Content gender gap: how to improve the coverage of women on Wikipedia

Roger Bamkin & Rosie Stephenson-Goodknight

Wikimania 2015 | July 15-19, 2015 | Hotel Hilton Mexico City Reforma | Mexico City

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https://etherpad.wikimedia.org/p/WikiProjectXX

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Tweet → @wikiprojectxx
Introductions

Roger Bamkin
User:Victuallers
- Editor since 2006
- Administrator since 2008
- Created >1,000 new articles
- Credited with >500? articles at DYK?
- Co-Founder, QRpedia, Monmouthpedia, Gibraltarpedia
- Former chair of Wikimedia UK

Rosie Stephenson-Goodknight
User:Rosiestep
- Editor since 2007 with >100,000 edits
- Administrator since 2009
- Created >3,000 new articles
- Credited with >1,200 articles at DYK?
- Founder, WikiProject Women Writers, 2014
- Sr. Recruiter @ DaVita HealthCare Partners

Photo credit: Pavel Hrdlička

Photo credit: Phoebe Ayers
Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Scope
3. Historical perspective
4. What has been done to address systemic bias against women?
5. What more can be done?
6. Announcement
7. Challenges
8. Methodology
9. Summary
10. Discussion
11. Appendix, further reading & acknowledgements

- We’ve placed some quotes in the sidebar, which are meaningful to us. Perhaps you’ll like them, too.
- Please refer to the Appendix for our references.
Scope

1. The problem we’re addressing is the systemic bias against women, i.e. their biographies and their works -- broadly construed -- such as books, paintings, etc., across all languages.

2. Off-topic:
   a. Editor gender gap (*)
   b. Language properties (article quality, wording)
   c. Network properties (linking, categorization)

“It has been my philosophy of life that difficulties vanish when faced boldly,”

– Isaac Asimov “Foundation” (a book about an encyclopediia that changed history.)
Historical perspective


“It is not women’s inferiority that has determined their historical insignificance: it is their historical insignificance that has doomed them to inferiority.”

—Simone De Beauvoir (1949)
What have Wikipedians been doing to address the content gender gap issue?

1. In the English Wikipedia, we’ve created several WikiProjects:
   a. WikiProject Women of psychology (2011)
   b. WikiProject Womens’ sport (2011)
   c. WikiProject Women’s History (2011)
   d. WikiProject Women scientists (2012)
   e. WikiProject Women artists (created in 2013)
   f. WikiProject Women writers (2014)
   g. etc. . . .

2. Wikidata has developed redlists of missing women’s biographies for the English language Wikipedia based on articles in other language Wikipedias (“Women in Red”)

3. Researchers are studying the issue of content gender gap and reporting on it.

"Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world."
— Margaret Mead
4. WikiWomen's History Month (March of each year) was launched in 2012 by the WikiWomen’s Collaborative.

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Is a category with five Mexican feminist writers impressive, or embarrassing when compared with the 45 articles on characters in “The Simpsons”?


"Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does."

– William James
5. On the English Wikipedia, DYK establishes a useful quality check for articles. The following are statistics for the month of June in years 2005 through 2015, comparing the number of men’s biographies with the number of women’s biographies.

6. Events:
   - Edit-a-thons and Salons
   - ArtAndFeminism
   - Ada Lovelace Day

7. Translation
   - WikiProject Intertranswiki
What more can we do to improve the coverage of women’s biographies and women’s works across all languages Wikipedias?
Announcing:

WikiProject XX
(named after the chromosomes)
WikiProject XX: a container project for all things related to the content gender gap

- WikiProject XX, a community-led project, launched this weekend.
- WikiProject XX is a collaborative space across languages to track all things related to content gender gap.
- It is the container project for other projects in all languages whose scope covers women and their works, such as WikiProject Women Writers.
- Wikidata will be used to manage the project because of its size and scope. This work is being done Max Klein and Piotr Konieczny who have created the Wikipedia Gender Inequality Index: (WIGI)
- It has tabs with links for conferences, challenges, discussions, editathons, Inspire grantees’ projects, newspaper articles, scholarly articles, etc.

"Try not. Do or do not. There is no try."

-- Yoda
Help Wanted: Data Coordinator Promotions/Events Coordinator Lead Coordinators for each language.

- We are using the expertise of WikiProject X, to create an appealing work space.
- Create a Wikimedia User Group
- Work with the Chapters

“Every academic year more than 500 articles on Estonian Wikipedia are created as part of local cooperation with universities.”
Challenges

1. July 2015, WikiProject Biography has ~ 400,000 Start-Class (or better) biography articles.
2. 60,000 (15%) of these can be presumed to be women (See appendix). So we increase women articles by 1 in 10.
3. WikiProject XX proposes to document and encourage the creation of 6,000 Start-Class articles on the English language Wikipedia. Other language Wikipedias are encouraged to come up with their own goals.
4. Multilingual GLAM projects have created ~ 1,000 start articles. so 6,000 is challenging but do-able (e.g. Derby Museum = 1250 articles)
5. We need at least 100 editors who agree with this idea, to become project members, and get to work.

In attempting to fix the problem of incomplete coverage on the encyclopedia, Wikipedians should not reinforce gender stereotypes or undervalued labor.

—Adrienne Wadewitz (2013)
Methodology

Wikitown GLAM projects and the new articles created by each project in < 1 year:

- Derby - 1,250
- Monmouth - 550
- Gibraltar - 1,020
- Bremen - 400?

A new project, targeting 6,000 new articles across Wikipedias, is achievable using "Wikitown" methodology.
Methodology cont.

**WIGI**
documents the problem, but it also shows that we now have the tools to make XX possible.
Summary of key points

1. The global community can move the needle regarding gender content bias.
2. The Wikimedia Foundation realises the gender gap issue.
3. The issue is well documented by scholars and the press.
4. WikiProject XX is a container project across all languages so we can see the improvement one article at a time.
5. We needed metrics and the tools are emerging (e.g. Max and Piotr)
6. We hope to speak again at Wikimania 2016 to review our successes and pose new challenges.

“History will look back at Wikipedia to see who we thought was notable enough to have an article... there’s no room for bias in history books or encyclopedias…”

“Content gender gap? Wikipedians have solved other problems. We can solve this one, too. Let’s resolve, starting right now, to end the gender bias implicit in the world’s favourite encyclopedia.”

—R.G. Stephenson-Goodknight & R. Bamkin
Open Discussion

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Thank You

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Appendix, Further Reading, Acknowledgements

WIKIPEDIA POLICIES

Wikipedia: Systemic bias

Wikipedia: Notability (people)

Wikipedia: Identifying reliable sources

Wikipedia: Verifiability

Wikipedia: Neutral point of view
WikiProject Biography

WikiProject Countering systemic bias/Gender gap task force/Media and research

WikiProject Women artists

WikiProject Women scientists

WikiProject Women writers

WikiProject Women's History
WikiProject X

WikiProject XX

WikiWomen’s History Month

WIKIMEDIA

Thematic organizations
https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Wikimedia_thematic_organizations#Thematic_organizations_in_discussion

Address the gender gap/FAQ
https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Address_the_gender_gap/FAQ
SCHOLARLY PAPERS


http://arxiv.org/abs/1501.06307

http://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/viewFile/777/631
NEWS

http://www.macleans.ca/culture/books/do-women-writers-have-literary-cooties/

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/31/business/media/31link.html?_r=1

http://www.newstatesman.com/lifestyle/2015/05/wikipedia-has-colossal-problem-women-dont-edit-it

http://www.kqed.org/a/forum/R201503130900


https://lib.wvu.edu/about/news/2015/03/19/where-are-all-the-women-wikipedias-gender-gap/

Possibilities for university cooperation: Estonian example
https://wikimania2015.wikimedia.org/wiki/Submissions/Possibilities_for_university_cooperation:_Estonian_example
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There are many editors who have helped us with this presentation, and we want to mention a few of them here, in alpha order, but this is not inclusive: user:Dr. Blofeld, user:Gerda Arendt, user:Harej of WikiProject X, user:Ipigott, user:Maximilianklein of WIGI, user:Nvvchar user: SusunW.