

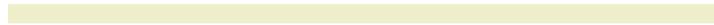
WikiProjects: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow

Jonathan T. Morgan
User:jtmorgan
User:jmorgan (WMF)
jmorgan@wikimedia.org



I'm Jonathan Morgan and I'm here today to talk about WikiProjects, how they work, where they've been, and where they are going.

Change



I'm going to talk about WikiProjects, but the broader story I want to tell is about change. Wikipedia is changing all the time, and we often don't notice it in our day to day work on the project. One of the cool things about being a researcher is that you can zoom out a little bit and focus on broader trends, like change over time. Understanding

● Outline

- How have WikiProjects changed?
- What are the consequences?
- What's next for WikiProjects?

The general outline of this talk is to describe how WikiProjects have changed since the first ones were created on the English Wikipedia back in the early 2000s, describe some of the features and consequences of those changes, and then suggest some next steps.

● Outline

- How have WikiProjects changed?
 - how has the way WikiProjects work changed?
 - how has the work WikiProjects do changed?
- What are the consequences?
 - for WikiProjects
 - for English Wikipedia
- What's next for WikiProjects?

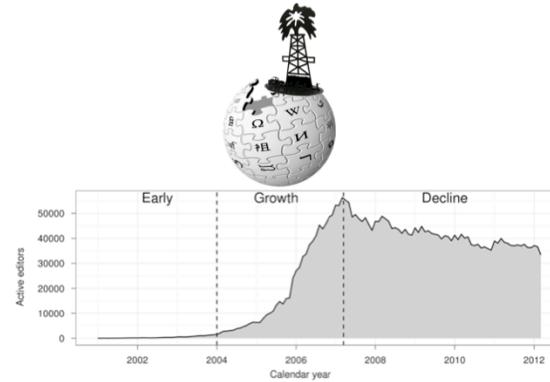
But to answer these questions right I need to get more specific. I will first cover some of the ways Wikipedia has changed, then talk about how the way WikiProjects work has changed, and then talk about how the work WikiProjects do has changed. And then I'll talk about the consequences not just for the WikiProjects of today and tomorrow, but also for English Wikipedia and maybe even the rest of the Wikimedia movement.

● Outline

- How have WikiProjects changed?
 - how has English Wikipedia changed?

And English Wikipedia has changed a lot since 2001. here are a couple examples.

● Editor decline

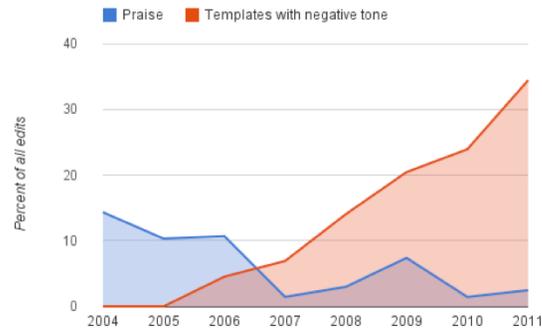


Source: *The Rise and Decline of an Open Collaboration System: How Wikipedia's response to sudden popularity is causing its decline*. Halfaker, Geiger, Morgan, Reidl. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 2012.

Many of you have probably seen this graph or one like it, showing the massive growth and gradual decline of active editors since 2007.

There are similar trends in article content as well: shifts in the rate of new article creation and the growth of existing articles, peaking and declining at around the same time.

Interactions with newbies



"The rise of warnings to new editors on Wikipedia. Pinchuk, M. (2011). Wikimedia Blog <http://blog.wikimedia.org/2011/05/02/neweditorwarnings/>

The social climate of Wikipedia has also changed in many ways. One example is a four-fold rise in the number of new users who get a warning as their first talk page message, rather than a message with a more welcoming tone. And this is happening despite the fact that newcomers nowadays are actually no more vandal-prone than they were in the past.

Like I said, these are just a few examples of the many ways Wikipedia has changed, there are many more.

● Outline

- How have WikiProjects changed?

How have all these changes affected WikiProjects? Before we get into that, I should probably give a brief overview of what WikiProjects are, and why you should care about them.

Wikipedia:WikiProject Feminism

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Main page **Talk page** **Members** **Resources**

WikiProject Feminism edit

Welcome to **WikiProject Feminism**, a project which addresses articles related to feminism and maintains the Feminism Portal. If you plan to be active in editing articles relating to feminism, please add your name to the [members list](#). Proposals, suggestions, and activities are discussed on the [WikiProject Feminism talk page](#). For background on the project, read our [WikiProject report](#) from *The Signpost*.

Shortcuts:
WP:FEMINISM
WP:FEM
WP:XX

Scope edit

The scope of WikiProject Feminism includes articles about feminism, women's rights, women's health, the history of women's rights, notable women's rights activists, concepts related to feminism, the history of feminism, notable feminists and philosophers, and works of feminist writers, thinkers and scholars.

- Our goal is to find, expand, create and identify all the substantive topics in feminism and women's rights and to expand the presence of these topics on Wikipedia.
- If you have knowledge of, an interest in, or simply want to help improve articles pertaining to feminism, you are welcome to join.
- This project does not extol any point of view, political or otherwise, other than that of a neutral documentarian. You don't have to identify as a feminist to join this WikiProject but you may want to Google the definition of feminism, which advocates that women have equal rights with men.
- WikiProject Feminism welcomes participants of all genders, and is not sexist, racist, agelist, classist, ableist, biphobic, homophobic, or transphobic. As with the rest of Wikipedia, trolling (posting intentionally provocative or disruptive comments) will not be tolerated. If this happens, the trolling user will be warned per WP:TALK and WP:EQ and will be removed from the task force's list of participants.

Article alerts edit

Articles for deletion

- 12 Aug 2013 – [Hugo Schwyzzer](#) (talk · edit · hist) AfDed by [Robotfish](#) (e · c) was closed as keep by [LFarone](#) (e · c) on 20 Aug 2013; see [discussion](#) ([19 participants](#))

Hot articles edit

This list is generated automatically by HotArticlesBot.

17 <small>edit</small>	Hugo Schwyzzer
16 <small>edit</small>	Domestic violence
15 <small>edit</small>	Matriarchy
10 <small>edit</small>	Annie Laurie Gaylor
9 <small>edit</small>	Adam and Eve

These are the articles that have been edited the most within the last three days. Last updated 2013-08-21.

Current status of articles edit

This table is generated automatically by WP 1.0 bot.

Feminism articles by quality and importance		Importance						
Quality	Top	High	Mid	Low	NA	Other	???	Total
★ FA	6	6	4					16
★ FL			1					1

This is an example of a WikiProject, WikiProject Feminism. It has a set of goals and tasks, a list of members, resources to help them do their work, and a talk page.

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Clear video game backlog?

There is a discussion going on at the **Video games WikiProject** about clearing out the backlog for video game nominations. As you know, there are some month-old GANs that are in need of reviewing them, but there are also second opinion requests for these as well. If anyone is willing to step up and clear out the backlog, please do so. Thanks, Lord Speno2 (talk - contributions) 05:35, 14 February 2013 (UTC)

The backlog there is due to one editor who has burnt a few bridges when it comes to reviewers. A/Ruorn (talk) 05:48, 14 February 2013 (UTC)

Yes, he has burnt a few bridges when it comes to reviewers. The editor in question, Nardit, is currently the subject of an ongoing RFC for disruptive behavior related to video game editors and it seems unlikely he'll be responsive to the RFC. At this point, what is the best possible solution? Lord Speno2 (talk - contributions) 06:07, 14 February 2013 (UTC)

I have no idea. A link on how many nominations an editor could have at once would help with the backlog in these situations at least, but that has failed to get consensus the last few times it has been proposed. It also doesn't solve the underlying issue. I guess we could propose a motion to ban them from submitting articles here, but I don't know whether that would gain consensus either. There is no real ban worthy issue with the nominations that I can think of. It just seems to be a case of an editor that doesn't play well with others. A/Ruorn (talk) 06:41, 14 February 2013 (UTC)

Part of the RFC is about his behaviour at GANs as detailed here. Nardit (as NarditHeller) was previously banned because of chronic rudility and inability to cooperate with others back in 2008, was unbanned in 2012 and he suddenly decided that same day this past November. We should go ask the VC about the matter. Lord Speno2 (talk - contributions) 06:48, 14 February 2013 (UTC)

I would say that any decision regarding his Good articles should be discussed here (or even better at WT:GAN) as it has a higher traffic flow. Looking at the VC thread most of the respondents seem to have wiped their hands of this. A/Ruorn (talk) 07:03, 14 February 2013 (UTC)

I have started a centralised discussion at the GAN talk page and I also feel that this backlog cleanup needs to happen sooner rather than later. The discussion can be found at Wikipedia talk:Good article nominations/Clearing out the VC backlog. Please direct your comments there. Lord Speno2 (talk - contributions) 17:28, 14 February 2013 (UTC)

Really need a qualified 2nd Opinion on Talk:Thomas Traheme/GA! edit

Nominated Thomas Traheme for GA in December. It finally got a reviewer (User:Michael) but from his comments he seems to not have read most of the article he's reviewing, especially he's not qualified to have the review right from the end, and he's being rather obstinate to professional advice. His job seems to be degrading the quality of a FAC, asking for expansion of content that goes beyond the wise limits of WP:SUMMARY and WP:DETAIL, and frankly inappropriate for a simple GA nomination. I'd like a second opinion from a qualified reviewer, because his comments are becoming increasingly frustrating. —GloriousHoney (talk) 17:52, 14 March 2013 (UTC)

Blocked reviewer edit

I posted this at the help desk, but have been advised to take it here. I'm in the process of having Bradley Higgins reviewed, but the reviewer GAbrochard has been given an indefinite block. Of course I'm not going to wait until it's lifted, if ever. What's my next move? Does it need to be closed and re-nominated? Baidibon 17:47, 14 March 2013 (UTC)

Interesting. I don't know whether you should close & nominate because that would look like the GA's failed. It seems that GAbrochard is the sock of a banned user, not just simply blocked. So, why don't you go and request GAbrochard as the reviewer? What you need there is a new reviewer. Someone from the original right page, or you could post notices on the talk pages of the various WikiProjects which pertain to your article. It looks like you've already addressed the editing concerns, so the review should be quick. (Sorry, I'm not in a WP:OTM mood right now. ☹) —GloriousHoney (talk) 18:27, 14 March 2013 (UTC)

GAN discussion edit

After F.U.love11online quick-failed *Jill Valentine* due to sourcing concerns as explained at *FDI*, a discussion about GANs has started over at *WT:GAN#Problem reviewers often not*

Articles for deletion

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FA	0	0	4	10
FL		1		1

This is an example of a WikiProject, WikiProject Feminism. It has a set of goals and tasks, a list of members, resources to help them do their work, and a talk page.

● What WikiProjects are

- Group workspaces
- Anyone can create or join one
- No official control over anything
- Been around since the early days of WP
- 1000s of them on en.wiki
- 100s(?) more across Wikimedia projects

WikiProjects are group workspaces in the project namespace of Wikipedia. You can create them about anything you want, anyone can create or join one, they don't have any official control over content or much in the way of formal status within the broader wiki-bureaucracy.

They've been around since the early days of Wikipedia, and there are 1000s of them on en.wiki alone, and (at least) hundreds more across all our projects. I don't think anyone knows the exact number.

● What WikiProjects do

- Increase new article creation
 - Develop & apply content standards and assessment criteria
 - Maintain article quality
 - Connect people with assistance, advice & collaborators
 - Encourage people to edit more & stick around longer
-

WikiProjects perform a really critical role in our projects. <read list>

Some of these findings come from research that other people have done on WikiProjects. There's a "further reading" list at the end of this slide deck, if you're interested.

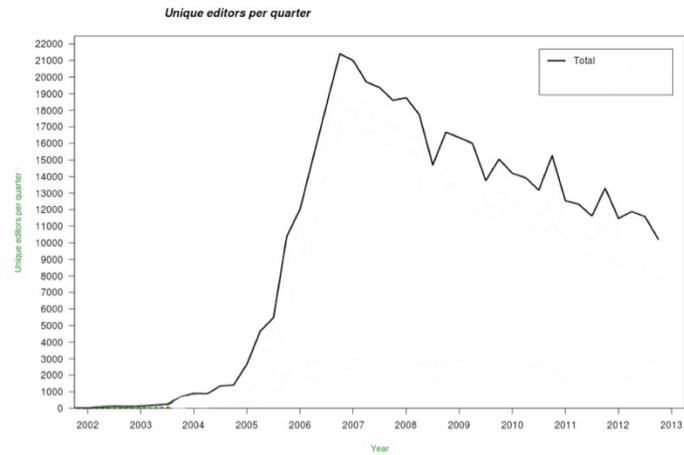
WikiProjects were essential for creating and curating all the content that was created in the "peak editing" years around 2007, and coordinating work among the massive influx of editors, but what about now?

List of WikiProjects by number of changes to all its pages in the last 365 days; data as of 20:03, 13 February 2014 (UTC).

No. ↕	WikiProject ↕	Edits ▾	excl. bots ↕
1	Wikipedia:WikiProject Deletion sorting	105992	47682
2	Wikipedia:WikiProject Spam	72846	795
3	Wikipedia:WikiProject Military history	26796	14765
4	Wikipedia:WikiProject Articles for creation	23769	20148
5	Wikipedia:WikiProject Medicine	12386	11298
6	Wikipedia:WikiProject Football	12188	9938
7	Wikipedia:WikiProject Video games	9275	7783
8	Wikipedia:WikiProject Guild of Copy Editors	8995	8937
9	Wikipedia:WikiProject Academic Journals	6710	516
10	Wikipedia:WikiProject Film	6602	3510

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Database_reports/WikiProjects_by_changes

Many WikiProjects are still active. There's a database report on en.wiki that tracks how active projects are based on the number of edits to the project workspaces. You can see that there are still many very active projects getting dozens of edits a week.



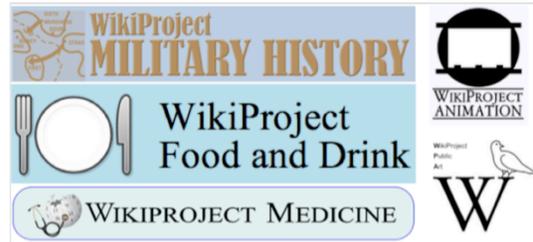
But if you look at the numbers over time, you start to see the a familiar and depressing pattern. This chart shows the number of unique editors who participated in the 1000 all-time most active WikiProjects over time. It's grouped by quarter year, to smooth out the lines. You can see that participation has dropped off by about 50%, which is an even greater rate than the overall active editor decline.

● Outline

- How have WikiProjects changed?
 - how has the work WikiProjects *do* changed?

So we've seen that there's been a steep drop in overall participation in WikiProjects, even steeper than we might have expected from the editor decline. To get a different perspective on this drop, I decided to examine how the work that WikiProjects *do* has changed over time.

● WikiProjects: conventional view



Scope: an encyclopedia topic

Goals: producing and curating content

Tasks: editing articles, and developing resources for editing articles

The conventional view of WikiProjects is as engines of collaborative content creation: they focus on an encyclopedia topics, coordinate editors work as they create and expand those articles, and also develop local tools, such as subject-specific style guides, and other resources to support tasks within their scope.

If you look at WikiProjects this way, it makes sense to assume that drop in participation is tied to the decline in article creation and expansion.

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However, if we look at the database report from February again.

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We see that a lot of the most active projects don't completely fit that definition. Either they focus on work beyond a single encyclopedia topic, like the Guild of Copyeditors, or they focus on a task that doesn't necessarily involve directly editing any articles, like Deletion sorting or AFC.

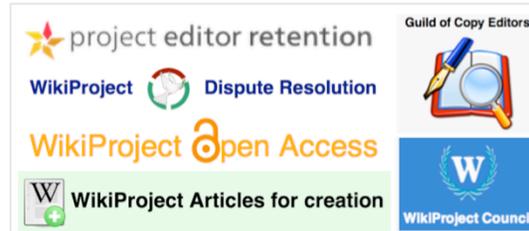


As my colleagues and I continued to investigate WikiProject we began to formulate a theory that WikiProjects were being used to play a variety of important roles in Wikipedia. Not just for creating content, but also



- Building tools and community policing
- teaching newcomers and answering questions and resolving disputes
- Rescuing orphaned articles from deletion
- Dealing with minutae and backlogs of editing tasks that spanned the entire encyclopedia
- And even brainstorming new solutions to community problems

alt.projects



Goals: ?

Scope: ?

Tasks: ?

Now, it's probably not news to Wikipedians that there are WikiProjects out there that don't fit the mold, but it was news to academia.

One question no one had asked was how many of these alternative WikiProjects there were out there. Were there more of them now than there were during the peak editing years? Were they more active?

I started to catalogue these alt.projects and to talk to their members to get a sense of what they focused on. I'll give you a quick rundown of the findings related to the types of work they do first.

● Editing across topics

wikify (*third-person singular simple present wikifies, present participle wikifying, simple past and past participle wikified*)

1. (*transitive, of text or other content*) To adapt to the standards and facilities of an existing wiki.
*As a starting point, I've **wikified** an article I wrote a while ago.*

“I consider the process really important. **One of the greatest improvements I've made to an article was just through wikifying it.**”

~ Member, *WikiProject Wikify*

I found that a lot of alt.projects, including some of the most active alt.projects, like Wikify, do work on editing articles, but they coordinate editing across topics instead of a single one.

● Editing meta-content



"I'd been interested in a lot of this meta stuff and I'd kind of touched on Help pages before and made a few edits... I saw someone had proposed this project to improve the help pages and I thought "God, yes they really do need improving"

~ Member, *WikiProject Help*

Others, like the Help Project, write and curate meta-content like Help pages

Community maintenance



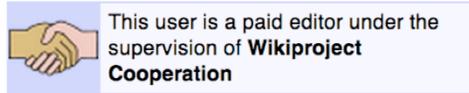
“This WikiProject exists to coordinate efforts to improve editor retention at Wikipedia.

We address existing difficulties, the ever-changing needs of the general community, and provide a positive environment to discuss new ideas towards that goal.”

~ WikiProject Editor Retention

Several of the newer alt.projects we identified, like Editor Retention, are set up to brainstorm and address community issues that have emerged over the past few years, like the loss of valuable contributors.

● Outreach and dispute resolution



"WikiProject Cooperation is trying to advance a model of cooperation with paid editors... They have a paid editor help board on which paid editors can come and have their drafts reviewed."

~ Member, *WikiProject Collaboration*

And other ones deal with hot-button current issues like proactive mentorship for paid editors, or resolving thorny disputes among editors.

● Border patrol

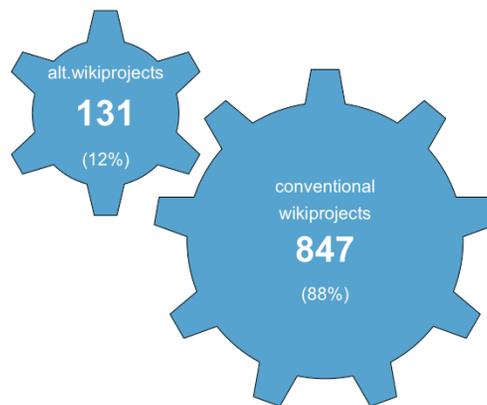


"WikiProject Spam is a voluntary Spam-fighting brigade. Our purpose is:

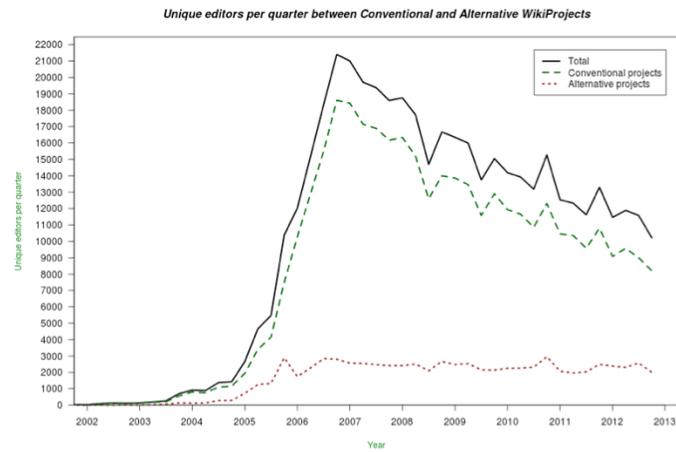
- a) to develop standards and processes for recognizing, hunting down, and eliminating link spam
- b) to send a message by our actions and effectiveness that link spammers are fighting a war they cannot win."

~ WikiProject Spam

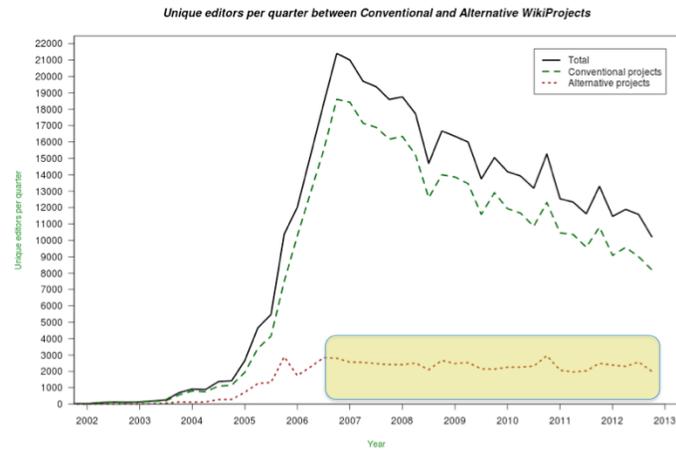
And of course, wikiprojects fight vandals and spam too. Where would we be without our border patrollers?



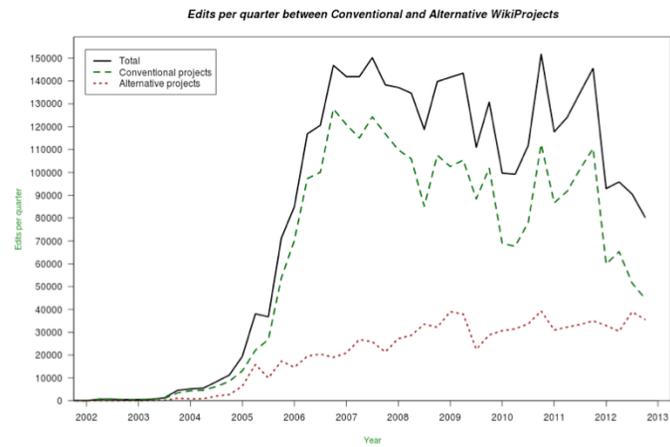
When we counted how many of all-time most active WikiProjects were alt.projects, we found that they were only a small subset, about 12%.



However, when we compared participation over time between alternative and conventional projects, we found that alt.projects as a whole were bucking the broader decline trend.



Conventional WikiProjects have seen a decrease of 56% unique (registered, non-bot) editors since peak for conventional wikiprojects, but the decline is only 13% for alternative WikiProjects. In other words, they still have a pretty steady stream of participants. In 2014, a higher proportion of people who participate in WikiProjects are participating in alternative projects than ever before.



Participation in alternative WikiProjects has actually growing by some measures. Compare the total registered-non-bot edits to alternative and conventional projects, they're almost equal now, even though there are many fewer active alternative projects.

Edit rank	2007	2012
1	WikiProject Military history	<i>WikiProject Deletion sorting</i>
2	<i>WikiProject Deletion sorting</i>	WikiProject Military history
3	WikiProject Video games	WikiProject Football
4	WikiProject Biography	<i>WikiProject Articles for creation*</i>
5	WikiProject Professional wrestling	<i>WikiProject Guild of Copy Editors*</i>
6	WikiProject Football	WikiProject Television Stations*
7	<i>WikiProject Red Link Recovery</i>	WikiProject Video games
8	WikiProject U.S. Roads	WikiProject Medicine*
9	<i>Department of Fun</i>	WikiProject Film
10	<i>WikiProject Spam</i>	WikiProject U.S. Roads
11	WikiProject Anime and manga	<i>WikiProject Wikify*</i>
12	<i>WikiProject Missing encyclopedic articles</i>	WikiProject Chemicals*
13	<i>WikiProject Council</i>	<i>Department of Fun</i>
14	WikiProject Film	<i>WikiProject Resource Exchange*</i>
15	<i>WikiProject Stub sorting</i>	WikiProject Birds*
16	WikiProject Comics	<i>Counter-Vandalism Unit*</i>
17	WikiProject Cricket	WikiProject India*
18	WikiProject Novels	<i>WikiProject Good articles*</i>
19	WikiProject LGBT studies	WikiProject Mathematics
20	WikiProject Mathematics	WikiProject National Register of Historic Places*

You can also see hints that the kinds of alternative projects people are participating in has changed much more over time than conventional projects. Here's a list of the most active conventional and alternative projects in 2006 and 2012. Alternative projects are shaded light brown. Projects that were not in the top 20 in 2006 are marked with an asterisk, indicating that they are either new or more popular than they were.

Edit rank	2007	2012
1	WikiProject Military history	WikiProject Deletion sorting
2	WikiProject Deletion sorting	WikiProject Military history
3	WikiProject Video games	WikiProject Football
4	WikiProject Biography	WikiProject Articles for creation*
5	WikiProject Professional wrestling	WikiProject Guild of Copy Editors*
6	WikiProject Football	WikiProject Television Stations*
7	WikiProject Red Link Recovery	WikiProject Video games
8	WikiProject U.S. Roads	WikiProject Medicine*
9	Department of Fun	WikiProject Film
10	WikiProject Spam	WikiProject U.S. Roads
11	WikiProject Anime and manga	WikiProject Wikify*
12	WikiProject Missing encyclopedic articles	WikiProject Chemicals*
13	WikiProject Council	Department of Fun
14	WikiProject Film	WikiProject Resource Exchange*
15	WikiProject Stub sorting	WikiProject Birds*
16	WikiProject Comics	Counter-Vandalism Unit*
17	WikiProject Cricket	WikiProject India*
18	WikiProject Novels	WikiProject Good articles*
19	WikiProject LGBT studies	WikiProject Mathematics
20	WikiProject Mathematics	WikiProject National Register of Historic Places*

Highlighting the two alt.projects that dropped off the list after 2006 in red, you see both of them were related to creating articles.

Edit rank	2007	2012
1	WikiProject Military history	WikiProject Deletion sorting
2	WikiProject Deletion sorting	WikiProject Military history
3	WikiProject Video games	WikiProject Football
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14	WikiProject Film	WikiProject Resource Exchange*
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16	WikiProject Comics	Counter-Vandalism Unit*
17	WikiProject Cricket	WikiProject India*
18	WikiProject Novels	WikiProject Good articles*
19	WikiProject LGBT studies	WikiProject Mathematics
20	WikiProject Mathematics	WikiProject National Register of Historic Places*

Highlighting the alt.projects that are new to the list in 2012, you can see that most of them are less directly focused on new content creation. They focus on curation (wikify, good articles), meta-work (resource exchange), border patrol, and even new editor support.

Overall, the sense we get is that WikiProjects, despite an overall drop in participation, are doing more kinds of things than ever before. In 2014, many conventional projects are still going strong, and new alternative projects have sprung up to fill import niches in the wiki-ecology.

● Outline

- What are the consequences?
 - for WikiProjects

So what are the consequences of the decline in wikiproject participation and the rise of alt.projects? What kinds of challenges do projects face in 2014?

● Maintaining momentum

 **This WikiProject is believed to be inactive.** If you are not currently a member of the project, please consider joining it and/or its parent project [\[\[Wikipedia:WikiProject Biography|WikiProject Biography\]\]](#) to help. This tag may be removed if activity resumes, or if this tag has been placed in error.

[Guide to WikiProjects](#) · [Directory of WikiProjects](#) · [Advice on dealing with inactive WikiProjects](#) · [List of inactive WikiProjects](#)

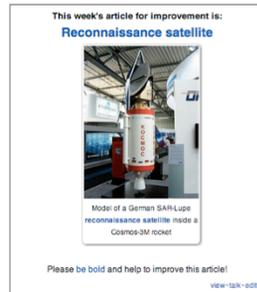
Shortcuts:
[WP:BCOTW](#)
[WP:WPBIOCOTF](#)

“WikiProjects that are gathered around specific article subjects might lose steam once coverage of that subject becomes more complete.”

~ Member *WikiProject*
Unreferenced BLP Rescue

One key challenge for WikiProjects is maintaining momentum, even among those that managed to achieve the critical mass necessary to become highly active in the first place. Conventional wikiprojects may be especially susceptible to this issue, since many major topics are comparatively well-covered.

● Getting noticed



“The main motive [for WikiProject TAFI] was to create a good enough framework for all editors and collaborators to come in... **It was as much of a "Rope in the newcomers" thing as "Improve the important articles"**”

~ Member, *WikiProject Today's Article for Improvement*

Another issue for newer projects is getting noticed. The Article for Improvement project is an alt.project geared towards helping newcomers work collaborate with veteran editors. But the project has had trouble advertising itself to the newcomers it wants to recruit.

- Working with the tools available



Another challenge, especially for alt.projects, is getting their work done using normal wiki-tools. Normal WikiProject pages work ok for creating style guides and task lists, but they are less well suited to the wide variety of tasks that alt.projects perform.

● Outline

- What are the consequences?
 - for English Wikipedia

What are the consequences of the WikiProject decline for Wikipedia? How could these changes effect the project as a whole?

● Harder to maintain quality

- Category:Unassessed-Class articles

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia



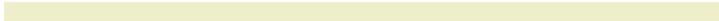
This is an **administration category**. It is used for **administration of the Wikipedia project** and is not part of the encyclopedia. It contains pages that are not **articles**, or it groups articles by status rather than content. Do not include this category in content categories.

Contents [hide]

Top · 0-9 · A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Subcategories

This category has the following 200 subcategories, out of 2,007 total.



One impact may be a reduced ability to deal with backlogs and perform assessments and re-assessments of article quality, since WikiProjects traditionally performed these tasks.

● Harder to increase coverage



“The Wikipedia project suffers systemic bias that naturally grows from its contributors' demographic groups, manifesting an imbalanced coverage of a subject, thereby discriminating against the less represented demographic groups.”

~ WikiProject countering systemic bias

Another possible challenge will be that with less wikiProject participation it makes it harder for us to expand into new topics, fill in the gaps in existing topics. This may be especially problematic if we want to keep fighting our systemic bias and increase our coverage of currently underrepresented topics

- Harder to fostering collaboration

Collaborative **Helpful**
Arrogant **Intelligent**
Dumb Unfriendly Rude
Friendly

And with fewer public spaces where editors who are interested in the same things can meet each other and work together beyond individual article talk pages, it may be harder for Wikipedia to maintain a collaborative atmosphere.

● Outline

- What's next for WikiProjects?



Given these challenges, what can be done? I can offer a few suggestions; I'm sure you can think of many more.

● Connect newcomers with projects



Hello! **Mcgroth**, you are invited to the [Teahouse](#), a forum on Wikipedia for new editors to ask questions about editing Wikipedia, and get support from peers and experienced editors. Please join us! [Sarah](#) (talk) 13:15, 23 May 2012 (UTC)

One strategy that worked for the Teahouse (which is itself kind of an alt.project) is inviting people to participate. This helped us solve the visibility problem and make newcomers aware of our project.

● Build better collaboration tools

Hot articles edit

This list is generated automatically by HotArticlesBot.

27 edits	Birth control movement in the United States
22 edits	Teresa Wright
17 edits	Domestic violence
9 edits	Women's suffrage
8 edits	Lucretia Mott

These are the articles that have been edited the most within the last three days. This section is updated daily.

Another strategy is to continue developing tools to support group work. One tool I like a lot (tho it's not widely used) is the Hot Articles tool, which provides a kind of lightweight group watchlist on the project page.

● Perform necromancy!



This **WikiProject** is believed to be inactive. If you are not currently a member of the project, please consider joining it to help. This tag may be removed if activity resumes, or if this tag has been placed in error.

[Guide to WikiProjects](#) • [Directory of WikiProjects](#) • [Advice on dealing with inactive WikiProjects](#) • [List of inactive WikiProjects](#)

Another possible solution is good old fashioned necromancy! Getting a few fellow editors together to re-boot a WikiProject that has become inactive and start working through the backlog.

● Create new projects!



And of course, there are tons of opportunities to create new projects, not just on En.wikipedia but on other languages, as well as commons, wikisource, wiktionary and wikidata. Building projects that exist work across wikis to tie together our content and our community may be particularly important as our movement continues to become larger and more complex.

Thank you!

Jonathan T. Morgan



Thanks go to
WikiProject members, Michael Gilbert,
David W. McDonald, Mark Zachry, Wikimedia
Foundation, University of Washington,
National Science Foundation

Apocrypha

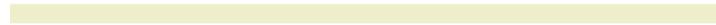
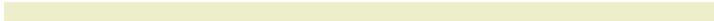


Image credits

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● Further reading

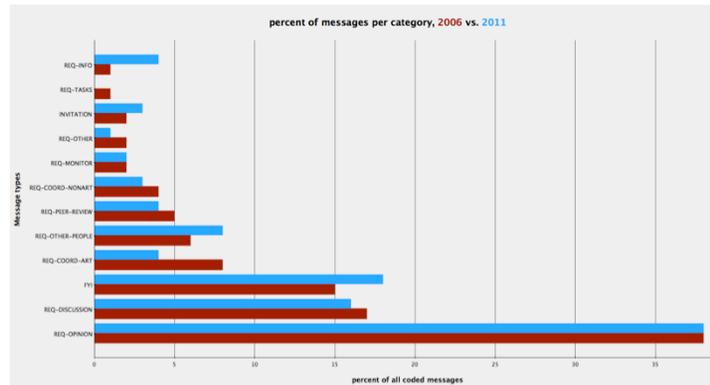
- Scaling Consensus: Increasing decentralization in Wikipedia governance (Forte et al. 2008)
- Herding the cats: the influence of groups in coordinating peer production (Kittur et al. 2009)
- The effects of diversity on group productivity and member withdrawal in online volunteer groups (Chen et al. 2010)
- Organizing without formal organization: group identification, goal setting and social modeling in directing online production (Zhu et al. 2012)
- Coordination and beyond: social functions of groups in open content production (Forte et al. 2012)
- Searching for the goldilocks zone: trade-offs in managing online volunteer groups (Wang et al. 2012)
- Project talk: Coordination work and group membership in WikiProjects (Morgan et al. 2013)
- Managing complexity: Strategies for group awareness and coordinated action in Wikipedia (Gilbert et al. 2013)

Previous research on WikiProjects has generally analyzed these projects as groups, have often focused on the mechanisms those projects use to support group collaboration, and have used group theories to examine the dynamics of WikiProjects. For example, how project members pursue group goals, form common bonds, and develop a sense of common identity.

Framing WikiProjects as collaborating groups seems appropriate given what we know about them: projects develop group goals, define group tasks, and provide lists of group members, and project members interact with one another in a shared workspace.

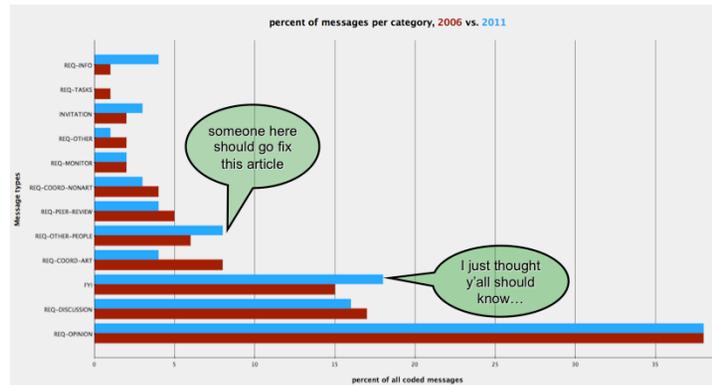
They provide ways for editors to identify with the project, and also to collaborate directly with other group members.

And as I mentioned before, some projects also engage in group collaboration and provide engaging ways for members to advertise their affiliation with the group.

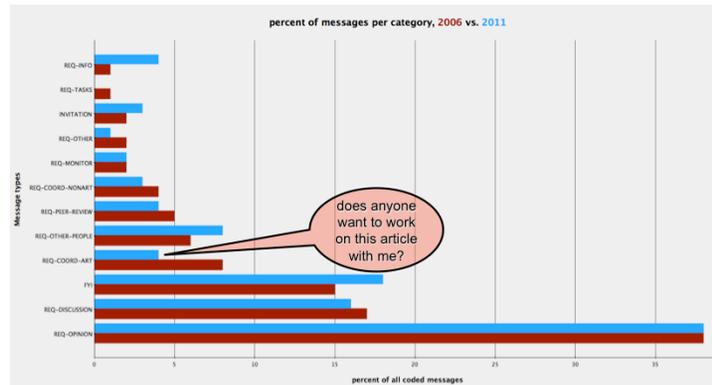


You also see changes in the way project members collaborate when you compare today's WikiProjects with the peak editing days. This chart shows the results of an analysis of the kinds of messages people post on the talk pages of about 100 highly active WikiProjects in 2006 vs. 2011. Blue means more in 2011, red means more in 2006.

This is from a study that focused on understanding how WikiProject members work together to get things done.



I'm not going to go into all of this right now, but here are a few key differences that show how the way people use WikiProjects has changed. In 2011, it's a lot more common for someone to post to a WikiProject page and say "hey, I found a mistake in this article and you should go fix it", and also for them to just post FYI-style messages basically saying that something is happening, like an RfC or a contribution drive, rather than posting questions that expect a response.



But the biggest drop between 2006 and 2011, in the same WikiProjects, was requests for collaboration. There were only about half as many instances of people asking other people to work on stuff together with them.

This isn't necessarily a completely bad thing, but it does suggest there's less collaboration going on within WikiProjects, and that suggests that there may be something different about how people work on Wikipedia on a day to day basis more generally.