p>
      <p>...</p>
    </div>
    <div class="article special" id="b0051">
      <h1>Office Article</h1>
      <div class="snippet">...</div>
      <p>...</p>
      <p>...</p>
    </div>
  </body>
</html>

```

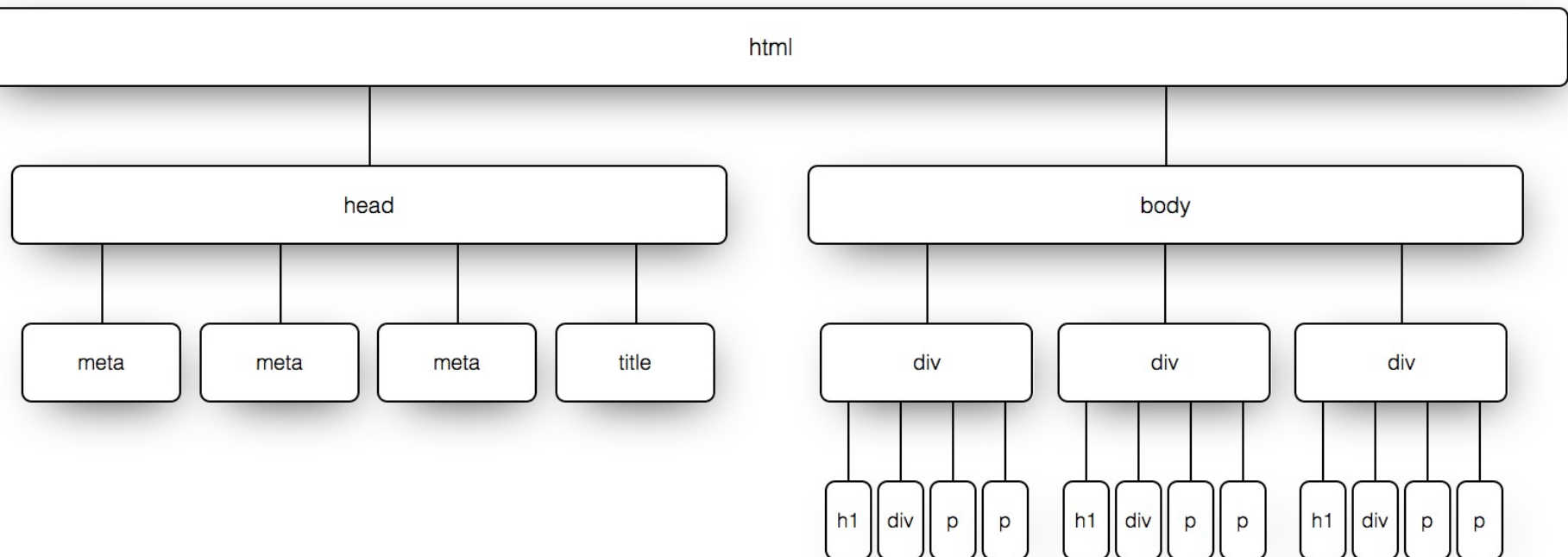
Recall: HTML defines
the content and the
layout of the page



page.html

DOCUMENT OBJECT MODEL (DOM)

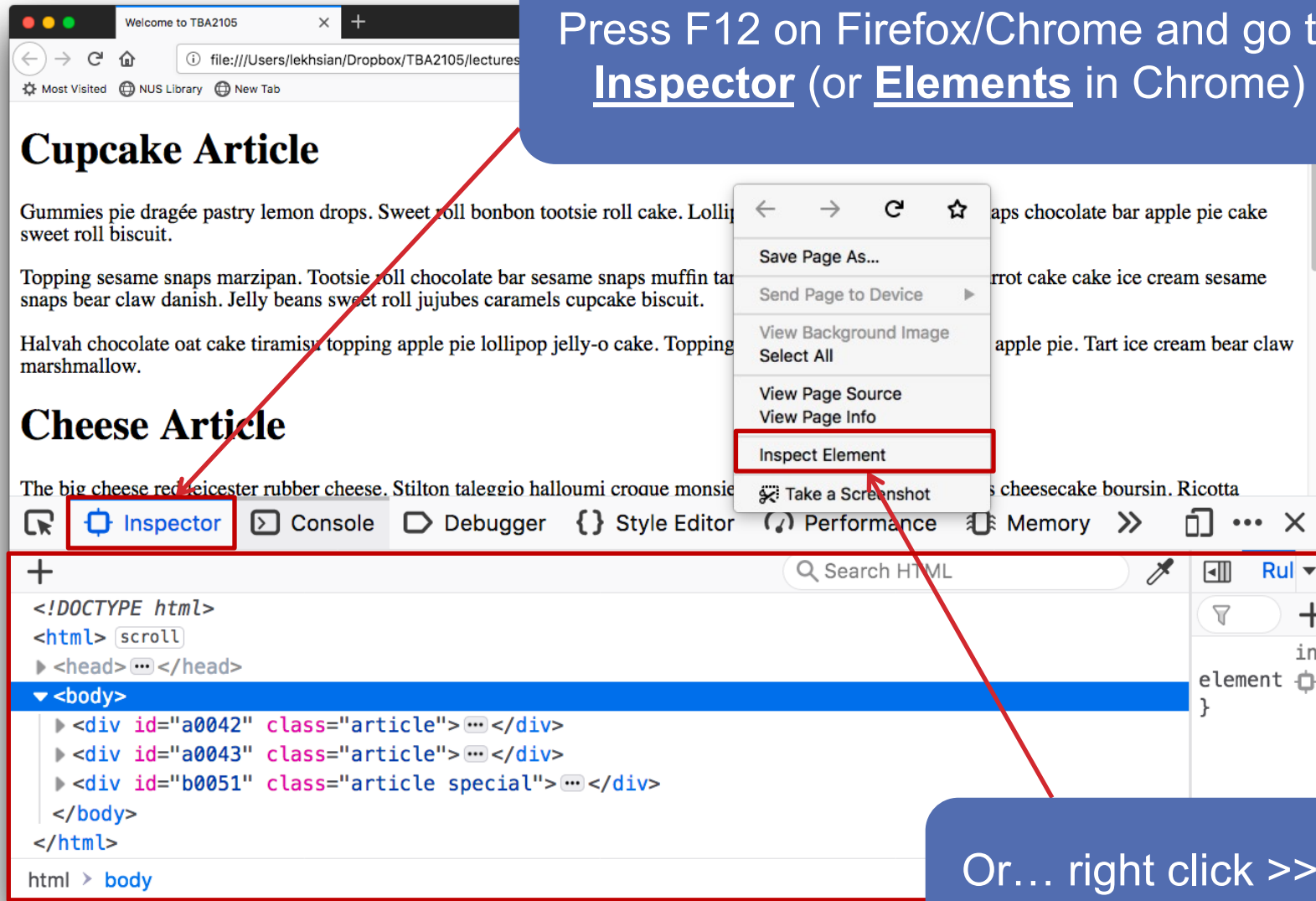
When the browser loads a page, it creates a **DOM** of the page and use it to render the page



DOM tree of page.html

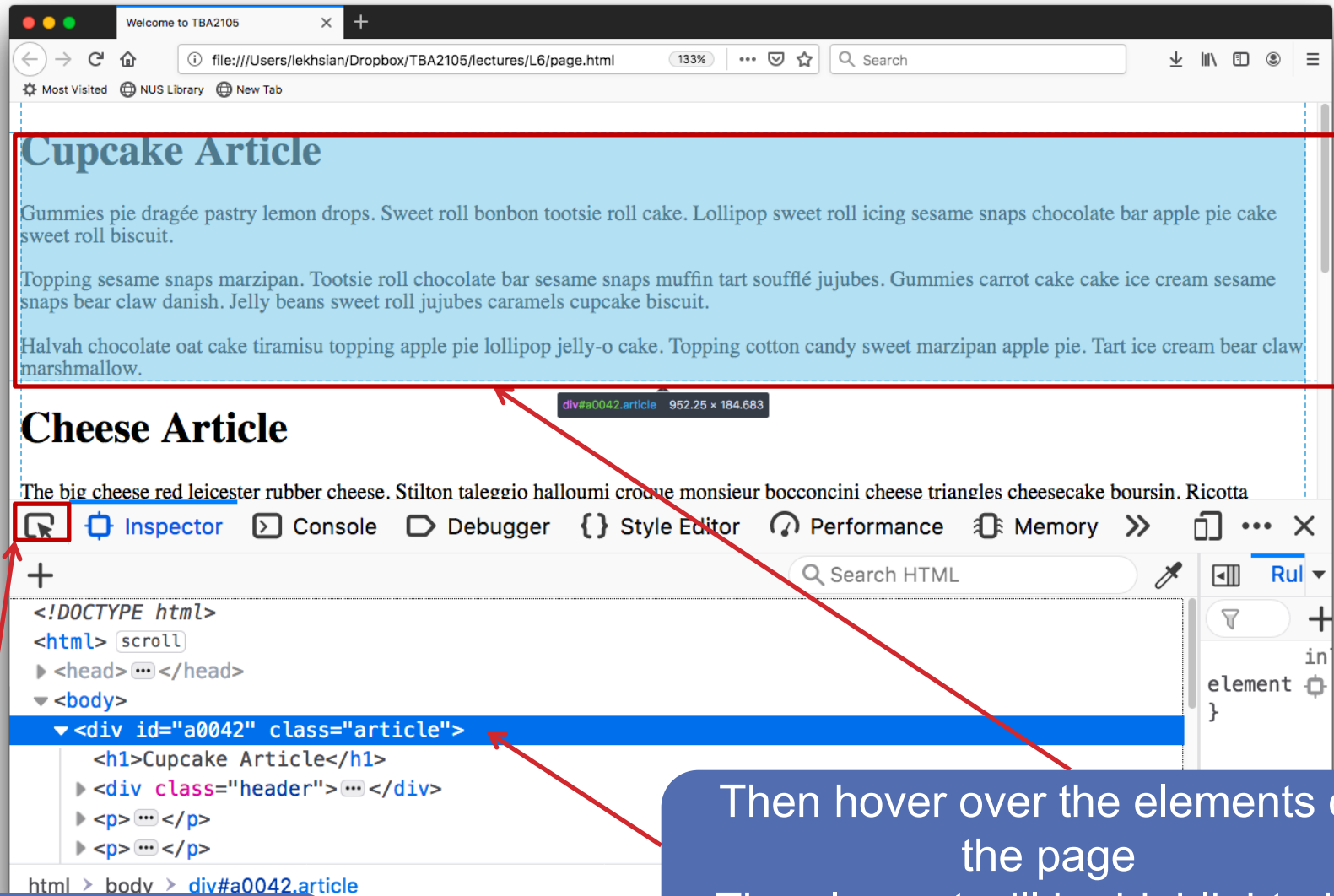
VIEWING THE DOM ON WEB BROWSER

Press F12 on Firefox/Chrome and go to the Inspector (or Elements in Chrome) tab



Or... right click >>
Inspect Element

VIEWING THE DOM ON WEB BROWSER



First Choose the
Pick Element Icon

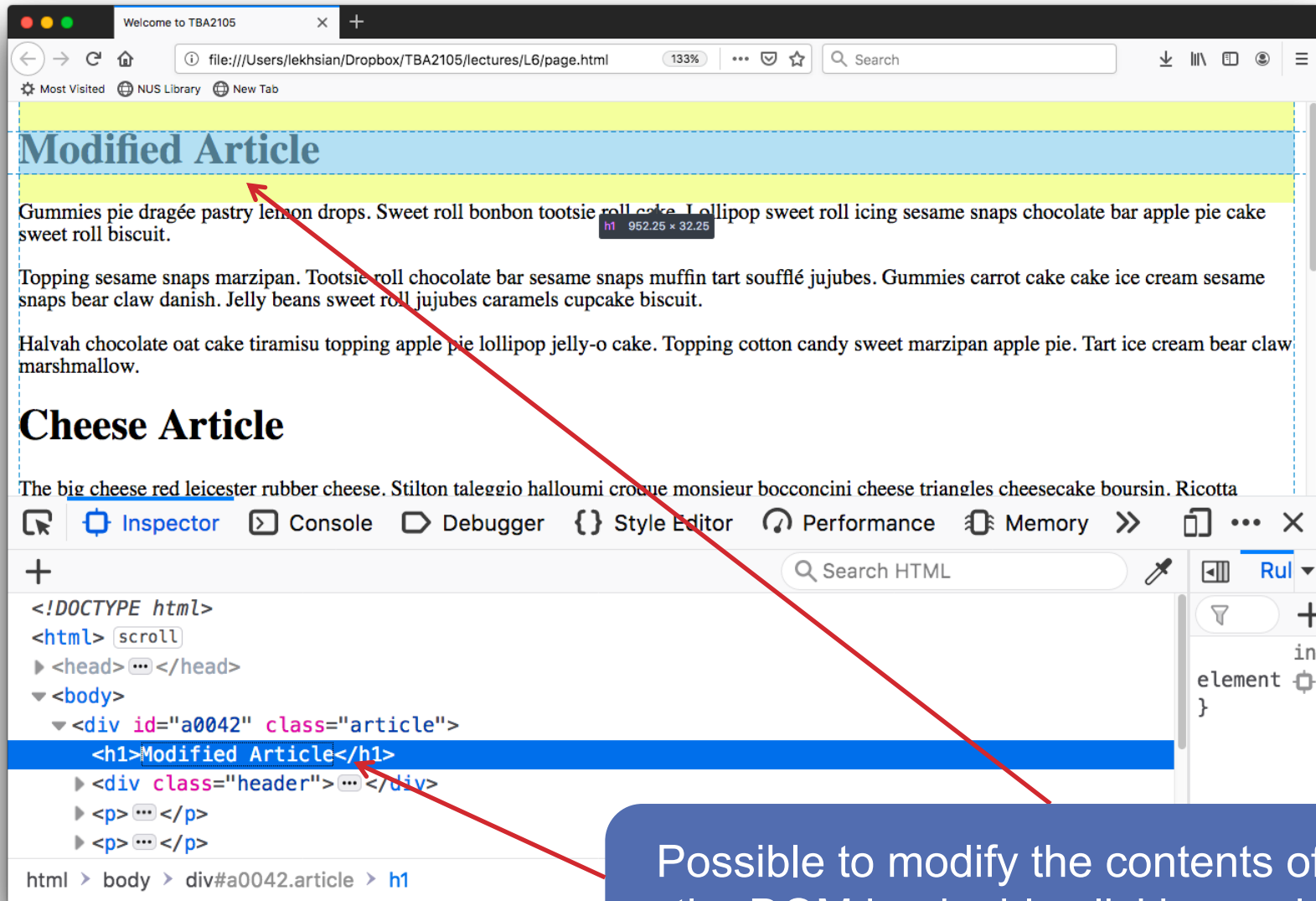
Then hover over the elements on
the page
The element will be highlighted at
the Inspector tab

VIEWING THE DOM ON WEB BROWSER



Alternatively could just select an element at the Inspector tab, the selected element will be highlighted on the page

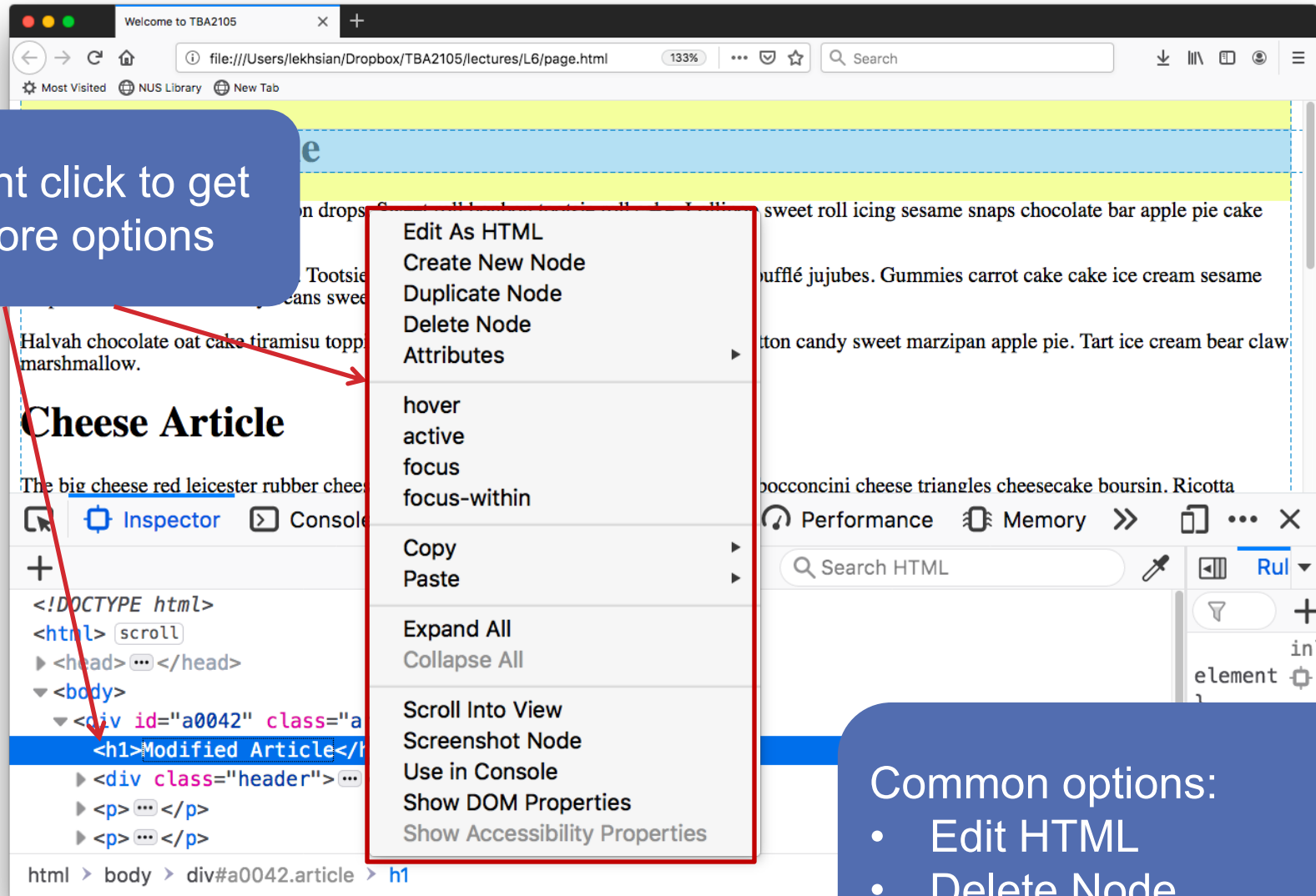
MODIFYING THE DOM ON WEB BROWSER



Possible to modify the contents of the DOM by double clicking and editing

MODIFYING THE DOM ON WEB BROWSER

Right click to get more options



Common options:

- Edit HTML
- Delete Node
- Copy (to be elaborated later)

NAVIGATING THE DOM TREE

Possible to navigate the DOM programmatically:

- e.g. extract content, add/remove elements, etc

2 ways to navigate the DOM tree

- Using **XPath**
- Using **CSS Selectors**

XPATH

Document
Object Model
(DOM)

XPath

CSS
Selectors

Extracting
Content using
HTML Parser

XPATH

XPath is a way to navigate through elements and attributes in an **eXtensible Markup Language (XML)** document

- HTML is very similar to a XML document
- Thus, XPath can be used to navigate through HTML documents also

XPATH EXPRESSIONS

XPath Expression	Description
/html	Select the html node
/html/head	Select the head node (notice the navigation path)
/html/body/div	Select all the div <u>directly</u> under body node
/html/body/div[1]	Select the <u>first</u> div <u>directly</u> under body node
//div	Select all div in the document (regardless of its ancestor)
//div[1]	Select <u>all the first</u> div in the document (originating from an ancestor). Note that this can select <u>multiple div</u>
//div[last()]	Select <u>all the last</u> div in the document (originating from an ancestor). Note that this can select <u>multiple div</u>
//body/div	Select all the div nodes that is a direct child of the body node
//body//div	Select all the div nodes that is a descendent of the body node
//body/*	Select all the nodes under the body node (* is a wildcard)

TRYING XPATH ON THE BROWSER

1. Select the Console tab

3. Result of the node selection is return as an array (hovering over a value will highlight the element on the page)

2. Type `$x (XPATH_EXPRESSION)` (this is effectively JavaScript)

Modified Article

Gummies pie dragée pastry lemon drops. Sweet roll bonbon tootsie roll cake. Lollipop sweet roll icing sesame snaps chocolate bar apple pie cake sweet roll biscuit.

Topping sesame snaps marzipan. Tootsie roll chocolate bar sesame snaps muffin tart soufflé jujubes. Gummies carrot cake cake ice cream sesame snaps bear claw danish. Jelly beans sweet roll jujubes caramels cupcake biscuit.

Halvah chocolate oat cake tiramisu topping apple pie lollipop marshmallow.

Choose Article

```
>> $x('/html')
< ▶ Array [ html ]
>> $x('/html/head')
< ▶ Array [ head ]
>> $x('/html/body')
< ▶ Array [ body ]
>>
```

XPATH EXPRESSIONS

Exercise: Try out these expression using the browser Console

XPath Expression	Description
/html	Select the html node
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//body/div	Select all the div nodes that is a direct child of the body node
//body//div	Select all the div nodes that is a descendent of the body node
//body//*	Select all the nodes under the body node (* is a wildcard)

XPATH EXPRESSIONS

XPath Expression	Description
<code>//div[@id]</code>	Select all div node with id attribute
<code>//div[@class='article']</code>	Select all div node with class attribute with the value article (must be exact match , i.e. even with extra spaces will not work)
<code>//*[@class='article']</code>	Select any node with class attribute with the value article
<code>//div[starts-with(@id, 'a004')]</code>	Select all div node with id attribute having value starting with a004
<code>//div[contains(@id, '00')]</code>	Select all div node with id attribute having value containing 00
<code>//*[contains(@class, 'article')]/..</code>	Select parent node of any node with class attribute having value containing article
<code>//div //p</code>	Select all div and p nodes

CASE SENSITIVITY

XPath Expression	Case Sensitive?
<code>//div[@id]</code> <code>//DIV[@id]</code> <code>//div[@ID]</code> <code>//DiV[@ID]</code>	All these are equivalent. Both the node name and the attribute names are not case sensitive
<code>//div[@class='article']</code> <code>//div[@class='Article']</code>	These are not equivalent. The attribute value is case sensitive Same principle applies to <code>starts-with()</code> and <code>contains()</code>

XPATH REFERENCES

https://www.w3schools.com/xml/xpath_syntax.asp

CSS SELECTORS

Document
Object Model
(DOM)

XPath

CSS
Selectors

Extracting
Content using
HTML Parser

CSS SELECTORS

CSS selectors is another way to select elements in HTML

- Used mainly for selecting HTML elements in order to apply styling into the webpage
- But could also be used for referencing to elements in JavaScript or for doing web scraping
- More commonly used compared to XPath
- Tends to be shorter compared to XPath

CSS SELECTORS

CSS selectors is another way to select elements in HTML

- ...
- For the purpose of web scraping, these are the most useful type of selectors
 - **Element** selector
 - **Class** selector
 - **Id** selector
 - **Attribute** selector
 - **Pseudo-Classes** selector
 - **Relationship** selector

ELEMENT, CLASS, ID SELECTOR

Element selector used to select all elements with a certain type of tag

Id selector used to select the element with a certain id value

- HTML usually use `id` to uniquely identify an element

Class selector used to select the element with a certain class attribute value

- HTML elements usually use `class` to denote the style of the element

TRYING CSS SELECTORS

To use css selector, type
\$\$ (CSS_SELECTOR)

Element selector:

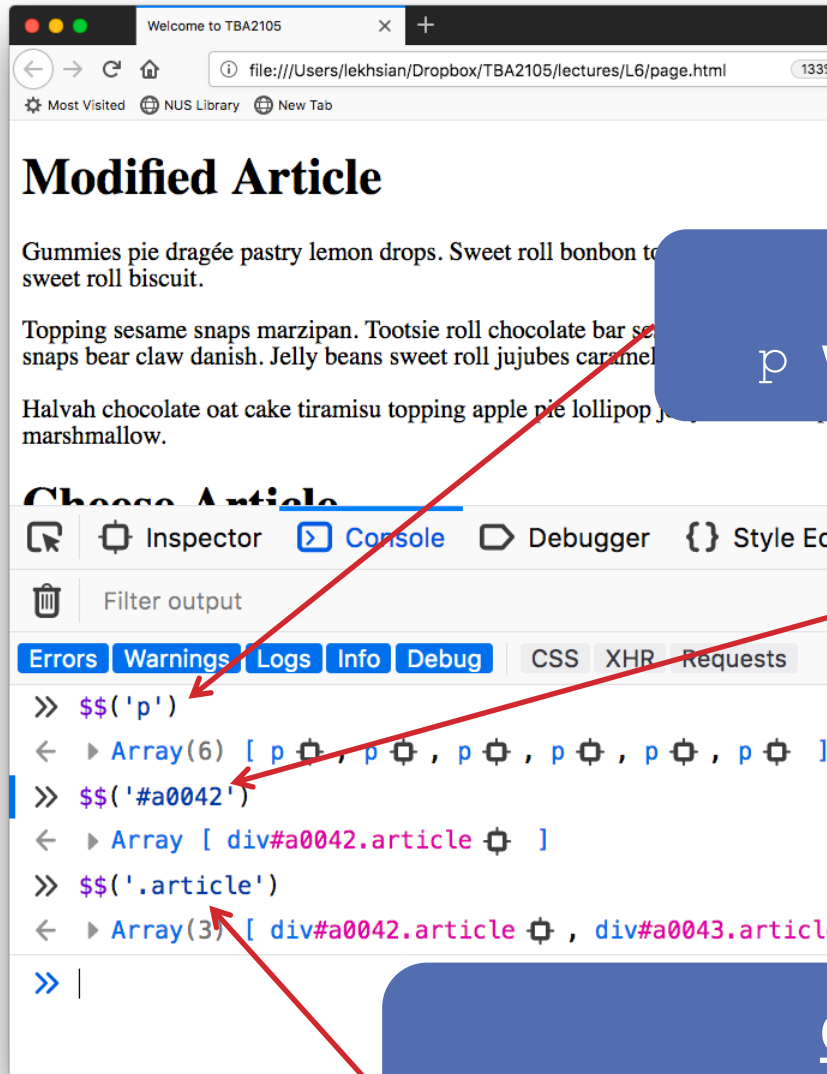
p will select all paragraph elements

Id selector:

#a0042 will select the element
with id = a0042

Class selector:

.article will select the elements with class
containing article class



CSS SELECTORS

Possible to multiple multiple type of selectors

CSS Selector	Description
<code>div#a0042</code>	This selects the div node with id = a0042
<code>div.article</code>	This selects all the div nodes with class <u>containing article</u> (need not be an exact match, the element can have multiple class values separated by spaces)
<code>.article#a0042</code>	This selects all nodes with class <u>containing article</u> and with id = a0042
<code>.article.special</code>	This selects all nodes with class containing both article and special (can be any ordering but be careful that <u>no spaces between the 2 classes</u>)
<code>div,p</code> <code>div , p</code> <code>div, p</code>	This selects all the div and p nodes

ATTRIBUTE SELECTORS

CSS Selector	Description
<code>meta[name]</code>	This selects the meta node with a name attribute
<code>meta[name='description']</code>	This selects the meta node with a name attribute with the value description (exact match)
<code>meta[content~='page']</code>	This selects the meta node with a content attribute containing a page as a <u>whole word match</u> . Would not match somepage.
<code>meta[content*='learn']</code>	This selects the meta node with a content attribute containing learn . Matches as long as there is a substring of learn.
<code>[class = 'article']</code> <code>*[class = 'article']</code>	This selects all node with class attribute that is article (exact match)
<code>[id ^= 'a00']</code>	This selects all node with id attribute that <u>starts with</u> a00
<code>[id \$= '51']</code>	This selects all node with id attribute that <u>ends with</u> a00

PSEUDO-CLASSES SELECTORS

CSS Selector	Description
<code>div:first-child</code>	This selects all div nodes that is the <u>1st child of its parent</u>
<code>p:last-child</code>	This selects all p nodes that is the <u>last child of its parent</u>
<code>p:nth-child(3)</code>	This selects all p nodes that is the <u>3rd node of its parent</u>

RELATIONSHIP SELECTORS

CSS Selector	Description
<code>body div</code>	This selects all div nodes that are <u>descendents</u> of body
<code>body > div</code>	This selects all div nodes that are <u>direct child</u> of body
<code>h1 + *</code>	This selects all nodes that is a <u>next sibling</u> of h1
<code>.article .snippet</code>	This will find all nodes having class containing article , and select all <u>descendent</u> nodes having class containing snippet . Notice that there is a <u>space separating the 2 classes</u>

Can mix with the other
selectors discussed before

CASE SENSITIVITY

CSS Selector	Case Sensitive?
DIV Div DiV	These are equivalent. Tag names are not case sensitive
.article .Article	These are not equivalent. Classes are case sensitive
#a0042 #A0042	Likewise, these are not equivalent. Ids are case sensitive
meta[name] meta[Name]	These are equivalent. The attribute names are not case sensitive
meta[name='description'] meta[name='Description']	These are not equivalent. Attribute values are case sensitive (as principles as class and id)

CSS SELECTOR REFERENCES

https://www.w3schools.com/cssref/css_selectors.asp

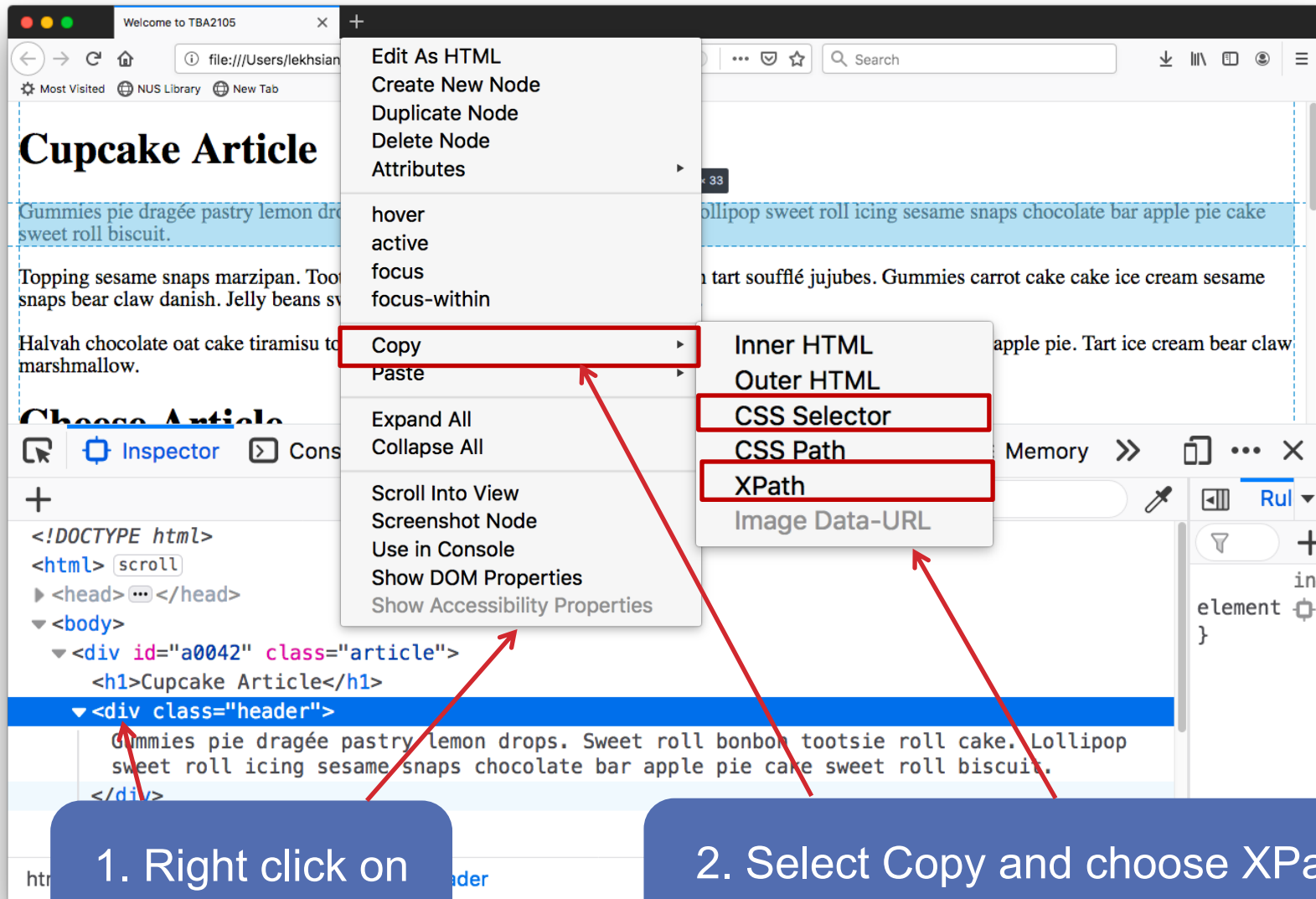
XPath vs CSS Selectors:

<https://johnresig.com/blog/xpath-css-selectors/>

Not confident of writing your own XPath/CSS Selectors?

- The browser also allows you to copy the XPath/CSS Selector expressions

COPY XPATH/CSS SELECTOR

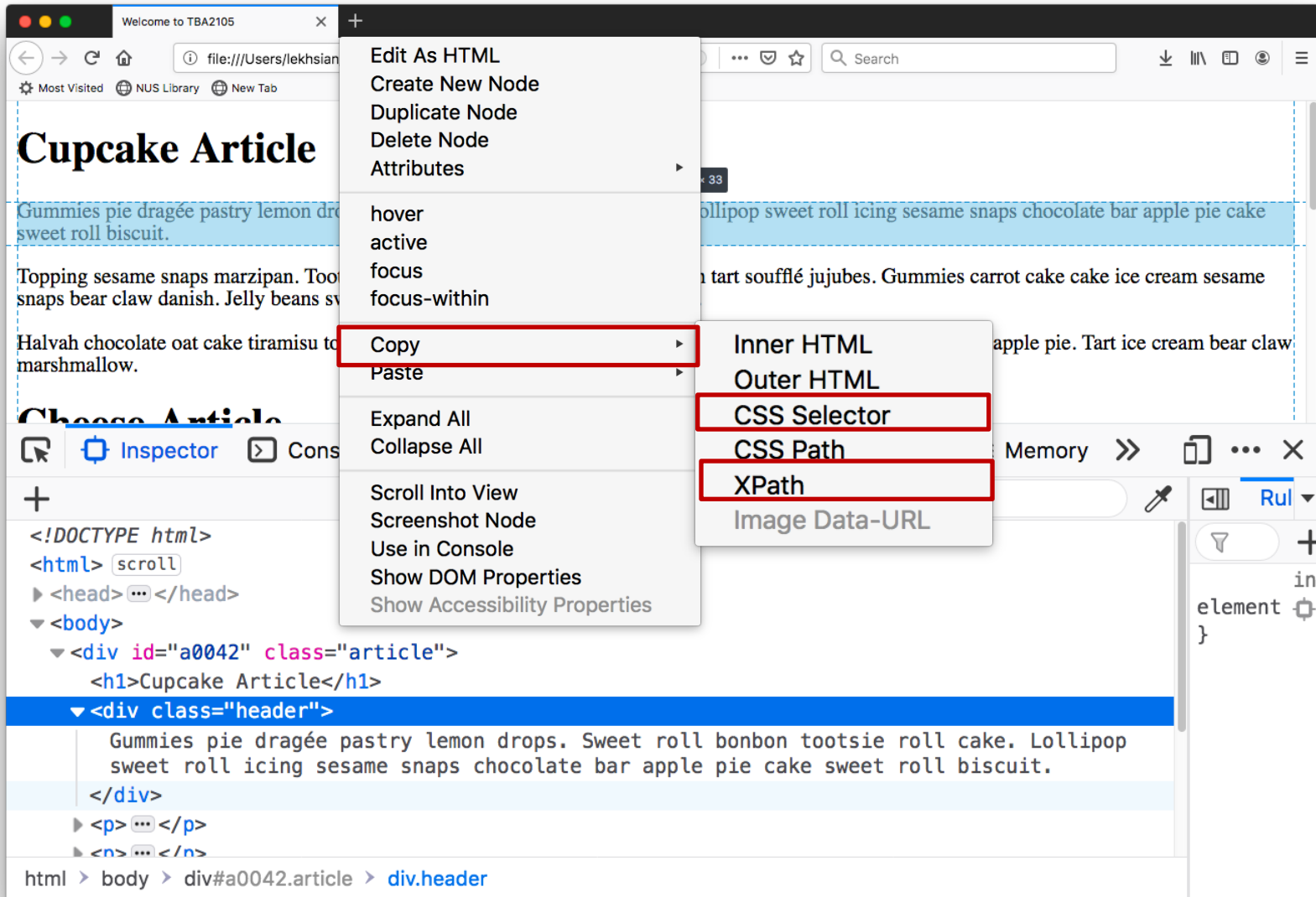


1. Right click on
an element

2. Select Copy and choose XPath or
CSS Selector (or Selector for chrome)

COPY XPA

Note that these expressions tend to be very long and overly specific (still better to write manually)



EXTRACTING CONTENT USING HTML PARSER



Document
Object Model
(DOM)

XPath

CSS
Selectors

Extracting
Content using
HTML Parser

HTML PARSING

Different programming platform has its own library for doing **HTML parsing**

- After parsing, we are able to select the HTML elements using XPath and/or CSS selectors
- Can use the **lxml** (for XPath) and **BeautifulSoup** packages

Idea:

- Parse the HTML document
- Use XPath/CSS Selector to select the element(s)
- Extract the value (attribute/text/html) of the element(s)

HANDS-ON: WEB SCRAPING

Download and access:
[Webscrapping using HTML parsing.ipynb](#)

```
Jupyter Web scraping using HTML parsing (autosaved) Logout
```

File Edit View Insert Cell Kernel Widgets Help Trusted Python 3 ○

Save + Undo Copy Paste Up Down Run Stop Refresh Next Markdown ▾ Keyboard Shortcuts

```
In [1]: from lxml import html\nimport requests\n\ndescription = requests.get("https://www.comp.nus.edu.sg/~lekhsian/sws3023/page.html").content\n\nOut[1]: b'<!DOCTYPE html>\n<html>\n  <head>\n    <meta charset="UTF-8" /\n      <meta name="description"\n        content="This is a dummy page for learning selectors"/\n      <meta http-equiv="X-UA-Compatible" content="ie=edge" /\n      <title>Welcome to TBA2105</title>\n    </head>\n    <body>\n      <p>this is a paragraph outside any div</p>\n      <div class="article" id="a0042">\n        <h1>Cupcake Article</h1>\n        <div class="header">\n          Gummies pi e drag\xc3\xa9e pastry lemon drops. Sweet roll bonbon tootsie roll cake. Lollipop sweet roll icing sesame snaps chocolate bar apple pie cake sweet roll biscuit.\n        </div>\n        <div>this is a third level div</div>\n        <p>\n          Topping sesame snaps marzipan. Tootsie roll chocolate bar sesame snaps muffin tart souffl\xc3\xa9 jujubes. Gummies carrot cake ice cream sesame snaps bear claw danish. Jelly beans sweet roll jujubes caramels cupcake biscuit.\n        </p>\n        <p>\n          Halva h chocolate oat cake tiramisu topping apple pie lollipop jelly-o cake. Topping cotton candy sweet marzipan apple pie. Tart ice cream bear claw marshmallow.\n        </p>\n        <div class="article" id="a0043">\n          <h1>Cheese Article</h1>\n          <div class="header">\n            The big cheese red leicester rubber cheese. Stilton taleggio halloumi croque monsieur bocconcini cheese triangles cheesecake boursin. Ricotta
```

SUMMARY

Document Object Model (DOM)

Navigating the DOM tree

- XPath and CSS Selectors

Extracting Content using HTML Parser

- lxml & BeautifulSoup packages

WHAT'S NEXT?

Mining Web Content III