Libraries at the Crossroads
Resolving Identities
Visualizing the Self-Published Author

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Overview

• National Bibliographies – Mirrors of a Country’s Culture? History and the Digital Future
• Telling the Story of the Self-Publisher from National Bibliographic Data
Visualizing the Self-Published Author

• Self-publishing is a challenge when producing national bibliography data.
• Starting from 2016 the National Library of Sweden can present detailed data on the self-published output in Sweden.
Self-Publishing in Sweden 2016

Self-Published Books
- Books for Children: 6%
- Books for Adults: 94%

National Bibliography
- Books for Children: 17%
- Books for Adults: 83%
Self-Published Fiction/Non-fiction

Fiction/Non-Fiction Self-Published 2015
- Fiction 39%
- Non-Fiction 61%

Fiction/Non-Fiction National Bibliographic Data 2015
- Fiction 33%
- Non-fiction 67%
Self-Published Literary Forms

- Poetry: 25%
- Novels: 59%
- Short stories: 6%
- Humour, satires, etc.: 3%
- Drama: 0%
- Essays: 0%
- Letters: 0%
- No attempt to code: 7%

NB-Data Literary Forms

- Poetry: 18%
- Novels: 63%
- Short stories: 6%
- Humour, satires etc.: 2%
- Letters: 0%
- Comics: 3%
- Drama: 1%
- Essays: 0%
- No attempt to code: 7%
Who Needs a National Bibliography?

- Sweden has one of the oldest legal deposit laws and it first came into force in 1661. Since 2012 there is a legal deposit law for electronic material.
- The National Library of Sweden gets its mandate from the Swedish government and the mission is to collect, describe, preserve and make accessible all materials published and distributed in Sweden, e.g. e-materials, books, periodicals, broadcasts and music.
- The Swedish government assigns the task of producing the national bibliography to the National Library.
National Bibliographic Future

Two projects evaluating the national bibliographic data of Sweden:

1. "Who needs a national bibliography?" – a study conducted in 2015 investigating the purpose and value of national bibliographies in the digital age.

The National Library of Sweden defines the purpose of the national bibliography as an objective and comprehensive outline of the Swedish publishing output and to function as a metadata source to libraries and other stakeholders.
Focus areas

- Current and updated knowledge on media and publishing trends.
- Increased automated work flows.
- Documentation and transparency regarding selection criteria and description levels.
- Updated and increased knowledge about the use and users of national bibliographic data.
- Discussions regarding the role of legal deposit in relation to the purpose of the national bibliography.
From Mirror to Pulse

- “a current national bibliography is a mirror that reflects the culture of country”. (Barbara L. Bell).
- Replacing the mirror metaphor by a pulse metaphor. Culture as an ongoing process rather than as a graspable fixed identity of a country.
- Tracking a publishing pulse in the Swedish national bibliographic data.
There is a publishing pulse, the flow can move in many parallel and entangled veins. This means looking at the publishing output not just as a reflection of society but also as something taking part in society, a passage of events creating patterns affecting culture rather than reflecting it.
What are the Subjects of Self-Publishing?
Who is the Self-Publisher?
Who is the Self-Published Poet?
Who is the Self-Published Poet?
Thank you!

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