# **The Gender Gap in Wikipedia** (Systemic Bias, Gender Bias)

60 min class (allow more time for discussion for 75 or 90 min classes)

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| **Time** | **Content** | **Method** | **Resources** |
| Pre-class visit  15 min. | Professor already requires students to [read a chapter and view a Colbert video](http://libguides.lmu.edu/c.php?g=587911&p=4061845#s-lg-box-wrapper-14860787).  Email professor link to libguide and ask if students can read the following for homework:   * [Wikipedia: Systemic Bias](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Systemic_bias) * [Gender Bias on Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gender_bias_on_Wikipedia) * 5 Pillars of Wikipedia | Readings | Course LibGuide  <http://libguides.lmu.edu/WGST1100> |
| **Time** | **Content** | **Method** | **Resources** |
| 10 min | **Agenda**   * Is Wikipedia neutral? * Evaluating Wikipedia – group activity * Discussion * Finding Reliable Sources   **Is Wikipedia neutral?**  *“All encyclopedic content on Wikipedia must be written from a neutral point of view (NPOV), which means representing fairly, proportionately, and, as far as possible, without editorial bias, all of the significant views that have been* [*published by reliable sources*](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Verifiability) *on a topic.”* [WP:NPOV](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Wikipedia:NPOV&redirect=no)  Wikipedia bills itself as the free encyclopedia that anyone can edit, but not everyone does. Almost 90% of the editors are men. Wikipedia is not neutral, it is a reflection of its creators.  Warm up Questions   1. Describe the typical Wikipedian. 2. What voices are missing or marginalized in Wikipedia? 3. Why is this important? What are the intellectual costs, social costs? 4. How might Wikipedia’s editor demographic, as overwhelmingly male, shape topic coverage and representation?\* 5. How does Wikipedia shape or influence public knowledge and culture?\*   \*“[Theories: Wikipedia and the production of knowledge](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3ATheories_Wikipedia_and_the_production_of_knowledge.pdf)” by Eryk (Wiki Ed) (Own work) [CC BY-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) via Wikimedia Commons / modifications    Possible Student Responses   1. “*The average Wikipedia on the* [*English Wikipedia*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_Wikipedia) *is (1) a male, (2) technically inclined, (3) formally educated, (4) an English speaker (native or non-native), (5) aged 15–49, (6) from a majority-*[*Christian country*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity_by_country)*, (7) from a* [*developed nation*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Developed_country)*, (8) from the* [*Northern Hemisphere*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northern_Hemisphere)*, and (9) likely employed as a* [*white-collar worker*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White-collar_worker) *or enrolled as a* [*student*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Student) *rather than being employed as a* [*blue-collar worker*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blue-collar_worker)*.[2]” (source –* [*Wikipedia*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Systemic_bias)*)* 2. Missing voices  * Women * Those without Internet are underrepresented digital divide – (poor, elderly, disabled, African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, [Aboriginal p](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aboriginal_peoples_in_Canada)eoples) * People with little free time are underrepresented (caregivers, working poor, minorities) * Availability of sources may cause bias * English-speaking editors from Anglophone countries dominate * An American or European perspective may exist  1. Why important.   Skewed views, loss of knowledge, missing multiple points of view, diversity of views, distorted world view, limited viewpoints, perspective, different, ignorance, fewer article on women, weak articles, missing the complete story, missing women’s perspective on certain matters   1. Demographics  * Lack of info on female subjects * Only 25% biographical entries about women * Fewer and less extensive articles about women or topics important to women (topical bias) * Emphasis * Existing article are skewed to reflect gender imbalances, gender is over emphasized, personal lives, language * Few instances of detailed entries on women and gender studies, disability studies and on people of color on Wikipedia?  1. Influence    * One of the first results in any Google search.    * Free encyclopedia, the largest in the world    * Wikipedia was ranked fifth in the most popular websites globally.[[60]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Systemic_bias_in_Wikipedia#cite_note-Alexa-64)    * It’s the 6th largest website in the world.    * What Wikipedia chooses to include is shaping what we remember and value about our culture    * Knowledge gaps in Wikipedia | Intro & Discussion  (Discussion & Lecture) | <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Systemic_bias>  <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gender_bias_on_Wikipedia> |
| 5 min. | **Demo**  bell hooks  Demonstrate the anatomy of a Wikipedia page, Talk tab (Article policies, article grade, archived talk links) , View History tab, Edit tab  Article policies (3 core content policies)   1. [No original research](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:No_original_research) 2. [Neutral point of view](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Neutral_point_of_view) 3. [Verifiability](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Verifiability) | Demo | <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bell_hooks> |
| 15 min | **Evaluating Wikipedia** – group activity  Students must work in pairs (teams of 2)  If the class is 60 minutes – use short version of worksheet  If class is 75 minutes, 90 minutes or 3 hours – use long version of worksheet  worksheets   1. Wedding Dress of Kate Middleton 2. Helen M. Duncan 3. Anita Sarkeesian | Hands-on activity  Teams of 2 | 6 copies of each worksheet: 1, 2, & 3  Computers & internet connection |
| 10 min. | **Discussion**  Go over worksheet questions & answers   * Call on student teams to share   Most of the articles that we analyzed today were nominated for deletion because of notability.  Questions for the whole class   * What are Wikipedia’s standards for notability?   + <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Notability>     - If a topic has received **significant coverage** in [**reliable sources**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Reliable_sources) that are [**independent**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Independent_sources) **of the subject**, it is **presumed** to be suitable for a stand-alone article or list. * Is it harder to prove notability for articles about women or topics important to women? Why or why not? * What counts as a reliable source?   + <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Identifying_reliable_sources> * What is not a reliable source? * Are Wikipedia’s policies and community guidelines contributing to their gender gap in content? (and gender bias problem) Why or why not?   + Notability   + Reliable sources | Discussion |  |
| 10 min. | **Finding Reliable Sources**  You have access to reliable sources through the library. Wikipedia privileges peer reviewed journal articles and other scholarly information. Secondary sources. Information is not always free (paywalls), but the library subscribes to many databases.   * LibGuide tour * Demo a Reference Database * Demo Library Discovery Tool   + Keyword search   + Limiters     - Peer-Review     - Books | Demo | Course LibGuide or Women’s & Gender Studies LibGuide  <http://libguides.lmu.edu/c.php?g=587911&p=4061846>  Sage Knowledge or GVRL  OneSearch+ |
| 5-8 min | If students have topics, they can start searching OneSearch+ | Practice | OneSearch+ |
| 1 min | Wrap up  Questions  Reminder: Wikipedia edit-a-thon is on April 7! |  | Wikipedia edit-a-thon Flyers |

60 min class