

Library Project #3 due Monday February 24, 2020
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? (REQUIREMENT: 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 foreword 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 *ANB* essay on either Cather or Hemingway. 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? Finally, who wrote the *ANB* entry on Edith Wharton?
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 ONE** of your 4 sources? Weaknesses/limitations? When would it be appropriate to use each source? (Reminder: 4 x 3 = 12)