Micropublishing: Helping to Tell Your Community’s Stories

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Until recently, that is…

Publishing takes big bucks
The book and the session
Q: What libraries have patrons with uses—needs—for micropublishing?
A: Almost all of them

Who needs it?
The Savonburg Public Library was founded in 1963 by Ms. Mabel Anderson. Savonburg is now a part of the Southeast Kansas Library System.
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- Materials Online: books, articles, research databases, and more
- Good Reads: book reviews, top sellers, author interviews, and news headlines

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Many possibilities

❖ Family histories
❖ Memoirs
❖ Local histories
❖ Specialized hobbies
❖ Teen and adult writing circles
Traditional: Publishing in microform (fiche, film, etc.)

Current: Publishing for a very narrow niche.

Micropublishing
1. Print-on-demand technology
2. Fulfillment/service agencies—Lulu and CreateSpace
3. A professional-quality template
4. Instructions on using Word effectively.

Four key elements
1. Print-on-demand technology--More than a decade

2. Fulfillment/service agencies—Lulu and CreateSpace—A decade or so

3. A professional-quality template—Now available with my book

4. Instructions on using Word effectively—The heart of my book

Four key elements
The Librarian’s Guide to Micro Publishing

Helping Patrons and Communities Use Free and Low-Cost Publishing Tools to Tell Their Stories

WALT CRAWFORD
All you need is Word.

Or for free: LibreOffice or OpenOffice—not quite as good.

Templates: free.

No publishing costs except **optional** test copy.
Anna Julia Young: Autobiography

Quick Case Study
I was born August 22, 1848 in New Port on the Illinois River, Green County, Illinois. My father, James Simmons, was Justice of the Peace and also carried on a small general merchandise store. He died in the cholera epidemic of 1849 leaving a widow, Laura Rogers, and three children, myself nine months old. It was a fearful time. My brother and sister were sent to Bluffdale. When Father died, before he was buried, came news that Will and Ella were very sick with cholera, so Mother had to go to them, but all interments were private and as soon as possibe Father's brother, Seldon Simmons, and two of Mother's sisters, Aunt Mary (Uncle Irvine's wife) and Aunt Augusta, all died with cholera. Seldon and Augusta were engaged, which made the four couples of the two families. Father was the oldest of the Simmons' family, and Mother was the oldest of the Rogers' family and then Ervine Simmons and Mary Rogers, Edwin Simmons and Eliza Rogers were the youngest of each family. Father's family consisted of Thomas, Jesse, Ervine, Edwin and two sisters, Sarah Simmons Spencer and Rachel Simmons Haworth (cousin Fanny Byron's mother). Mother's family consisted of Laura Rogers, Mary, Ruth, Augusta, Eliza, Charles, and John (Jesse Simon's wife Mary Love), (Thomas Simmons' wife Sophia) Ervin's second wife Adeline Brenizer.

My first remembrance was when I was about four years old, seeing a table set with all white dishes, as we used blue for common such as you see in the museums now. The occasion was Mother's second marriage to Daniel E. Gates, who was a merchant and lived in Columbianna on the Illinois River several miles north of New Port. I do not think either place is in existence now. My next remembrance, the river had overflowed and was all around the house I was at Bluffdale with an aunt when Mr. Gates and Mother came for a visit, and of course I wanted to go home with them. Mother said "no" but Mr. Gates said "let her go." We went home in a boat, and the first thing I did was to go out on the steps to dip up some water, and I went in head first as Mother predicted I would. So I was sent back to Aunt Hattie's to wait till the water went down.

My childhood was very happy as I did not realize what a hard time my mother had to get along after my step-father died, as he only lived about two years and left a baby girl. Mother had no wood, and no one to cut it, so she would burn fence rails such as Lincoln made. She would put one end in the stove and the other on a chair and move them as they burned. We had no lamps but made our own tallow dips. Sometimes we had a few sperm candles which made a better light. We had no sewing machine, washing machine or wringer. We made our own soap and rag carpets, and we children had to sew the rag strips to make them of which were rolled into balls and sent to the weaver. We had no picture books, and the
Anna Julia Young

Autobiography
“My Autobiography”

by

Mrs. A. J. Young

I was born August 22, 1848, in New Port' on the Illinois River, Green County, Illinois. My father, James Simmons, was Justice of the Peace and also carried on a small general merchandise store. He died in the cholera epidemic of 1849 leaving a widow, Laura Rogers, and three children, myself nine months old. It was a fearful time. My brother and sister were sent to Bluffdale. When Father died, before he was buried, came news that Will and Ella were very sick with cholera, so Mother had to leave and go to them, but all interments were private and as soon after death as possible. Father's brother, Seldon Simmons, and two of Mother's sisters, Aunt Mary (Uncle Irvine's wife) and Aunt Agusta, all died with cholera. Seldon and Agusta were engaged, which made the four couples of the two families. Father was the oldest of the

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1 “Newport, a town site and landing at the mouth of Apple Creek, in Greene County. It contains two or three stores, and half a dozen families.” (From: A Gazetteer of Illinois; in three parts, by J. M. Peck, Philadelphia, 1837, p.261.)


3 Laura Ann Rogers (1822 – 1877)


5 Ervin H. Simmons (1824 - ) married Mary Emmeline Rogers (1828 – 1850).

6 Seldon Richard Simmons (1811 – 1850) was engaged to Augusta Ruth Rogers (1825 – 1849/50).
In 1878 Pa Roberts started building our house, had it partly enclosed by Christmas, and we had our second Christmas tree. We hung up blankets at the windows but it was very cold. We moved in sometime in May. It was a great change from the little house and it was the finest house in that part of the country, and the only bath room within 25 miles. E. G. Young was born December 13, 1879.

Lone Oak Farm

School was started in a room in Aunt Ella’s house with Miss Florence Whitmore as teacher. Our next teacher, Miss Helen Johnson, was with us three years, and when our sixth son, Fred S. Young, was born March 27, 1883, Miss Johnson was very indignant because he was not a girl, but I was always very proud of my six boys. That winter Father and Mother Young came for a visit, and we had 12 in the family all winter. I think Miss Parker of San Francisco was the next teacher, as she was teaching in 1884, and was not a pleasant boarder. The first break in our family was the

74 Edwin Guy Young (1879 – 1926)
75 This is probably Anna’s sister Ella.
76 Fred Simmons Young (1882 – 1951)
Vanity publishing: Big bucks, claimed real publishing, no promotion or bookstore sales.

Micropublishing: No bucks, you’re the publisher, optional extras.

Self publishing: Traditionally, big bucks. Now, micropublishing can do it for less.

Vanity, self or micro?
Passive: Provide the book.

Supportive: Help build editing/writing circles.

Active: Library as micropublisher

Academic libraries: Print versions of library-published ejournals? Virtual academic presses?

Library roles for micropublishing
Changes in micropublishing

- Can consider ideas too narrow for traditional publishing

Library roles

- Writer’s circles, source of inspiration & research

1. The idea and writing
Changes in micropublishing

- None, but self-editing is more crucial

Library roles

- Same as for 1: Writing groups and the like

2. Rewriting & initial edits
Changes in micropublishing

If the author thinks it’s worth doing, that’s the end of the step.

Library roles

None, except as a way to check existence of similar books.

3. Acquisitions/acceptance
Changes in micropublishing

❖ It’s up to the author, friends and colleagues—or hiring an editor

Library Roles

❖ Writing circles to swap editing? Resource list of local editors for hire?

4. Line editing (editing)
Changes in micropublishing

Once again—it’s up to the author

Library roles

Books on copyediting, grammar, etc.

Possible resource lists of copyeditors

5. Copyediting
Changes in micropublishing

None, really. When it’s done, it’s done.

6. Authorial revisions
Changes in micropublishing

▷ It’s up to the author

Library roles

▷ *The Librarian’s Guide to Micropublishing*

7. Layout and typography
Changes in micropublishing

* It’s all on the author—and Word’s not perfect

Library roles

* Resource list?

8. Proofreading
Changes in micropublishing

- It’s up to the author (or a hired indexer)

Library roles

- Resource list of professional indexers
- Books on indexing

9. Indexing
Changes in micropublishing

- It’s up to the author—but templates can help

Library roles

- Thousands of cover examples for inspiration
- Resource lists of local artists
- Photoediting software to create covers

10. Cover design
Changes in micropublishing

- Done only as books are ordered (usually)
- Handled by Lulu or CreateSpace

11. Printing and binding
Changes in micropublishing

*Handled by Lulu or CreateSpace*

12. Distribution & sales
Changes in micropublishing

❖ It’s all on the author—which may not matter for true micropublishing

Library roles

❖ Resources on marketing
❖ Resources on reviewers and reviewing

13. Marketing & publicity
Making a good book, not just a book.

Doing it right
Write Gooder, Not Worser

Get the words right
You’re always using styles and templates—whether you know it or not.

Styles aid consistency and make for easy change.

Overcome stylephobia
It Was Never a Universal Library:
Three Years of the Google Book Settlement

Remember the Google Books settlement? It was going
to settle a four-year-old pair of lawsuits (four
years old then, eight years old now) against Google
(by the Association of American Publishers, AAP,
and the Authors Guild, AG) asserting that Google
was infringing on copyright through its two-line
snippets from in-copyright books scanned in the
Google Library Project—and by the scanning itself.
Later, a third group representing media photographers
also sued Google for the same actions.

A proposed settlement was announced in October
2008. Lots of people had lots of things to say
about it—not unreasonably, since it had major
implications. The March 2009 Cites & Insights is a 30-
page discussion of the settlement and what was
being said about it. An essay in the July 2009 issue
addressed the misuse of the English language by
some commentators. I assumed—as I believe most
other observers did—that the settlement might be
modified slightly but would probably be approved
within a year or two, maybe even faster than that.

Now? The settlement (modified) is dead: The
judge struck it down as being unfair. Most of those
who were commenting on it (including me) really
didn’t deal with what turned out to be the core
issue: You can’t substantially transform copyright law
by settling a class action lawsuit.

We are, in some ways, back to square one after
the better part of a decade. There will assuredly be
more developments over the next (year? five years?
decade?)—but given the clear death of the settlement
and my March 2009 overview and possibly a few of the
items it points to. I’m not going to rehash it—as it is,
this discussion is longer than the earlier one, even as
it’s fundamentally a story of failure.

Or is it? Maybe the failure of GBS is a success in
other areas—including (potentially) areas such as
fair use and sensible planning for library futures.

This is a long set of notes and comments (cites
& insights). It strikes me that the topic and com-
plexity deserve that length—but note that I’m offer-
ing much briefer excerpts and comments on most
items than I normally would in this sort of roundup.

After two sets of general notes and overviews
(one before the settlement was rejected, one after)
I’m breaking the discussion down by topics rather
than chronologically.

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General Notes: Before the Outcome
It Was Never a Universal Library: 
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Now? The settlement (modified) is dead. The judge struck it down as being unfair. Most of those who were commenting on it (including me) really didn’t deal with what turned out to be the core issue: You can’t substantially transform copyright law by setting a class action lawsuit.

We are, in some ways, back to square one after the better part of a decade. There will assuredly be more developments over the next (year? five years? decade?) but given the clear death of the settlement itself, I thought this would be a good time to update the situation.

If you’ve managed to ignore the settlement (called GBS for convenience, as it is by at least one of the truly knowledgeable commentators) so far, I’ll suggest reading my March 2009 overview and possibly a few of the items it points to. I’m not going to rehash it—as it is, this discussion is longer than the earlier one, even as it’s fundamentally a story of failure.

Or is it? Maybe the failure of GBS is a success in other areas—including (potentially) areas such as fair use and sensible planning for library futures. This is a long set of notes and comments (cites & insights). It strikes me that the topic and complexity deserve that length—but note that I’m offering much briefer excerpts and comments on most items than I normally would in this sort of roundup.

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General Notes: Before the Outcome

It may be amusing to start with the single item I re-tagged “gsb-paranoia” when I was re-tagging nearly 300 “gsb” items in Digo. It’s by Steven Levy, posted at wired.com on March 31, 2009 with the title “Who’s Messing With the Google Book Settlement? Hint: They’re in Redmond, Washington.” It’s as fair-minded, balanced and objective as most of Steven Levy’s writing, especially where certain computing companies are concerned.
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Getting the book to look better than the average megapublisher product
The Quick Brown Fox Jumped Over the Lazy Dog. 1&2#3$4%5 6?7 “89”. Kerning and ligatures: Tam’s AV Was Void—finally and officially cast out. The Quick Brown Fox Jumped Over the Lazy Dog. 1&2#3$4%5 6?7 “89”. Kerning and ligatures: Tam’s AV Was Void—finally and officially cast out. Ours is a noble old house, and stretches a long way back into antiquity. The earliest ancestor the Twains have any record of was a friend of the family by the name of Higgins. [Mark Twain’s (Burlesque) Auto-Biography via Project Gutenberg]
Hardly knowing what she did, she picked up a little bit of stick, and held it out to the puppy: whereupon the puppy jumped into the air off all its feet at once, and with a yelp of delight rushed at the stick, and made believe to worry it then Alice dodged behind a great thistle to keep herself from being run over, and, the moment she appeared at the other side, the puppy made another dart at the stick, and tumbled head over heels in its hurry to get hold: then Alice, thinking it was very like having a game of play with a cart-horse, and expecting every moment to be trampled under its feet, ran round the thistle again: then the puppy begin a series of short charges at the stick, running a very little way forwards each time, and barking hoarsely all the while, till at last it sat down a good way off, panting, with its tongue hanging out of its mouth, and its great eyes half shut. Some vandal added words.
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Micropublishing: Helping to Tell Your Community’s Stories
Speaking Notes

WALT CRAWFORD, 2012 INTERNET LIBRARIAN

Most every public library has patrons with stories to tell—their own family’s stories, personal reminiscences, niche topics and others that deserve permanence but can’t justify the expense and complexity of traditional publishing. Almost every public library has patrons working on local issues and history, enriching the community’s story. Many public libraries have or should have groups—teen poets, local history groups, writers, others—whose creative output should be preserved.

Until recently, it took a fair amount of money, special skills or both to put those stories into book form in a way that the authors could be proud of. Even with the advent of print-on-demand publishing, eliminating the thousands of dollars needed to produce several hundred copies, you’d have the substantial costs of layout and typographic design.
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Blog: Walt at Random,
walt.lishost.org

Ejournal: Cites & Insights,
citesandinsights.info

Thank you!