

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 20<sup>th</sup> 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)