

Friday Project #3 due October 4 Evaluating Websites

For this project, choose either Willa Cather or Ernest Hemingway as your topic. Both are American authors active during the 20th century.

1. You will be working with the American National Biography (ref CT213.A68 1999). However, before you look at the ANB, gather some background information on the Oxford University Press, the publisher of the ANB. When was it founded? Where is it located? What is its mission? (Hint – you must go beyond Wikipedia)
2. Now, gather information on the ANB project. When was it started? Why? How was it compiled? (Hint – go to the ANB website; there is information about the content, and the forward and preface from the print version are freely available online. You will ultimately be using the paper copy – we do not have an online subscription.)
3. Why would information on the press and the project be important to know?
4. Now, in paper, look up the essay on either Cather or Hemingway (and just for kicks, check the ANB entry on Edith Wharton!). Get a general sense of your author's life, especially significant events and important works. Why would this reference tool be a good place to begin your research?
5. Examine 3 websites that provide biographical information on your author:

Wikipedia

Academic website: _____

Other: _____

6. What does the appearance of each of the web pages suggest about content?

7. Is the information accurate and comprehensive, using the ANB as a “gold standard”?

8. How can you check on the credentials of each website’s contributors?

9. What is the emphasis of each website: life events or writing?

10. Finally, what are the strengths/advantages of using each of your 4 sources? Weaknesses/limitations? When would it be appropriate to use each source?