Franks – 2nd Cat 1 and 2 Assignment Draft

Twitter for Research in the Disciplines, Annotated Bibliography

The goals of this project include locating, identifying, analyzing, and integrating sources; identifying and engaging trends in disciplines; and developing a research-specific twitter account to generate a running playlist of trends, developments, and resources in a field. This project also offers practice with database and internet search terms (and their differences), as well as with following information flows. CNN, for example, televises a lot of content generated by Fortune writers; they’re owned by the same company, and twitter shows these connections.

The first part of the project asks you to follow a common set of twitter accounts to analyze organizations/periodicals and the content they distribute. The second part asks you to focus your own twitter research account to follow 10 organizations/periodicals in a field of your choice. The third part asks you to develop a question or identify a problem in your field and write an annotated bibliography for that question or problem.

Step 1: The first step is to create a research-specific twitter account. This is crucial – you don’t want your tweets for research mixed in with your tweets from Katy Perry. If you use twitter already, you probably don’t have your account linked to your ECU email, so that’s a good bet.

Step 2: Follow these accounts:

@FortuneMagazine

@CrainsChicago

@FutureofNursing

@AmJNurs

@AJEForum

@edutopia

[These accounts focus on business, nursing, and education (two on each), but any number of other accounts and disciplines could work equally well. I try to use pairs that provide interesting contrasts.]

Step 3: Describe the feed on your twitter homepage. Which accounts tweet most? Which least? What can you infer about each organization/publication’s focus and approach to issues based only on what you can see in your feed?

Step 4: Go to the twitter page of one of the organizations/publications. Make notes on how the organization characterizes itself. Does it have a particular editorial focus? Is it affiliated with other organizations (as Future of Nursing is to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation) or a print format? Who does the organization follow and why? Note the account’s following/follower ratio – this can show you important information about an organization/publication. *Fortune* for example has 1.43 million followers, but only follows 494 people, often its own writers and editors and writers for related periodicals and news outlets. Edutopia by contrast has 493k followers but follows 61k people. Explain what following a large number of people shows us about Edutopia’s purpose as a crowd-sourced organization, providing day-to-day experiences and teaching strategies from practicing teachers.

Next, go to the organization/publication’s homepage and make notes on further information you can gather, and write up a description of the organization/publication’s history and purpose in a couple of paragraphs.

[This might a good time to incorporate go-to lessons on website analysis, credibility, copyright information, and citation.]

Step 5: Tweets from these kinds of accounts give you “headlines” and links to content. Now we’ll begin to analyze the content these accounts promote. Pick one pair of accounts and look into two tweets from each; click on the links and read the content. Then compare the content between the two organizations/publications.

Step 6: Focus the accounts you are following in your research specific account to one discipline (nursing, business, education, etc.) by deleting ones you don’t need and finding new ones in your discipline for a total of 10. Investigate the accounts followed by your key accounts (Edutopia might be following other accounts of interest to you in the field of education), and use the twitter search bar with search terms in the field. Traditional internet searches bring up useful organizations/publications as well, and a surprising number of them have twitter accounts.

[This might be a good time to incorporate go-to lessons on library search terms and internet searching as well].

Step 7: Now you’re following 10 accounts relating to a particular discipline. The next step is to identify trends and debates. [You can let this develop over a week or two, or look back through your feed as far as you’d like.] Issues addressed by multiple accounts, from multiple perspectives, are an excellent starting point. Remember to follow the links; you can’t just read the headlines in the tweets.

Step 8: Focus on one particular trend or debate that you’ve discovered, and articulate and revise a proposal paragraph including the situation in the discipline, the new development or source of debate, and an indication of potential outcomes/solutions. Using material you’ve found through twitter as well as the library and online sources, put together an annotated bibliography, correctly citing your sources and explaining what each contributes to your project.