Women Scientists and Women Philosophers on English Wikipedia: Best Practices in Targeting Systemic Bias

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Women Philosophers

There is a systemic bias against non-Western/female philosophers, which affects feminist philosophers very heavily.

See the example of [[en:Alison Jaggar]], the founder of modern feminist philosophy and feminist philosophy education, who didn’t have an article till the beginning of Kevin’s initiative.

The online component to his initiative is located at [[en:User:Kevin Gorman/philosophers]]. He has compiled a list of hundreds of missing female philosophers that are clearly notable in their field.

- **Identify what articles are missing in the underrepresented area and collect them in a centralized public space.**

Kevin has engaged the American Philosophical Association, which has created a blog written by prominent women philosophers that profiles important & notable women philosophers, located at <http://www.apaonlinecsw.org/> and a monthly Feminism Newsletter, located at <www.apaonline.org/?feminism_newsletter>.

- **Engage academic groups that may have or be creating resources about the underrepresented group of biographies.**

The University of California at Berkeley has a robust instance of the US Education Program and Kevin is partnering with their philosophy and women’s studies classes to engage students in writing about women philosophers and feminist philosophy.

- **Use established programs to encourage new editors to contribute in the designated topic area.**

These sources and editors are all working from English language sources, which are usually biased.

- **Find and engage people from other communities and seek out sources that address non-Western/non-English speaking biographies.**
Women Scientists

We estimate that English Wikipedia is missing over 1500 biographies of women scientists. WikiProject Women Scientists has as of November 2013 1,664 articles tagged, 5 FAs and 12 GAs. Much of the project’s work has been focused on creating new content through Did You Know at Start or C-class. In one year of existence 30 members have joined and the amount of quality content has doubled.

Create a collaborative, supportive space online for Wikimedians.

One-off events for Ada Lovelace day have been the main offline venue for focused contribution. They create good content but run into the typical problem with edit-a-thons: no editor retention.

My pilot program at Loyola University Chicago is based on the idea that regular, focused workshops will create better content and more long-term editors than one-off edit-a-thons. I am working with the Women in Science and Math (WISAM) group, which aims to promote women in these disciplines and is a student-run initiative.

Find an interest group at an institution that aligns with your aims.

Editing workshops will be advertised to women but open to all and will happen every 2 weeks. We collect metrics on who attends and why, and incentivize returning more than once.

Create a safe editing space that can become a part of a routine for women editors. This is an invitation and an impetus to edit.

The first workshop had 11 attendees (short of the target 15) and word-of-mouth was essential in recruiting attendees. Free food was provided to attendees and they were given the chance to win a Wikipedia t-shirt.

Use networks and interest groups at an institution to invite people.

Challenges: Finding missing articles, learning model, sister projects