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College Composition 2

September 10, 2019

Boyd Reading Summary

Many view Wikipedia as a very faulty source of information due to the factor of anyone being able to edit almost any page, which is an incorrect sentiment, according to Danah Boyd in her essay “Wikipedia as a Site of Knowledge Production”. Boyd argues that Wikipedia can be an excellent source, just that one needs to treat it differently than a traditional source and investigate the edit history and the discussion pages of the Wikipedia page of a topic, so as to see the growth of a page and the disputes and resolutions that come from active, up-to-date discussion; this can be much more preferable to the traditional method of trusting a concrete source that may have the biases or misunderstandings of one person, a few people, an entire organization, or maybe even a government. Boyd says that crowdsourcing the writing of an article doesn’t necessarily make an article better but makes the creation of said article and knowledge more transparent, which can help someone understand the topic more than if they simply read a book by a single author. Boyd also praises Wikipedia for being much more accessible to the public than history books and textbooks, which not only can introduce someone to knowledge that they wouldn’t have been able to access before, but it can also help improve someone’s “digital literacy”, which would be beneficial to people of all ages.