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The Scholarly Publishing Scene-Sci-Tech Book Publishing Days

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The Scholarly Publishing Scene —  
Sci-Tech Book Publishing Days

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It was half-a-dozen years ago, give or take a year or two. A small group of us gray-hair...
are changing in collection development. I suspect that the same is true for other areas. For my collection development course, I ask students to read articles on “eBooks,” “publishing, “print-on-demand,” and “electronic publishing” in Wikipedia. I didn’t find any scholarly articles that were current enough and offered broad enough coverage of these topics. I ask students for feedback on using Wikipedia for assigned readings. Some are surprised after the negative comments from other professors. While the quality of the articles varies, I tell students that they are more current, offer multiple perspectives, and give links to more scholarly resources. I conclude by saying that they should be savvy enough information seekers to overcome any of the weaknesses traditionally assigned to Wikipedia.

To conclude, I would suggest to libraries that they give up on steering students away from Google, Wikipedia, and similar online resources. Instead, they should show them how to use these resources as entry points into the formal scholarly communication network. One of my students pointed out a few weeks ago that she uses Wikipedia to get an overview of legal topics before reading the specialized articles that most often assume this basic understanding. Instead of losing the battle against using these resources, librarians should co-opt them by showing what they do and don’t do well and how they can be exceptionally useful at the start of the information gathering process.

Random Ramblings from page 36

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The Scholarly Publishing Scene from page 35

I’m reminded these days of the time years ago when a boss of mine passed on the criticism from on high that I “loved the books [my division was publishing] too much.” The criticism lacked nuance, but I didn’t push back against it. The reason was that I suspect I’m like a lot of other people in sci-tech book publishing. We do love the books too much. We still believe they have a useful place in the world, and maybe that’s why we keeping plugging away at them.

Booklover from page 39

two races is perfectly described in this 20-page short story. Nancy’s stream of consciousness (a style Faulkner used in his writing), the dialogue between the children, parents, and other laborers in the home, and the simple focus on fear lead us into the emotional and Gothic world of a society that is very reticent (or not) to come to terms with its fate.

“...When yawl go home, I gone,’ Nancy said. She talked quieter now, and her face looked quiet, like her hands. ‘Anyway, I got my coffin money saved up with Mr. Lovelady.’ Mr. Lovelady was a short, dirty man who collected the Negro insurance, coming around to the cabins or the kitchens every Saturday morning, to collect fifteen cents... We went up out of the ditch. We could still see Nancy’s house and the open door, but we couldn’t see Nancy now, sitting before the fire with the door open, because she was tired. ‘I just done got tired,’ she said. ‘I just a (n-word). It ain’t no fault of mine.’”

And with that we might understand why Flannery O’Connor, stated that “the presence alone of Faulkner in our midst makes a great difference in what the writer can and cannot permit himself to do. Nobody wants his mule and wagon stalled on the same track the Dixie Limited is roaring down.”

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