



WHAT'S ALL THE FUSS ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA?

DO YOU READ OR write a blog, hangout on Facebook or Myspace, check out Wikipedia for a quick history lesson, recently listened to a podcast or Tweeted? If you "do" any of these then you are using what is called "Social Media." If you don't do these, you might want to consider adding them to your genealogical tools arsenal.

As "Social Media" has grown in popularity throughout mainstream society, it has also become an invaluable genealogy research tool. Given how much is encompassed by it, it can be a bit daunting to figure out how multi-faceted it is.

Help now exists in the form of the book, *The Social Media Guide for Ancestral Research — Applying Web 2.0 Strategies*, by Claire V. Brisson-Banks. This is a very simple and straightforward book and will be most useful to those who consider themselves novices when it comes to Social Media. The chapter titles capture the essence of the book: Electronic Mail and Mailing Lists; Instant Messaging, SMS, Twitter; Blogs; Wikis; Forums; Real Simple Syndication; Social Bookmarking;

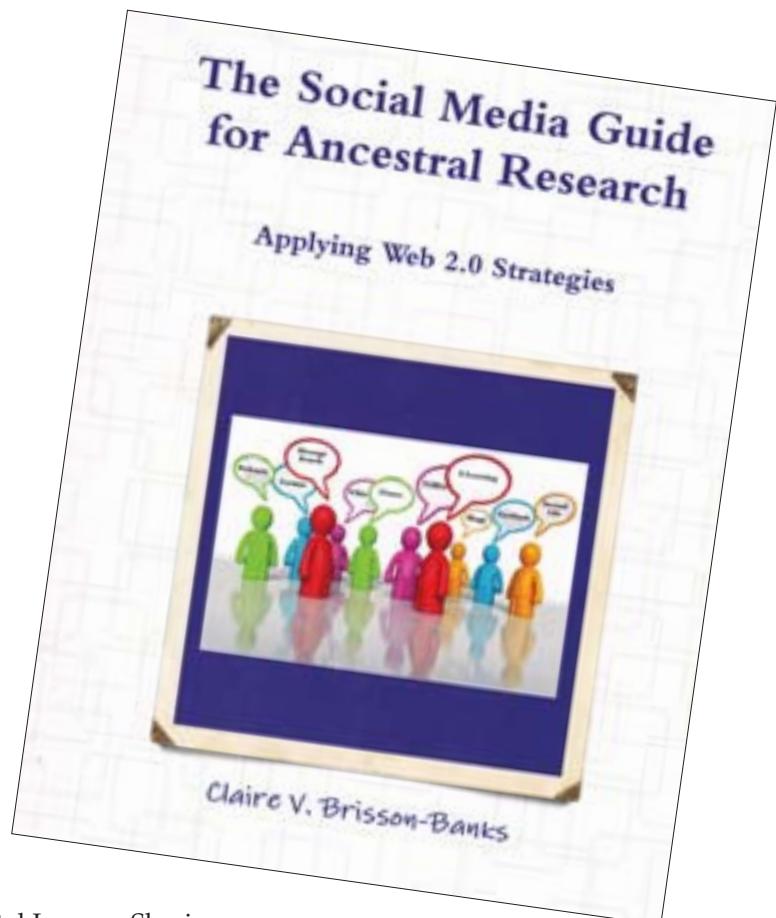
Sharing Digital Images; Sharing Video Files; Podcasts and Vodcasts; E-learning and Online Classes; Social Networking and Online Communities; and Family History Games.

Each chapter defines the type of Social Media and then talks about some of the more familiar and/or larger examples of the named type with some discussion about "how" one might use it effectively.

And, even for the experienced genealogist who has written about various new technologies, though not as a techy-geek expert, there were things that I learned. For example, I have used Yahoo Instant Messaging (IM) for years and didn't even know that there were services such as Trillian and Meebo! And, "Social Bookmarking" — this was something I wasn't even aware of! I guess I need to take some time and look into Delicious, Digg, Reddit and StumbleUpon.

And, what's Squidoo, a Vodcast, or Bit.ly? I now know, do you?

Though this is not a fancy



book, nor a weighty (as in densely packed) tome, I like its simplicity. It isn't trying to tell you everything you need to know about the various types of Social Media, but it gives you enough of a "window" on all of these newer technological tools, that you will feel encouraged to explore them further and figure out which of these will now become part of your genealogical arsenal.

This book is available via Lulu.com, www.lulu.com/commerce/index.php?fBuyContent=10137085. With all the specials that Lulu.com has been offering lately, you can probably get it at a great price.



Diane L. Richard has been doing genealogy research for over 24 years. Though she only dabbles with FaceBook, blogs, podcasts, etc., they can be invaluable. She currently does professional research in NC & DC and can be found online at www.mosaicrpm.com/Genealogy.