

Martin De Saulles: Information 2.0

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New models of information production, distribution and consumption. Facet Publishing, ISBN: 978-1-85604-754-8, 160pp

This book aims to take a contemporary snapshot of the world of information and intersperses descriptions of current trends and developments with small case studies of companies, institutions and technologies.

This short textbook is structured into six chapters that each follow a similar pattern and demonstrate how the internet has changed various aspects of everyday life. The book does pretty much what it states in its title by sandwiching between the introduction and conclusion, chapters on information production, storage, distribution and consumption. Chapters 2-4 each start with a brief introduction of the subject under consideration, before going on to outline how the internet has affected this sphere of activity and then concluding with four questions to think about. These chapters would provide library and information-science tutors with a readymade series of seminar topics and potential essay questions.

The author is a well respected academic and writes with verve and style, but as he himself acknowledges the book can only ever provide a broad overview of the issues and topics under consideration and unfortunately this means the work is of rather limited utility to practitioners. Where a topic of interest to the practitioner is mentioned such as changes to the Google search algorithm or a new service is highlighted like Radian6 or Klout, its presence is frustratingly fleeting before the reader is sped along to the next topic for consideration.

The book is an ambitious snapshot in time, and one of the features that make this work of potential interest is its coverage of current trends and developments in the information sector. It is therefore rather hard to understand the rationale for documenting these trends as a printed monograph when these very trends evolve so quickly and there appears to be a gradual decline in this particular medium. Whilst I would agree with De Saulles' assertion that the monograph can continue to be a key format for the transfer of ideas and arguments, I feel it simply doesn't make sense with this particular topic matter. Current trends in the information sector can be communicated far more dynamically using the new tools and techniques that are being pioneered by information professionals. In these straitened economic times practitioners may be better off saving their money

and instead turning their attention to De Saulles excellent blog www.mdesaulles.net, where in a format more fitting to his message he communicates his current thinking, ideas and arguments about Information 2.0.

For the cash-strapped student this may be a book to consider borrowing rather than buying as the £49.95 price tag is rather hefty, but this should not

be a problematic strategy as it will no doubt feature on the reading lists of many library and information-science courses, and will be stocked by academic libraries supporting these programmes.

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