

Critical *Point* 4

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Wikipedia
Research
Initiative

View v

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1 Wikipedia, Critical Point of View

Naam project	: Wikipedia, Critical Point of View
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1.1 Belangrijkste opgeleverde resultaten

- Wikipedia, Critical Point of View programma boek >> Een omschrijving per sessie en daarbinnen een overzicht van alle deelnemende sprekers. Daarnaast is van iedere deelnemer een korte biografie opgenomen. In programma boek zijn zowel het programma van Amsterdam als van het event in India, Bangalore opgenomen. Dit event is gehouden 12 en 13 januari 2010. Er is bewust gekozen om twee verschillende covers op te nemen, zodat er geen hiërarchisch verschil ontstaat tussen beide events.
- <http://networkcultures.org/cpov/> >> De website/weblog van het event. In deze blog is het event WikiWars, gehouden in India, Bangalore op 12 en 13 januari ook opgenomen. Na de zomer zal er een spinoff plaats vinden in Siegen, bij de Universitat Siegen. Begin 2011 zal er een derde event plaatsvinden in Taipei, Taiwan. Deze events zullen ook opgenomen worden in de blog Critical Point of View, Wikipedia Research Initiative. Het idee achter deze blog is het hebben van een vaste plek waar materiaal kan worden verzameld en geactualiseerd rondom dit thema.
- Opnames van alle presentaties >> alle presentaties zijn terug te vinden op <http://networkcultures.org/wpmu/cpov/videos/>. In dit systeem zijn de presentaties opgenomen voor een heldere documentatie.
- 150 tot 200 bezoekers, verdeeld over 2 dagen.
- Blogposts in relatie tot presentaties, zie ook hierop volgende pagina's.
- Nieuwe contacten onderling binnen de sprekers, alsook met het instituut. Netwerkuitbreiding en kenniscirculatie.
- Zeer uitgebreide lijst van bronnen zie hiervoor ook <http://networkcultures.org/cpov/resources/>. Dit zowel in het Engels, Portugees als Duits. Deze lijst geeft een uitgebreid overzicht van al het Wikipedia onderzoeksmateriaal.
- Documentatie / INC online media archief, foto's en illustraties.
- Publiek bezoekers programma.
- Verdere theorievorming met concepten als netwerkcultuur, georganiseerde netwerken en networked politics.

1.2 <http://networkcultures.org/cpov>

De blog is gedurende het project heel erg goed bezocht. Dit is de mainportal richting de doelgroep. Alle uitingen omtrent het event zijn hier gecommuniceerd. Deze blog zal bestaan blijven. Hier is divers archief materiaal van video interviews tot foto's terug te vinden.



Wikipedia Research Initiative

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resources

Table of content:

1. [Research\(ers\)](#)
2. [Research projects & hubs](#)
3. [Journals & books](#)
4. [Tools for researching the web & in particular the Wikipedia](#)
5. [Wikipedians+medians & wp-friends+observers](#)
6. [Projects on creating/collecting \(alternative\) knowledge](#)
7. [Papers, essays and other writings](#)

Research(ers)

On the Meta Wiki you find a — surely non-complete — [list](#) with researchers who tackle the 'wiki-issue' from all kind of angles. On this [wiki-site](#), and also [here](#) you find a list of different PhD theses, articles, and conference papers containing analysis of Wikipedia. For research(ers), lectures, and seminars in German see this [wiki-site](#) of the de_Wikipedia.

- [Felix Stalder](#) takes Wikipedia as example where Open Source/FOSS migrates to Open Culture.
- [Johanna Niesch](#) explores Wikipedia as transigual space of political knowledge production.
- [Kiran Jonnalagadda](#) has an interesting collection of Wikipedia bookmarks.
- [Mark Graham](#) is a Research Fellow at the Oxford Internet Institute and presents us the spatial contours of Wikipedia through analysis of geotagged Wikipedia articles.

Search

Recent Comments

- [julianabrunello](#) on [Wikipedia GLAM](#)
- [Interview with Florian Cramer | Wikipedia, Critical Point of View on Cramer: Objectivism and the Fictions of Collaborative Media](#)
- [Tweets that mention interesting tools related to Wikipedia | Wikipedia, Critical Point of View — Topix.com on interesting tools related to Wikipedia](#)

Recent Posts

- [Data en research juni 2010 — Kries random Wikipedia](#)
- [Amit Basole: Wikipedia is irrelevant and it's not](#)
- [Interview with Florian Cramer](#)
- [Wikipedia GLAM](#)
- [Interview mit Geert Lovink | ZEIT ONLINE](#)

2 Blogposts

Gedurende Wikipedia, Critical Point of View is er net als op voorgaande events een team van bloggers actief geweest. Dit team heeft alle presentaties bijgewoond en hier verslag van gedaan. Achtereenvolgens treft u alle blogpost aan die geschreven zijn tijdens de conferentie.

Een prachtig verslag van alles wat er zich ontwikkeld heeft gedurende de twee dagen.

Over het algemeen zijn de blogposts in het Engels. Als bijlage is er nog een Nederlands verslag toegevoegd, gemaakt door studenten van de Universiteit van Utrecht, Nieuwe Media en Digitale Cultuur in Utrecht.

[Verslag Wikipedia conferentie door studenten van de Universiteit van Utrecht](#)

Op 26 en 27 maart vond in de OBA in Amsterdam de Wikipedia Conferentie "Critical Point of View" plaats. Tijdens dit evenement werd door verschillende mensen gekeken naar de problemen van Wikipedia naar aanleiding van participatie, encyclopedische functie, nationale en internationale functie, techniek en analyse. Er waren zes sessies tijdens deze twee dagen en elk onderdeel bestond uit drie of vier sprekers. De onderdelen waren: Wiki Theory, Encyclopedia Histories, Wiki Art, Wikipedia Analytics, Designing Debate en Globale Issues and Outlooks.

Een team van studenten die verbonden zijn aan de opleiding New Media and Digital Culture in Utrecht hebben een verslag van een aantal sessie van de twee conferentiedagen gemaakt: Bas Bergervoet, Snezana Nedeski, Marijke Tiemensma, David van Toor, Natalia Vijlbrief, Samuel Zwaan.

Session 1: Wiki Theory (door Bas Bergervoet en Marijke Tiemensma)

Ramón Reichert (A) – Rethinking Wikipedia: Power, Knowledge and the Technologies of the Self

De eerste spreker op het Critical Point of View Congres over Wikipedia was Ramón Reichert van de Universiteit van Wenen. Hij heeft al verschillende boeken geschreven, zoals "Amateure im Netz" of "Das Wissen der Börse". Hij doet onderzoek naar de historiografie van media en technologie, de impact van nieuwe media en communicatietechnologieën. Op het congres sprak hij in de sessie Wiki Theory over kennis en macht op Wikipedia.

Ramón Reichert omschrijft Wikipedia als een fundamentele organisatie in de manier waarop tegenwoordig kennis wordt verzameld en weergegeven. Op Wikipedia werken mensen met verschillende achtergronden samen. Wikipedia representeert een speciale manier van machtsrelaties, de macht ligt niet bij één persoon maar bij het netwerk van gebruikers en bewerkers. Het uitvoeren van die macht leidt volgens Reichert tot nieuwe objecten van kennis.

De moderne macht is dus decentraal. Wikipedia zou daarom neutraal zijn, zonder iemand die de macht claimt. Reichert haalt hierbij Foucault aan. Van 'Technology of domination' (Foucault) gaan we naar technologie van de zelf door zelfregulering. Het individu kan zijn eigen subjectiviteit veranderen door technologie van de zelf. Het subject wordt niet langer gedomineerd, maar er is vrijheid en individualiteit door de technologie van Wikipedia, die uitnodigt om te reflecteren op jezelf. Men kan kennis die hij beheerst delen met anderen en daarmee zichzelf profileren.

Toch is Wikipedia niet vrij van overheersing en macht, het is alleen verschoven. Er wordt gewerkt aan een normatief gebaseerd archief van kennis, waarbij sommige kennis ge-edit wordt en sommige kennis geaccepteerd wordt. Dit is alleen niet gebaseerd op macht en prestige, maar op kennis, bewijsvoering en technologie van de zelf. http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ram%C3%B3n_Reichert

Jeanette Hofmann (DE) – Wikipedia between Emancipation and Self-Regulation

De Duitse Sociologe Jeanette Hofmann was de tweede spreker op het congres. Haar verhaal ging over emancipatie en zelfregulering en de positie van Wikipedia daarbij.

Wikipedia wordt volgens Hofmann gestuurd door de vraag naar nieuwe, emancipatorische manieren van collectieve kennis productie. Op het internet is volgens Hofmann een traditie van zelfregulering en regulering van kennis. Er is als het ware een levenscirkel van zelfregulering.

Zelfregulering gaat samen met hoge verwachtingen van vooruitgang, nieuwheid, flexibiliteit en grenzeloosheid, autonomie en emancipatie. Het kan echter leiden tot crisis en misbruik van macht. De theoreticus waar Hofmann haar theorieën op baseert is De Sousa Santos. Hij stelde dat kennis tijdelijk is, altijd veranderlijk. Alle kennis heeft zijn eigen blinde plek, en er is geen echte goed of fout.

De Sousa Santos stelt ook dat experience (ervaring) en expectation (verwachting) niet hetzelfde zijn. Er is

een verschil tussen ervaringen uit het verleden en verwachtingen van de toekomst. We geloven in vooruitgang, innovatie en leren. Santos maakt onderscheid tussen regulering en emancipatie. Regulering gaat over normen, instituten, behouden van sociale orde en emancipatie over het vestigen van 'goede' orde, waarbij de afstand tussen ervaring en verwachting groter wordt. Sociale verandering is een wedstrijd tussen regulering en emancipatie. Kennis kent ook vormen van regulering en emancipatie. Kennis als regulering gaat over de overgang van chaos naar orde, moderne wetenschap, 'common sense'. Kennis als emancipatie bevraagt de gevestigde orde, 'not yet', is altijd in beweging, een taak.

Hierdoor is Hofmann dus één van de grote critici vandaag op het argument dat Wikipedia neutraal is. Aangezien er altijd een blinde plek is en kennis altijd verandert, is er geen één waarheid en is neutraliteit ook onmogelijk. Objectieve kennis door het volgen van de regels is onmogelijk, het zou alleen maar voor een beperking zorgen. Een artikel op Wikipedia kan zelfs verwijderd worden als de meerderheid van de editors dat wil, er is dus sprake van gereguleerde kennis. Er moet volgens Hofmann juist een overzicht komen van alle verschillende gezichtspunten, waarbij ze een oproep doet voor "a plurality of knowledge". Aangezien een encyclopedie, en zeker Wikipedia, vaak gebruikt wordt op even snel op te zoeken wat iets betekent of kort een overzicht te krijgen van een theorie of een gebeurtenis, is het de vraag of een compleet overzicht van meerdere gezichtspunten wel gewaardeerd zal worden door de gebruikers.

We hebben Jeanette Hofmann gevraagd om wat extra toelichting voor de camera te geven. [video: <http://www.vimeo.com/10461578>]

Mathieu O'Neil (AU) - The Critique of Law in Free Online Projects

De derde spreker in deze sessie is Mathieu O'Neil van de Université Paris Sorbonne. Hij is auteur van het boek *Cyberchiefs. Autonomy and Authority in online Tribes*

http://www.neural.it/art/2009/07/mathieu_oneil_cyberchiefs_auto.phtml

O'Neil spreekt over de gebruikerscultuur van Wikipedia, ofwel de 'tribal culture', die, in tegenstelling dan wat er wordt uitgedragen, wel degelijk hiërarchisch van aard is.

O'Neil legt allereerst uit hoe hij Wikipedia plaatst: het is een blanke mannenbolwerk. Met slechts 13% vrouwelijke editors is het normaal dat bepaald gedrag zoals agressief commentaar en flaming getolereerd wordt. Er is een vorm van Machismo bij Wiki's aanwezig. Om uit te leggen hoe een online tribe werkt gebruikt O'Neil de termen charisma (autonomie), hacken, soevereiniteit (regels) en archaisch. Om te begrijpen hoe Wikipedia werkt als een tribe is volgens O'Neill zowel charisma als soevereiniteit heel belangrijk.

De theorie van O'Neil focust op het werk van Boltanski. Boltanski ziet het veld van rechtvaardiging als een open veld. Iedereen heeft andere rechtvaardigingen, wat kan leiden tot conflicten en kritiek. De dingen die volgens O'Neil tot conflicten op Wikipedia kunnen leiden zijn: vage regels, geen institutie, snelheid, diversiteit van mensen en doelen. De factoren die hiervoor zorgen zijn: Het aantal mensen en artikelen, de issues zelf (vooral controversiële issues als oorlog en homeopathie, waar vele verschillende meningen over bestaan), identiteit, en de 1500 administrators die mensen en artikelen kunnen blokkeren.

Mathieu O'Neil, Wikipedia: Experts Are Us, <http://mondediplo.com/2009/05/15wikipedia>

Gérard Wormser (FR) – The Knowledge Bar

Gérard Wormser vergelijkt Wikipedia met een 'knowledge bar', een kennisbar, zoals deze aan het begin van de 18e eeuw in Frankrijk te vinden waren. Intellectuelen kwamen in literaire café's samen en discussieerden hetgeen ze gelezen hadden. Hieruit ontstond de eerste encyclopedie van Diderot en d'Alembert, die volgens Wormser de directe aanleiding voor de Franse Revolutie is geweest. Foucault heeft erover geschreven dat de nieuw ontstane kennisstructuren de manier van denken en leven van mensen heeft veranderd. Met Wikipedia zien we echter niet hoe mensen in het openbaar met de kennis ervan omgaan: open toegang tot kennis zegt nog niets op de regulatieve en/of emancipatorische effecten ervan op de maatschappij. We weten dus ook niet wat de kennisstructuur van Wikipedia teweeg zal brengen. Wormser stelt daarom dat het belangrijk is te onderzoeken wat er precies gebeurt, om een eventuele grootse verandering (zoals de Franse Revolutie) te kunnen begrijpen.

De collaboratieve structuren van Wikipedia zijn een goed startpunt: wanneer is samenwerking gezond en hoe raakt het gecorrumpeerd? Wormser vindt dat we nieuwe collaboratieve instituten moeten uitvinden, die (net als in de 18e eeuw!) niet slechts in universitaire of activistische kringen plaatsvinden. Ironisch genoeg geeft hij daarvoor de Wikimedia Foundation als een goed voorbeeld, maar er zijn er meer van nodig.

<http://networkcultures.org/wpmu/cpov/2010/03/26/gerard-wormser-is-wikipedia-a-mirror-of-our-society-or-is-it-new-in-the-society-of-knowledge/>

Session 2: “Encyclopedia Histories” 26-03-2010 (13.30h-15.30h) (David van Toor)

Joseph Reagle (USA) – *Wikipedia and Encyclopedic Anxiety*

Joseph Reagle gaat in zijn betoog in op Wikipedia als een collectieve inspanning en een invloedrijk fenomeen in het publieke debat. Hoewel het vaak als iets nieuw wordt uitgelegd, mag deze “collaborative practice” volgens hem niet als een nieuw fenomeen worden gezien. Het maken van associaties tussen verschillende soorten kennis, zo betoogt hij, is iets wat decennia geleden al gebeurde, al zij het dat dit tegenwoordig door nieuwe technologieën andere vormen heeft aangenomen. Reagle werkt in zijn betoog toe naar het hoofdargument dat Wikipedia moet worden gezien als de belichaming van bredere maatschappelijke angsten. Deze angsten hebben vooral te maken met onzekerheden over de legitimiteit en feitelijke correctheid van een dergelijke manier van collectieve verslaggeving. Het zijn vragen over de integriteit van kennis en de auteur en de verschillende manieren waarop kennis wordt geïnterpreteerd.
<http://reagle.org/joseph/Talks/2010/0326-encyclopedic-anxiety.html>

Charles van den Heuvel (NL) – *Authoritative Annotations, Encyclopedia Universalis Mundaneum, Wikipedia and the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

Charles van den Heuvel leunt in het licht van Wikipedia sterk op de ideeën van Paul Otlet (1868-1944), een Belgische bibliograaf en pionier in het denken over de documentatie van menselijke kennis. Zo stelt Van den Heuvel dat Wikipedia teveel is georganiseerd, zoals dat bij een krant ook het geval is. Van den Heuvel ziet graag een sterker associatief karakter van de informatie die op Wikipedia te vinden. Daarnaast pleit hij voor meer mogelijkheden om als gebruiker annotaties te kunnen toevoegen aan artikelen en een duidelijker overzicht van de gedane aanpassingen binnen de artikelen. Van den Heuvel pleit dan ook voor een onderzoek naar een nieuw soort interface die de eerdergenoemde tekortkomingen kan wegwerken. Hij spreekt daarbij over een hybride wiki, waarbij op alle fronten door de gebruiker kan worden ingegrepen.
<http://virtualknowledgestudio.nl/people/vks-staff/charles-van-den-heuvel/>

Dan O’Sullivan (GB) - *An Encyclopedia for the Times: Thoughts on Wikipedia from a Historical Perspective*

Dan O’ Sullivan ziet Wikipedia als een radicale encyclopedie. Het radicale is volgens hem sterk terug te zien in de non-lineaire opbouw van de site, waarbij de gebruikers hun eigen pad uitzetten, als een boek die door de gebruiker zelf wordt gecreëerd. O’ Sullivan spendeert het grootste gedeelte van zijn betoog aan een historisch inzicht in de herkomst van de encyclopedie. Aan het einde van zijn betoog wordt het mijn inziens een stuk interessanter, wanneer hij stelt dat Wikipedia, als radicale encyclopedie, sterk verschilt van de ‘conservatieve’ encyclopedie zoals deze voorheen werd samengesteld. Toch ziet O’ Sullivan een aantal knelpunten in het gebruik van Wikipedia, voornamelijk met betrekking tot de NPOV: de “Neutral Point Of View”. Volgens O’ Sullivan is de feitelijke informatie die op Wikipedia wordt gegeven sterk eenzijdig te noemen, waardoor saaie en steriele artikelen ontstaan. In plaats van een consensus na te streven, zo stelt hij, zou het mooier zijn om meerdere kanten van het verhaal te zien.
<http://networkcultures.org/wpmu/cpov/2010/03/26/dan-osullivan-an-encyclopedia-for-the-times/>

Alan Shapiro (USA, DE) – *Gustave Flaubert Laughs at Wikipedia*

De vierde en laatste spreker van deze sessie, legt zich toe op de gedachte dat Wikipedia niet alleen een representatie is van kennis, maar ook van stupiditeit. Shapiro stelt dat veel van deze kennis is gebaseerd op maatschappelijke geaccepteerde clichés. Volgens Shapiro is Wikipedia een voorbeeld van de democratisering van kennis, maar stelt hij dat er een betere balans moet komen tussen enerzijds de contributie van wetenschappelijke auteurs en niet-wetenschappelijke auteurs. Het grootste gedeelte van zijn betoog gaat Shapiro in op de representatie van stupiditeit binnen Wikipedia en daarbij laat hij het voorbeeld zien een artikel op Wikipedia over Jean Baudrillard, die volgens hem veel foutieve informatie bevat, gebaseerd op de eerdergenoemde maatschappelijk geaccepteerde clichés.

Gesteld kan worden dat alle vier de sprekers een totaal andere invalshoek hadden binnen deze sessie over “Encyclopedian Histories”. De rode draad echter was duidelijk, deze liet zich kenmerken over vragen als integriteit en legitimiteit van de content die wordt tentoongespreid binnen Wikipedia. Persoonlijk vond ik het betoog van Van den Heuvel erg interessant, met name omdat hij zich niet alleen kritisch positioneerde ten opzichte van Wikipedia, maar ook daadwerkelijk met aanbevelingen kwam om Wikipedia te veranderen en te optimaliseren. Dit raakte eigenlijk ook aan het betoog van Shapiro, waarin hij van leer trok over de gevolgen van de democratisering van kennis. Hoewel O’ Sullivan deze democratisering ook vooral zag in het

betrekken van meerdere kanten van het verhaal, lijkt deze laatste toch zeer onwaarschijnlijk. We zien hier vooral een spiegeling van de traditionele journalistiek, die eigenlijk nooit strikt objectief is, maar altijd gekleurd. En dit sluit uiteindelijk ook weer aan bij het betoog van Reagle over de betrekkelijkheid van het 'nieuwe' van Wikipedia. Het is mijn inziens dan ook belangrijk om te begrijpen dat Wikipedia als gezamenlijke inspanning nooit als een objectieve bron moet worden gezien, net als traditionele encyclopedieën nooit volledig objectieve kennis kunnen brengen. Dat een fenomeen als Wikipedia kennis democratiseert valt niet te ontkennen, de vraag blijft echter wat dit voor gevolgen heeft voor de manier waarop Wikipedia wordt gebruikt en wordt beschouwd.

Session 5: “Designing Debate” 27-03-2010 (13.30h-15.30h) (door Snezana Nedeski)

Wikipedia's Mythe van Objectiviteit

Florian Cramer vergelijkt in zijn presentatie getiteld “Fictions of collaborative media” Opensource en Wikipedia met elkaar. Hij stelt dat dit de enige twee voorbeelden zijn die collaboratie succesvol hebben gemaakt. De prijs die ze hiervoor echter betalen is dat ze proberen conflict te vermijden door generieke Operating Systems (in het geval van Opensource) en generieke informatie (in het geval van Wikipedia) te leveren.

Wikipedia's enorme nadruk op 'objectiviteit' houdt volgens Cramer de hele community van Wikipedia bij elkaar. Het probleem is volgens hem echter dat deze fictie (de mythe dat je deze vorm van objectiviteit kunt hebben) niet schaalbaar is. Tot op een zekere hoogte can de community samen gehouden worden door dit principe, maar zodra het groeit wordt dit onmogelijk. “Objectiviteit op Wikipedia bestaat niet.”

Door de visuele manier waarop Wikipedia zichzelf en de artikelen presenteert, probeert het objectiviteit en neutraliteit te creëren. Het ontwerp laat niet zien wanneer het artikel geschreven is, wanneer het werd aangepast, wie het geschreven heeft en hoeveel mensen het geschreven hebben. Dat terwijl Wikipedia een enorme nadruk legt op objectiviteit. Florian Cramer pleit, net zoals de filosoof Karl Popper in “The Open Society and Its Enemies”, voor een open cultuur zodat we kunnen zien wat er precies met het artikel is gebeurd door de tijd heen.

EpicPedia

Annemieke van der Hoek, aanwezig om Florian Cramer te ondersteunen, laat haar oplossing zien die een open cultuur introduceert. Afgeleid van Brecht's 'epische theater', heeft zij haar afstudeerproject de naam 'EpicPedia' [Http://www.epicpedia.org](http://www.epicpedia.org) gegeven, een applicatie die via de knop “Show/hide reality” een Wikipedia pagina naar keuze laat zien, compleet in de stijl van een open cultuur. De getoonde pagina is niet bedoeld als makkelijk leesmateriaal, aangezien het precies laat zien wat er wanneer allemaal met het artikel gebeurt is én door wie. Je kunt uiteindelijk dus zien welke gebruiker het grootste deel van het artikel heeft samengesteld (dit word accuraat weergegeven in het aantal karakters) en krijgt zo veel meer informatie over de totstandkoming en de groei van het artikel. Eventuele discrepanties of opvallende discussies of veranderingen zijn daardoor ook makkelijk te zien.

Volgens Florian Cramer is deze applicatie een erg goed initiatief. “Als je Wikipedia gebruikt als een bron van kennis, moet het wel mogelijk zijn om een kritische blik te kunnen werpen op de manier waarop het tot stand is gekomen.”

Kan Wikipedia oorlog neutraal maken?

De Finse Teemu Mikkonen besprak in zijn presentatie “Kosovo War in Wikipedia, Tracing the Conflict and Consensus in the Wikipedia Talk –pages” tijdens de CPOV conferentie de Kosovo Oorlog en hoe die wordt besproken in de Wikipedia Talk-pages. Hij maakte daarbij gebruik van de term ‘disputed neutrality’: het hebben van een bepaalde point of view die ontstaan is door etniciteit. Volgens Mikkonen is het in bepaalde gevallen, zoals in de gevoelige kwestie rond de Kosovo oorlog, niet mogelijk om de complete neutraliteit te bereiken waar Wikipedia naar streeft.

Oplossen van conflicten: Wikipedia richtlijnen

Wikipedia heeft een *etiquette*¹ voor Wikipediërs, welke de grondregels neerlegt voor de sociale omgang tussen redacteurs op Wikipedia. Elkaar respecteren en beleefdheid spelen daarin een grote rol. Ook raden

¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Etiquette>

ze aan om met elkaar te praten over verschillen van mening om er samen uit te komen.

Wikipedia's officiële richtlijnen lijken er erg op zijn gericht om elkaar met respect te behandelen en vooral beleefd te blijven. De meeste redacteurs lijken zich daar op de Talk-pagina's verrassend goed aan te houden, volgens Mikkonen. Redacteurs proberen op uiterst beleefde wijze hun conflicten op te lossen om een zo neutraal mogelijk artikel te reproducieren. Maar vooral bij artikelen die gaan over controversiële onderwerpen zoals de Kosovo oorlog willen deze officiële richtlijnen nog wel eens in de achtergrond verdwijnen.

Oplossen van conflicten: Onofficiële conversatiecultuur

Volgens Mikkonen zijn er drie veelvoorkomende soorten redacteurs in Wikipedia, met elk verschillende eigenschappen:

1. **Extremist:** vindt dat er maar één echte en eenzijdige waarheid is. Ze reageren meestal anoniem en hebben extreme politieke meningen.
2. **Gatekeeper:** ook wel een 'deletionist'. Dit zijn admins, actieve Wikipedians, die vinden dat er een consensus van de waarheid zou moeten zijn die gebaseerd is op gelijkwaardige discussie en / of democratische stemming.
3. **Situationist:** vindt dat er helemaal geen waarheid is en dat zelfs 'democratische consensus' altijd bevooroordeeld is. De waarheid is altijd situationeel gebaseerd op context.

Het samenkomen van deze redacteurs zorgt vaak voor conflicten op de Talk-pagina's van Wikipedia. Mikkonen koos specifiek voor de Talk-pagina van de 'Kosovo War' omdat veel conflicten over neutraliteit op Wikipedia ontstaan door etniciteit.

In oorlog zijn er vanzelfsprekend meerdere partijen en meerdere belevenissen. Elke partij heeft soortgelijke manieren om hun eigen standpunten te rechtvaardigen, maar hun standpunten zijn verschillend, soms zelf tegenovergesteld. "Afhankelijk van de point-of-view kan NAVO worden gezien als verdediger van de mensenrechten of als een dodelijke organisatie die onschuldige mensen doodt. Zo kan het Servische / ex-Joegoslavische leger óf als een slachtoffer dat zichzelf verdedigd worden gezien of als de aanvallende overwinnaar die massamoordenaar is geworden."

Conflicten op Wikipedia ontstaan dan ook vaak tussen verschillende culturen. Zo zullen Europeanen een andere mening hebben over de oorlog in Kosovo dan bijvoorbeeld de Serviërs of Albanen.

Door deze verschillende standpunten in de staat van oorlog, ontstaan er vier paradoxen in 'war talk':

1. Men hoopt dat Wikipedia neutraal is ook al is het moeilijk om neutrale informatie te verkrijgen over de gebeurtenissen tijdens de oorlog (er zijn immers altijd meerdere kanten aan). Informatie in tijden van oorlog is zelden neutraal!
2. Er is in tijden van oorlog en na oorlog sprake van *bevooroordeelde objectiviteit*: er is meer informatie beschikbaar vanuit het perspectief van de winnaar en er is vaak ook geen eerstehands informatie over oorlog. De vraag wat een betrouwbare bron is, is zeker in 'war talk' problematisch.
3. Wikipedia's verifieerbaarheid-principe is moeilijk toepasbaar. Hoe verifieer je immers persoonlijke, unieke ervaringen die in een bepaalde context hebben plaatsgevonden? Moet elke zinvolle informatie verifieerbaar zijn, terwijl persoonlijke ervaringen tijdens oorlogen ook vol informatie zitten?
4. De hegemonie van de Engelse taal is ook een belangrijke paradox. De kritische massa in andere taalgebieden is simpelweg te klein. Bovendien is de "lingua franca" op Wikipedia (en in de wetenschap) ook Engels.

Wikipedia's concept van neutraliteit is, vooral als het gaat om conflicten en oorlogen, te problematisch. De notie van neutraliteit op zich kun je al in twijfel trekken. Immers, wie bepaalt er wat neutraal is? Zeker als we dit bekijken vanuit een oorlogssituatie. De burgers en de soldaten hebben de oorlog meegemaakt, wij niet. Wie zijn wij om te bepalen wat er gebeurt is? Oorlog is nooit neutraal en wordt dat ook niet ineens omdat Wikipedia er een neutrale blik op wil werpen. De kennis die uiteindelijk getoond wordt over een oorlog is uiteindelijk altijd een kwestie van selectie en keuze geweest. Je weet immers niet alles en je kunt ook niet meer terugvinden wat er precies gebeurd is. Bovendien zijn er andere meningen over wat er precies gebeurd is tijdens een oorlog.

Als getuige kun je oorlog bovendien alleen maar subjectief meemaken, en vervolgens is subjectieve kennis het enige wat je kunt aanbieden om door te geven.

Volgens Mikkonen wordt er op Wikipedia op bepaalde manieren beïnvloed wat neutrale informatie is. Veel informatie op Wikipedia excludeert volgens hem bepaalde standpunten die destructief zouden kunnen zijn

voor andere (dan 'westers') manieren van leven. Dit noemen we **Cultural Sensitivity**. Daarnaast overheerst er op Wikipedia een hegemonie van 'westerse' ideologieën en wordt informatie die niet voldoet aan de NPOV policy verwijderd.

Hier is Mikkonen voornamelijk geagiteerd over. Eerstehands kennis volgens hem namelijk ook erg waardevol. Zou ware kennis altijd neutraal moeten zijn? Vraagt hij zich af. Het verhaal van iemand die de oorlog ook daadwerkelijk heeft meegemaakt is erg waardevol en ja, partijdig en valt dus niet binnen de NPOV policy. "Want wie zijn wij om te zeggen dat hun perspectief niet de waarheid is? Ze kunnen het daadwerkelijk zo ervaren hebben. Zij hebben de oorlog meegemaakt, wij niet, wie zijn wij om te zeggen wat er gebeurd is?"

Wikipedia's proces naar neutraliteit

Andrew Famiglietti bespreekt Wikipedia's befaamde standpunt van neutraliteit. Volgens Wikipedia houdt een neutraal standpunt in dat "[m]en probeert ideeën en feiten op een zodanige wijze te presenteren dat zowel voor- als tegenstanders ermee uit de voeten kunnen. Complete tevredenheid is moeilijk te bereiken; het is om te beginnen al moeilijk een neutrale definitie van het begrip 'neutraliteit' te geven. Wat we wel kunnen proberen, is een manier van schrijven te vinden die acceptabel is voor alle 'redelijke' personen ondanks hun verschillende meningen"².

Tijdens zijn presentatie "Negotiating the Neutral Point of View: Politics and the Moral Economy of Wikipedia" tijdens de CPOV conferentie in Amsterdam, trad Famiglietti in de voetsporen van E.P. Thompson. Dit deed hij door Thompson's term 'Moral Economy'³ toe te passen op Wikipedia en te stellen dat de redacteurs op Wikipedia geleid worden door een moreel gevoel van wat wel en wat niet een legitiem moment is om in te grijpen in het productieproces. De morele economie is een economie gebaseerd op goedheid, eerlijkheid en gerechtigheid.

Famiglietti merkt op dat Wikipedia's notie van neutraliteit vaak te simpel wordt geïnterpreteerd en dat er vergeten wordt dat Wikipedia redacteurs vaak met elkaar moeten onderhandelen in hun gezamenlijke poging om de Neutral Point of View (NPOV) policy te interpreteren en toe te passen in de productie van Wikipedia's artikelen.

Case Study: Gaza war

De pogingen van redacteurs om de NPOV policy toe te passen tijdens het productieproces leidt tot een enorme hoeveelheid aan onderhandelingen en conflicten. Andrew Famiglietti bespreekt de Engelse Wikipedia pagina "Gaza war"⁴ als case study om te illustreren wat voor problemen de NPOV policy met zich meebrengt.

Wikipedia's zogenaamde 'morele economie' vindt plaats op de "Talk pages", waar redacteurs per artikel bespreken waar ze het wel en niet mee eens zijn en wat ze denken dat er veranderd moet worden. Op deze pagina's willen nog wel eens verhitte discussies ontstaan. De discussie op de Talk pagina van de 'Gaza war'⁵ komt volgens Famiglietti neer op ongeveer 600 geprinte pagina's.

Redactionele problemen

Het 'Gaza war' artikel groeide van één zin naar 8 pagina's in 25 uur, naar 30 pagina's enkele maanden later. De immense snelheid waarmee Wikipedia artikelen veranderen en uitgebreid worden maakt het moeilijk voor redacteurs om te begrijpen wat er precies gebeurt. Ze klagen over de moeilijk te navigeren Talk pagina en de overenthousiaste archiverings-bots. De redacteurs hebben geen controle over wat de bots doen, waardoor het opvragen van een bepaald discussiepunt moeilijk wordt gemaakt en sommigen zelfs in het archief verdwijnen.

Het proces van het aanpassen van het artikel lijkt dan ook constant in cirkels rond te gaan. Een controversieel artikel blijft onder discussie staan en wordt constant aangepast.

² http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Neutraal_standpunt

³ Thompson, E.P. (1971). "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century." Past and Present, Vol. 50, Feb. 1971. Pp. 76-136.

⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gaza_War

⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk:Gaza_War

Wikipedia houdt een lijst met controversiële issues⁶ bij, waarvan ze van mening zijn dat er meer aandacht moet worden besteedt om een NPOV te behouden. De lijst lijkt eindeloos.

Wikipedia's hoofdprincipes van neutraliteit

Neutraliteit op Wikipedia is geen gegeven, en daar zijn ze van op de hoogte. Wikipedia hecht dan ook veel waarde aan het *proces* van neutraliteit. Wat ze precies onder neutraliteit verstaan wordt constant heronderhandeld en herbesproken. In dit proces worden ze geleid door drie hoofdprincipes:

4. **NPOV** – Neutral Point of View⁷

5. **WP:V** – Verifiability not truth⁸

6. **WP:OR** – No original research⁹

De definitie van het NPOV principe is in de inleiding al besproken en is dan ook erg belangrijk in het behalen van Wikipedia's neutraliteit. De WP:OR regel spreekt voor zichzelf; informatie op Wikipedia moet altijd gebaseerd zijn op ander onderzoek, niet op onderzoek dat ze zelf hebben gedaan. Dit garandeert dat de schrijvers op Wikipedia zelf geen invloed kunnen hebben op de resultaten van dat onderzoek.

WP:V - De problemen van verifieerbaarheid

Andrew Famiglietti is niet zo zeker van de waarde van het tweede principe van "Verifiability not truth". In het proces van het verkrijgen van neutraliteit is er een verschuiving geweest van het zoeken naar de waarheid naar het zoeken naar verifieerbaarheid. Omdat de term 'waarheid' op zich al erg discutabel is en dus moeilijk gebruikt kan worden als meting voor neutraliteit, werkt verifieerbaarheid iets makkelijker. In het geval van de Gaza oorlog houdt Wikipedia zich dus niet meer bezig met een zoektocht naar de absolute waarheid, maar met het vinden van verifieerbare informatie en het bediscussiëren van die bronnen. Hun notie van de waarheid is zodanig gedefinieerd dat het gelijk staat aan het hebben van verifieerbare bronnen.

In de eerste instantie lijkt dit een goede methode te zijn om het waarheidsgehalte van informatie te bepalen. Maar, zo merkte Famiglietti op, het is problematisch om te zeggen dat iets waar bronnen voor zijn, gelijk staat aan de waarheid. En hier vallen de beperkingen van het proces van neutraliteit op. De shift naar het vinden van betrouwbare bronnen is volgens hem "erg zinvol voor Wikipedia om het redactie-proces door te laten gaan, maar er is een probleem met *dominerende* bronnen." In het geval van de Gaza oorlog, vertelt hij ons, ligt het probleem bij een dominerende hoeveelheid aan Europese en Israëlische bronnen. Dus het probleem met Wikipedia's principe van verifieerbaarheid ligt in het feit "dat er erg weinig toegang is naar andere bronnen zoals de Palestijnse en dit is erg zorgwekkend. Het artikel over de Gaza oorlog heeft dus veel verifieerbare bronnen, maar alleen maar van bepaalde standpunten".

Andrew Famiglietti wil ons er bewust van maken dat het neutraliteitsprincipe op Wikipedia veel ingewikkelder is dan we denken. Vooral bij onderwerpen die gevoelig liggen is het moeilijk om de redacteurs met een sterke, eenzijdige opinie over het onderwerp in toom te houden. Dit komt voornamelijk voor bij artikelen over etnische conflicten. Terwijl onderlinge problemen tussen redacteurs (al dan niet met veel moeite) via o.a. redelijke discussie kan worden opgelost, is het probleem met bronnen veel groter. Het idee dat iets op verifieerbare bronnen gebaseerd moet zijn is tot zekere mate een goed idee. Maar net zoals mensen hebben ook bronnen nog wel eens een bepaalde point of view en kunnen ze eenzijdig zijn. Voor Wikipedia zal het proces van neutraliteit zich hier dan ook op moeten gaan richten en rekening houden met het feit dat momenteel bijvoorbeeld Amerikaanse en Europese bronnen op Wikipedia domineren.

Interview with Dr. Athina Karatzogianni (door Samuel Zwaan)

Dr. Athina Karatzogianni is a lecturer in Media, Culture and Society at the University of Hull. Although Karatzogianni has published several books regarding subjects like cyberconflict, global politics and powerstructures, she states at the beginning of her presentation Wikipedia was a rather undiscovered domain for her. Nevertheless Karatzogianni is able to use her expertise to analyze Wikipedia and state that Wikipedia and similar endeavors, provide a battleground for dominance in our global political consciousness. This battleground has internal conflicts, competitors within the open software movement and external others

⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:List_of_controversial_issues

⁷ http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Neutraal_standpunt

⁸ <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:V>

⁹ <http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:OR>

in the overall business of knowledge. Wikipedia's content is not radical, it is the actual process, which is radical.

Samuel Zwaan was able to have a short interview with Dr. Athina Karatzogianni and tried to find out more about her view on governments and their use of information and communication technology.

Samuel Zwaan: *Today it is very common that governments use information and communication technologies like the internet. Governments refer to themselves as E-government and use buzzwords like eParticipation. What is your view on these developments and this promise of participation?*

Athina Karatzogianni: One of the problems is that within the public management discourse the citizens aren't really being seen as citizens. Citizens are in fact seen as customers. So the first problem of e-government is that the citizen is not being seen as a citizen. It means that the public should not just be offered services, but that they should have the opportunity to participate full blown. It should be possible to chat and have discussions directly, not just be able to fill in another tax form and say this is e-government. So how can we make it interactive so that citizens feel like citizens in a democracy?

SZ: *Do you think governments could learn from 'open source' initiatives like Wikipedia? For instance in a way that people can actively adjust and add to government proposals?*

AK: I think that governments can learn from everything that is going on in cyberspace at the moment. It is a school for the new generation, for people in their 20's 30's. But we are talking now about the First World, the advanced world. Not in every country it is possible to access the internet and learn from different open source projects, but they are getting there. So if you are thinking about e-government you are talking about the advanced countries. What these governments should be doing is exploring every possibility that is accessible online, because that means that they can get people to participate. If you look at the Obama campaign, if you look at how he used social networking he used a variety of options. It is better to have a thousand people Blogging for you than have one million people talking like we are doing now. Because the Bloggers are going to find another thousand people and another thousand, the whole thing multiplies. So governments have to become very dynamic, they need to have a very dynamic online presence.

SZ: *This sounds very much like a salestalk from the government. Governments trying to get votes via social networking, exploiting the people, propaganda...*

AK: But they do that anyway. The way you posed the question is: "what do governments do"? Now, in my opinion governments and states are slowly becoming obsolete. But if you are asking what they can do to survive... Maybe that is a better question: "what can they do to survive"? They have to exploit the population and younger people who know how to manipulate these technologies, that is the only way to do it and this is this way that it has been done for years. These people with creative talents will move the world forward. But the question is does the state survive or doesn't it, does that even matter anymore? It depends on what claims are being made by the states. If a state is democratic it should be engaging the citizen as a citizen and not as a customer. If it is totalitarian it will use technologies against its citizens. In the UK, technology is used in extreme surveillance operations, expressive of a neo-totalitarian state and the new Digital Economy Bill targets individuals for digital piracy in a way that will prove very difficult to enforce reasonably. So it all depends on where you are...

SZ: *So it seems you are pretty critical on the notion of e-government because it seems more like surviving than innovating...*

AK: If they were innovating they would actually engage in open source initiatives, engage full blown. But that means they lose their hierarchies and lose their power. The discussion is actually more fundamental than just the governments trying to survive, the whole system is in flux.

[Introduction by Geert Lovink](#)

Posted: March 26, 2010 at 10:37 am | By: Tjerk Timan | Tags: [CPoV](#), [introduction](#), [lovink](#), [wikipedia](#)

Welcome all. This conference is about framing debates of Wikipedia and online collaborative knowledge production within the future of public libraries and the architectures of public access. Not only to knowledge production but moreover knowledge production. This project started two month ago, conference in Bangalore. It is about Wikipedia and it is not. This not a expert meeting about the website Wikipedia; we like to make broader claims and wider explorations. Obviously wiki software is used for multiple purposes, also outside the Wikipedia foundation.



Wikipedia is a part of Web 2.0; people consider Wikipedia social media. It an ambivalent project: one the one hand there is an immense interest all over the world. On the other hand, the actual involvement and contribution somehow stagnates and does not really reflect the variety and diversity of its user based. It is considered very rich, but perceived as very uncool. Why is this double face of Wikipedia. The dusty encyclopedia side makes it uncool, or maybe the primitive software and interface? Maybe the absent relationship to waves of user profiles in other Web 2.0 practices. These are the concerns that we used as a starting point. What Wikipedia in fact needed is an outside layer: a semi-detached, critical point of view. Wikipedia is too important to be left in the hands of the Wikimedia foundation (this is a group of insiders/ editors). Not that we wanted to exclude anyone; but it is a point of emancipation that we have a conference without the Wikimedia foundation. We nee wider, more critical perspectives, but also a more worldwide perspective. The fact that there is such a small group of editors and contributors is a cry/ call to do something about it. We have to analyze this situation. Wikipedia is used by all, so it is a concern for all. In the fist sessions, we will see four broader perspectives on Wikipedia.

[Lichty: This Presentation Might Get Me Killed](#)

Posted: March 27, 2010 at 9:49 am | By: julianabrunello | Tags: [conference](#), [CPoV](#), [Lichty](#), [Patrick Lichty](#), [wikiart](#), [wikipedia](#) | [1 Comment](#)



Social Media, Cultural Scaffolds, and Molecular Hegemonies. Musings on Anarchic Media, WIKIs, and De-territorialized Art
Presentation by **Patrick Lichty** for the [Critical Point of View \(CPoV\)](#) conferece in Amsterdam, 26.03.2010

Patrick Lichty, assistant professor of Media Theory at the Columbia College in Chicago and independent curator, walks in with a Lila toy gun, the American way of defence, on the podium and states: "This presentation might get me killed". This sentence will be better understood after his ironical comment, that there seems to be not much consensus in consensual media.

He analyses Wikipedia and other community-driven online media as cultural frames and curatorial models that problematize traditional power relations.

From a radical perspective, the wiki template can be considered a site for anarchical organization. However, they are anarchic only when used in their most basic forms. These communities create their own power relations. This means, after the formation of the community, participants start to establish themselves a set of rules/social contracts, which are implicit or explicit, and are then enforced. These rules are created to frame for instance the user generated content, the community's mission and several internal governances, all of which are specific to this created community. Each user-generated community has its own agendas of power.

He questions whether we can learn something from the relocation of power structures, from the institutional to the communal. Also, is the political structure of Wikipedia superior to the traditional one? Furthermore, are Wikis radical? Do their created social structures and communal cultural production have any effect on the larger society? Is there a potential for art in such a community structure? How does art and curation change when subjected to consensus?

In order to answer some of this questions, he presents some user-generated communities as sources of cultural influence:

The first one is the [Encyclopedia Dramatica](#), which is a kind of internet counter-culture site. It consists of trolling, low culture (such as [lolcats](#)), pop songs, etc. In terms of cultural function, ED is the direct opposite of

Wikipedia in its anarchical nature. The similarities of the two wikis seem not to be their form though, but their context.

4chan.org is not a wiki, but one can make an image available for comments. It is frequently the main influence that originates many of the famous internet themes, like the lol cats phenomenon. Also, in opposition to the wiki sites, which have stated missions, the 'Chans' are much more generalized and have loose categories. Discourse arises in a more ad hoc way. They are not completely anarchic, but considering the social structures of Wikipedia, they are much more flexible.

However, do communities such as [Wikipedia Art](#) or [YTMND](#) suggest viable models for community based curating?

[Wikipedia Art](#) was a further example. He explains that the entry was the art work, and any further editing was considered as continuation of the process. The interesting part was the community interactions surrounding the work. The entrance changed from a strategic art work into a tactical one, as the discussion turned into a sort of battle field and started bridging molecular communities (Wikiart, blogs, Wikipedia, etc.) and their cultures into a larger discourse. During its existence many of the community's rules, unknown to the outsider, revealed themselves into the discussion - eg. Trolls or snowball rules.

Another example was the website [Art in the Age of DataFlow](#) and its wiki book chapter. Here he points out the wiki-based article on non linear narrative, that even though it was written to be modified, it has been modified only very little. The question that arises is whether authorship is still seen as something sacred, or if the community needs to achieve some critical mass to get conversation going on. Or: "Did no one simply give a ****ing damn?"

In short, he examined the structures of these community based media production sites plus Wikipedia in order to verify the differences that emerge due to their local discourses and social protocols. How do they relate to the construction of society? He concludes that community-based media creation sites like Wikis create interesting potentials for curation and creation, however problematic. Will the future of curation be wiki based, or will it have the format of 4Chan, YTMND...?

Furthermore, he points out that the emergence of communal media creates hegemonic structures which are not better than the institutions before them. He is neither for nor against either one, but he calls for intentionality. What is necessary is that as cultural production heads towards social media community based models, cultural producers need to maintain a cpov in order to maintain a notion on how culture is being shaped by online platforms and how a tecnocultural society is being build, as well as its culture in general. Homepages: patricklichty.com, voyd.com



[Killdall: Wikipedia Art: Fifteen Hours of Magic](#)

Posted: March 26, 2010 at 10:42 pm | By: Karlijn Marchildon | Tags: [amsterdam](#), [conference](#), [CPoV](#), [Scott Kildall](#), [wikiart](#), [Wikipedia Art](#) | [3 Comments](#)



"Wikipedia art doesnt exist anymore". These heavy words elapsed provocatively out of [Scott Killdall](#)'s mouth somewhere during the first part of his speech. Only later on in his talk, were we to learn why.

Scott Killdall stood behind the speech table. A short man, peering into the audience determined to get his message across about the life, death and debatable resurrection of the phenomenon called [Wikipedia Art](#).

Wikipedia Art was a performative act originally intended to be art composed on Wikipedia. Though confined by the enforced standards of quality and verifiability of Wikipedia, the artwork could

potentially be edited by anyone as long as changes were published on, and cited from, 'credible' sources. To catalyze the launch of Wikipedia Art, Killdall and Stern had urged others to write about the project as it came into existence to facillitate sources. These sources, being [interviews](#), [blogs](#), or articles in 'trustworthy' media institutions, were meant to give birth to and then slowly transform the work of Art.

And so it happened. Simply through writing and talking about it, the debate around Wikipedia Art ignited. The tremendously heated discussion led to the expulsion of Wikipedia Art from the Wikipedia domain only 15 hours after it's birth. This seemingly premature death is paradoxical in retrospect according to Kildall when he responds to a comment from the audience.

As Wikipedia Art was to be interpreted as a critique of the shortcoming of Wikipedia, it was essentially an intervention. It was in itself destroyed by the exact 'wikiality' it was critiquing. As Kildall explains "The majority of Wikipedia readers rarely think of the internal structures and rules behind Wikipedia." Wikipedia Art surely unveiled these structures, as we see in [the skeletons](#) that are left. In the eyes of the wiki community, Wikipedia Art was seen as commercial vandalism, and was banned from the site.

Now, you might ask. What exactly 'is' this piece of art. The answer is abstract. For one, to understand it, you have to step away from the traditional concept of classical art that is based around an image. For Wikipedia Art is about the construct of words itself. Kildall teaches us throughout his talk that it's form is in words, as that is what Wikipedia does best. "Through citations and debate it existed." Subsequently, because of this debate which turned against the artwork itself, it was also destroyed.

Wikipedia Art lives on in the minds of peoples far from the Wikipedia domain. For us who have missed its birth, bloom and death, we have to make do with the words of Patrick Lichty; "Those fifteen hours were magic".



Hofmann: Wikipedia Between Emancipation and Self-Regulation

Posted: March 26, 2010 at 9:30 pm | By: Karin Oenema | Tags: [conference](#), [CPoV](#), [Hofmann](#), [report](#), [selfregulation](#), [wikipedia](#) | [2 Comments](#)



Jeannette Hofmann focuses on how to represent knowledge. It all starts with life cycles of self-regulations online. The first step is one of high expectations in establishing novelty, boundlessness, autonomy, uniqueness and a certain blindness which are all a part of Wikipedia's self representation. What follows is the feeling of otherness, it is the experience of deadlocks, contention, concentration of power, frustration, disillusionment and crisis. But how do we interpret these life cycles and what can we learn from them?

Hofmann is inspired by the work of Sousa Santos, especially his essay "[Toward an Epistemology of Blindness](#)". Sousa's main

argument is that experience and expectations are not the same and that they are characterized by a certain discrepancy. In modern societies there is a difference between the experience of the past and the expectations of the future. We believe in change, progress and learning.

Santos recognizes two pillars; a pillar of regulation and a pillar of emancipation. Regulation is about maintaining social order and stabilizing expectations. Emancipation establishes good order. It expands distance between experience and expectation. When this is achieved there is a new emancipator movement. Even Knowledge recognizes forms of regulation and emancipation but the forms of knowledge are not the same. Regulation is more about the transition from chaos to order, and Knowledge as emancipation is the struggle against the waste of experience for experimentation. But there is neither a general knowledge nor a general ignorance. This is important to Santos because there is always a certain blindness and this is what Hofmann finds important with regards to Wikipedia.



Call for a plurality of knowledge and practices

All Wikipedia articles must be written from a neutral point of view, representing objectively, proportionately and as far as possible without bias, all significant views that have been published by reliable sources. But what kind of knowledge is assembled in Wikipedia? Reading against the background of Santos, this is problematic. The tension between regulation and emancipation are unavoidable and so there are conflicts related to them. Hoffman argues that we have to change the conflict between "all knowledge" and the Neutral Point of View that allows only "small samples" that

are represented at Wikipedia. There is a need to make the debate more constructed. It has to be about social order and change, about regulations and emancipation.

However, the NPOV policy on Wikipedia is misleading and evil. It structures the debates around Wikipedia in a nonsensical way. It doesn't exist. So, our ambition should be to represent knowledge despite the fact that there is no NPOV.

Joseph Reagle: Wikipedia and Encyclopedic Anxiety

Posted: March 26, 2010 at 7:42 pm | By: Erinc Salor | Tags: [CPoV](#), [encyclopedia histories](#), [Joseph Reagle](#), [Reagle](#), [wikipedia](#) | [1 Comment](#)

Reagle's presentation can be accessed [on his own website](#).

I want to make sense some of the criticism Wikipedia receives in a historical frame. I want to do this in a very simple proposition, that; reference works embody larger social anxieties. One of the central things about thinking about encyclopedias is through their motives. Because of the Enlightenment, we tend to think of progressiveness as an inherent property of encyclopedias but that has not been always the case (Reagle's examples can be found in his presentation on the link above). Encyclopedias can combine progressive or conservative elements and their reception can again be perceived as either, regardless of the inherent qualities of the work in question. The same has been true about Wikipedia as well. While some people criticize it for being anti-academia and hostile to expertise, other people blame it for being a servant of peer-review institutions. While Wikipedia aims to represent all claims to knowledge via verifiable sources in a neutral point of view, this creates an inherent bias towards opinions that are more widely represented within verifiable and notable sources. This natural bias for representation according to proportional evidence aggravates fringe opinion holders (Creationists etc.). Yet, even among scholars the meaning of what an encyclopedia should represent is not certain, not only concerning Wikipedia but concerning historical encyclopedias as well.

Based on all these opinions and issues in discussion, we have understand this debate not strictly about encyclopedias but about larger societal issues. That is my approach; To get a sense of what it is that Wikipedia stirs in society.

At the heart of most discussions concerning reference works in general, and Wikipedia in particular, is a question regarding the degree of normativeness a reference work should embody in contrast to being merely descriptive (Telling how things should be instead/in addition to telling just how they are).

Also, Why should even we care? We certainly don't care as much about Facebook, to the extend of having conferences solely devoted to it.



Two reasons:

I) This is a market construct. Mid-20th century marketing of Britannica; "Send your children to the Britannica."

II) Questions of material constraints: What do we put in, what do we take out?

Historically, this is why we have so much critical discourse and debate around Wikipedia. When I look at the discourse around Wikipedia, relative to my research about collaborative culture, I saw four themes that are most prevalent:

I) Collaborative Practice- How do we work together? II) Encyclopedic impulse III) Bibliomania IV)

Technological Inspiration - To what extent technology facilitate our struggle to reach our encyclopedic goals?

I will be focusing on the last one.

One of the central arguments of the merits of technology relates to hypertext. It has been hailed as a door for more fluid and accessible learning but it has also been accused of destroying the sanctity of authorship and removing us from real knowledge in favor of mere information. I find most such discussions to be ahistorical, the urge behind connecting information like this is not new. Otlet dreamt of connecting knowledge with index cards and loose-leaf binders.

One other point of heated debate is concerned with the hype surrounding Wikipedia. Critics argue Wikipedia's shortcomings as a general cultural model. Yet, Wikipedians themselves are seldom the ones that believe in this hype. They usually say "Wikipedia is awesome not because it's perfect, but it's surprisingly good. We thought it wouldn't even work but it's surprisingly good." While some critics find even this to be not good enough, I think this might be a question of glass half-empty of half-full. However, comparing something to Wikipedia has become the new cliché. Another indicator that Wikipedia is being used as an example in a



larger cultural discussion. Such discussions closely reflect larger, and very common, generational issues, maybe not directly related to age but to certain sensitivities (quotes Douglas Adams on the way people's perceptions change over time regarding technology). Before Wikipedia, there were many books pointing out shortcomings of other encyclopedias.

In closing;

A lot of the discussion about Wikipedia is representative of some of the prevailing attitudes and beliefs, and some of the contradictions of these attitudes and beliefs, as they shift, as facilitated by

technology, and therefore (my argument); Reference works do embody and provoke larger social concerns and with respect to this issue of technology and technological inspiration, I think we can see a concern about the integrity of knowledge, the sanctity of the author and the concern about hype, with the background of this generational difference in perception.

[Dan O'Sullivan: An Encyclopedia for the Times: Thoughts on Wikipedia from a Historical Perspective](#)

Posted: March 26, 2010 at 3:53 pm | By: Erinc Salor | Tags: [CPoV](#), [encyclopedia histories](#), [wikipedia](#)



I will present a history of encyclopedias with respect to Wikipedia. I will specifically focus on the question, whether they were conservative or radical enterprises for their time. It should be noted that encyclopedia is a very mobile genre. It has meant different things to different people throughout time. It can be traced back to ancient Greece and Rome but the word itself is from the 16th Century England. However, Encyclopedic can be taken as meaning an inclusive discussion of where you get your knowledge from and where you apply it. In this sense Leibniz and Bacon can be considered encyclopedic authors. Even fiction from 20th century can be classified as such, Joyce, Eco etc.

While these examples have been radical and challenging, historically most of encyclopedias have been conservative. The tendency to be conservative can be traced back to the fundamental purpose of an encyclopedia, after all, what is an encyclopedia but a collection of existing texts. This has been true for other cultures as well like the Chinese. The Chinese emperors supported huge encyclopedic efforts throughout history to support their regimes and bolster national pride. In the West, medieval scholars mostly did conservative work; digesting the ancient Greeks with Christian theology. They used different analogies to illustrate their attempts; one of them was a mirror (Famously used by Vincent of Beauvais with his Speculum Maius in 13th Century). A mirror implied that they could capture a snapshot of a world, that the human-worldly affairs were essentially static.

Given these conservative encyclopedias, the question is, can you even have a radical encyclopedia. The answer is, it is possible when the time is right. A very critical example is Francis Bacon. Although he did not produced an encyclopedia, he talked about possibilities of amassing and organizing knowledge. He also produced his own trope to illustrate knowledge; a tree, which is slightly more radical than a mirror. A tree can still grow where a mirror is static. Bacon challenged the Aristotelian categorization of knowledge that was in use for centuries where he divided knowledge in three categories;

1. imagination
2. reason (Natural Philosophy, etc.)
3. Memory (Natural History, etc.)

At this time (17-18th Century), compilers were still trying to produce encyclopedias which presented knowledge as part of an organized whole which could be understood by an individual reader. The idea was, one can read it from cover to cover and achieve enlightenment. In that sense, encyclopedias has a mission of being a personal university. This was challenged by the massively expanding knowledge at the end of 18th century, it was around this time that compilers started writing scientific dictionaries. These were an

attempt to include scientific knowledge but they also retained the old idea of a personal university, signifying a transition in the mentality. An example is Ephraim Chambers's Cyclopaedia (1728) which described knowledge as a course of learning. Scientific Dictionaries represented a mixture of radical and conservative in this regard. Chambers is followed by the Diderot and d'Alembert and their Encyclopedie which was again a transitional work it still tries to provide diagrams that explains how it all works while having an alphabetical organization which implied you look it up, not read it from beginning to end. Diderot was a radical in many other ways; they used many collaborators and they used cross-references, also they used the encyclopedia to push social change.



During the 20th and 19th centuries, multi-volume encyclopedia came to the forefront. Most famous of which is the Britannica, which featured specialized treatises and combined them with shorter, general articles. These works were essentially conservative. They didn't include any self-criticism. They made many assumptions about the nature of things. They had a Victorian confidence concerning achieving knowledge and preserving it.

Wikipedia; It it radical?

- It may be obvious that it is. Given its digital nature; Hyperlinks (Anyone can forge their own path while browsing, create their own book). George Landau, 1992 on Hyperlinks, influenced by Deleuze and Guattari's Plateau and their trope of Rhizome, argued hyperlinks represent a cultural revolution.
- Wide community of authors vs. small group of expert contributions
- It produces a new view of knowledge as a pluralistic and ever-changing

What isn't?

While Wikipedia is certainly not conservative on talk pages, many people don't read them. From the public point of view, the article pages mostly reflect a 19th century multi-volume encyclopedia. This is a very conservative thing to do.

What's wrong with Wikipedia?

The NPOV is at the root of the problem, combined with majority decision making. These lead to a consensus which is very limiting. It doesn't allow you to see different voices and result in an article that sounds very sterile and boring. It would be much more interesting when dealing with a controversial topic if they could take different points of view and give them one offer one another instead of aiming to achieve an uninteresting consensus. That would be a very radical project. We can argue, based on this that, Wikipedia is very radical except for all the articles.

[Karatzogianni: The Process is Radical the Content is Not](#)

Posted: March 29, 2010 at 10:36 am | By: Karin Oenema | Tags: [conference](#), [CPoV](#), [cyberconflicts](#), [Karatzogianni](#), [report](#)



Karatzogianni combines in her talk the theory of cyberconflicts and media. According to her you have to see the Internet as a dialogue. We are looking at a medium and we have to analyse the discourses at that medium. So what control of information do we have? We are using the open source as a choice, we try to keep it very open but it is a mistake to give the people this role. In this environment, Wikipedia and similar endeavors, provides a battleground for dominance in our global political consciousness. This battleground has internal conflicts, competitors within the open software movement and external others in the overall business of knowledge. The tread is not Wikipedia's content, and even the

battle of edit wars is futile. The real threat and promise of Wikipedia and open knowledge production is not an alternative knowledge production, but the alternative to knowledge production.

Wikipedia content is producing a single neutral point of view, knowledge is constantly shifting but adhering to the universal neutral fact based encyclopedia.

The process is radical the content is not. University scholars learn multiple points of view and Karatzogianni strongly advocated multiple points of view during teaching but Wikipedia only provides a single point of view.

Famiglietti: Managing Scarce Resources in Wikipedia

Posted: March 29, 2010 at 10:15 am | By: julianabrunello | Tags: [conference](#), [CPoV](#), [designing debate](#), [Famiglietti](#), [Gaza War](#), [moral economy](#), [wikipedia](#)



Negotiating the Neutral Point of View: Politics and the Moral Economy of Wikipedia

Presentation by **Andrew Famiglietti** for the [Critical Point of View \(CPoV\)](#) conference in Amsterdam, 27.03.2010

Andrew Famiglietti's presentation was about the concept of moral economy applied to the Wikipedia. He does so by analyzing the article called '[Gaza War](#)' in the period of 2008/2009. He starts by referring to the work of E.P. Thompson and how crowd intervention influenced the way grain prices were regulated in the 18th century. He applies this idea into how Wikipedia regulates its resources around its community. First, how was the crowd regulating resources in times of scarcity? In case of Wikipedia: how do they manage the scarce resource of volunteer labor within the site? This is a matter that Wikipedians have to work out themselves. He believes that they do that in terms of what Thompson called '[Moral Economy](#)'. In the 18th century there were outrages concerning the procedure of regular market forces that was considered illegitimate by the starving population; in the 21st century's Wikipedia there were outrages by the

editors, who considered some of the actions by the site owners were illegitimate based on moral values. He presents then a case study of how values that organize the moral economy have particular political effects in the particular case of the Gaza War article. He shows how the particular design of the page influences how debate emerges. Famiglietti starts by pointing out to the title, which is handled as being an important element on debates. Secondly, he points out to the info-box on the right side of the article, which has a central role in structuring information around the article and therefore was an important part of the debate. He continues by calling our attention to the 66 archive pages of the discussion, which are equivalent to about 600 printed pages. The page provides bookmarks to particular important debates, which is necessary due to its sheer volume. There is also a timeline that can be used to see how the debate evolved. He focuses his studies on the heavy editing period while hostilities during the event are going on and the period immediately after that.

The volume of information on the discussion page, along with the difficulties of navigating it, makes it difficult for editors to actually keep up with the conversation and understand what is going on. Bots here have also a role, as they archive pages by moving them from the main page. Some editors become increasingly frustrated and others believe that this is done on purpose in order to sabotage them.

As the pages become longer and longer, chunks of information are split out into sub-articles. The discussion then shifted into whether this was a POV (point of view) fork. Forking points of view were suggested by some editors (maybe naively, not knowing about Wikipedia's policies) as a kind of a potentially positive direction to Wikipedia to move. This notion of splitting different POVs has been explored by Wikipedia, however it would set up different articles on the same topic, avoiding neutrality. The idea was largely rejected and Famiglietti believes that it has to do with the management of labor as a resource. Forking duplicates effort and splits the labor force. He believes that the containment of forkings is intended to retain scarce labor resources. (I ask myself though; discussing is so much more work, so splitting would be a better option, if it was the case.)

Dangers of nationalism to Wikipedia: Administrators have fundamentally played a role in policing the boundaries of the editors' community. The issue was therefore under a particular administrator's scrutiny. The editors were aware of that scrutiny and the fact that they were under surveillance. Neutrality was constantly renegotiated. In several occasions the title of the article was changed depending on who was available to talk to at the moment. This also points out to the fact that it is not possible to represent all POVs in the title, which is another design problem of the platform. Moreover, the process of neutrality involves the three guiding principles: [Neutral Point of View](#), WP:V and WP:OR. Several times it has been enforced that they were after verifiability and not truth. This moves debate from difficult questions about the truth to a debate about reliable sources. This is useful in keeping the editing process moving. However it may privilege certain historical forms of inequality, as there is a large reliance on western, but not in Arabian sources.

Famiglietti finishes by emphasizing this was a presentation with the goal to show how the community works and what seems to be valuable for them. Also, he tried to show the community's attempts to organize their scarce labor force. By understanding that, he hopes one can better intervene in this debate more effectively. I do not particularly agree with him, that NPoV has anything to do with managing the 'scarce' volunteer labor force. His presentation was nevertheless very interesting and brought up many important points about the design that were new to me.

[Mikkonen: The Kosovo War Continuing on Wikipedia: Too Many Truths for One Wiki](#)

Posted: March 28, 2010 at 10:02 pm | By: Karlijn Marchildon | Tags: [analysis](#), [conference](#), [CPoV](#), [kosovo war](#), [report](#), [Teemu Mikkonen](#), [wikipedia](#)



[Teemu Mikkonen](#) challenges the Neutral Point of View policy haunting Wikipedia when it comes to [controversial cases](#) such as the Kosovo War article. In these cases, he argues, it is not possible to achieve complete neutrality. As a Masters student at the University of Tampere, Mikkonen has [studied](#) the [Talk page](#) of the Wikipedia article on the Kosovo War.

Mikkonen fills his thirty minutes of fame by paying attention to the disputed neutrality of the Kosovo War article on Wikipedia. He attempts to trace the conflict and consensus on this Wikipedia Talk-page. By outlining four paradoxes, he lets us in on the juicy bits of his research. By finding out essentially 'how people talk' about the Kosovo War in the context of wikipedia, he unravels the

Foucauldian power structures underlying the famous online encyclopedia. Starting with the title, Mikkonen notes the underlying and inavoidable 'biasses' included in the article. For example by naming it the 'Kosovo war', instead as an non-serbian alternative.

On the Talk page, there is a lot of discussion going on about what actually happened during the conflict(s). As we see, more often than not are facts, numbers and words disputed on the talk page. Ever since November 2009, the top of the [wiki](#) is decorated by a warning message stating that "*the neutrality of this article is disputed. Please see the discussion on the talk page. Please do not remove this message until the dispute is resolved.*" When looking critically at this Talk page, different discourses are noticeable revealing among others Serbian, Albanian, both pro- and anti-NATO points of view. As one may imagine, because of the many parties involved in any conflict, and in this Yugoslavian conflict in particular, it is factually impossible to achieve a genuine neutral point of view when recollecting the facts. Mikkonen reminds us that the less damaged 'winning' side of a conflict would always have a justification-driven view on matters, not to mention a better infrastructure and more survivors left to recollect. Subsequently the most inflicted party can be fueled by trauma and revenge influencing their memory of accounts.

When analyzing the Talk page, Mikkonen abstracts the three most common positions. The edits are either to be grouped as 'extremist', where the contributors see only one real and one-sided truth -mostly that of their own. These individuals place unsigned edits more often than not. Moreover, they are characterized by extreme political (hard-right nationalist) viewpoints. An other common position is that of the gatekeepers. The admins and active wikipedians. They believe that there should be a consensus of truth which should be based on equal, neutral knowledge. Mikkonen lets us know this is a highly problematic virtue. As a third group, the situationists are identified. According to Mikkonen they believe that there is no real unbiased truth at all. Even the gatekeepers' democratic consensus is always biased. In fact, wikipedia is unneutral after all.

These three positions brings us to four paradoxes that arise from the Talk page. At this point it is more than clear that Mikkonen is of the opinion that absolute neutrality isn't possible. Mikkonen essentially explains how it would be better to get the wikipedia policies working towards a non-neutral point of view. On a closing note I will include some interesting posts from the Talk page on the Kosovo War to illustrate Mikkonen's point. One edit gives a rare supposedly first-hand witness account of a downed helicopter during the conflict. Before you get at each other's throats... I was a border scout in the Yugoslav Army at that time. I was there when the helicopter was shot down by a 12.7mm anti aircraft cannon. It presented an easy



lateral target, as we were camouflaged. The gunner emptied the thirty round magazine at his target and it exploded. We were not in Albanian territory, although the helicopter was. The cannon was outdated and a permanent fixture at the border base and its use was intended for infantry. —The preceding unsigned comment was added by Leeppa 21:19, 23 April 2007.

This raises the question concerning one of the beforementioned paradoxes: The paradox of verifiability. What makes a source reliable and true? Mikkonen puts it as follows: "There is a huge problem how to verify the context of these unique experiences." It is all meaningful information, but is it supposed to be true? verifiable? reliable? What makes this paradox (one of four, on which I dare not touch) is that it also makes us think about the reliability of other written, more static sources and encyclopedias. Now we all agree that there is no such thing as a genuine Neutral point of view on controversial matters, at least the dialogue is made visible on Wikipedia. The fact is that traditional top-down sources be it news institutions and other encyclopedias don't have a transparent view on the debate surrounding these issues. In that sense, Wikipedia offers something that does come darn close to a 'neutral' point of view' because she shows exactly the ins and outs of the controversy. Though this conference has given a critical point of view on the Wikipedia institution and thereby revealed the faults and shortcomings of Wikipedia. Mikkonen's critique has actually shown an invaluable aspect of this product of collective intelligence in its transparency. As other speakers in Designing Debate Andrew Famiglietti (UK), Andrew Famiglietti (UK), and Lawrence Liang (IN) have also shown; indeed it is problematic to seek a neutral point of view. Knowing many other visitors of this conference will agree with me, I would say that seeking a neutral point of view is downright pointless. There are simply too many truths to fit into one wiki.

Shapiro: Wikipedia Provides Intelligence but Not Intelligence about Stupidity

Posted: March 28, 2010 at 8:09 pm | By: Karin Oenema | Tags: [amsterdam](#), [conference](#), [CPoV](#), [report](#), [Shapiro](#), [wikipedia](#)



Unlike the other speakers, such as Reichert (Foucault-inspired), Shapiro said that he is less critical: "The critique is all right, however, it should be a component of a larger view, and the larger view should be pragmatic and constructive". According to Shapiro, [Hofmann](#)'s ideology critique is insufficient. Blindness and ignorance are a weak thesis within ideology critique. Shapiro is inspired by the work of Gustave Flaubert: "He shows that knowledge is based in society and as such Wikipedia not only represents knowledge, but also stupidity. And what most people believe in society is based on accepted clichés". We must separate the real knowledge from the clichés and the stupidities.

Shapiro says that Wikipedia is about the democratization of knowledge and the promise of popular education (a Gramsci-inspired view). We need balance between the consensus culture such as Wikipedia and respect for the work of the scholar who has dedicated a lot of research on particular issues. A model for balancing these two contributory streams needs to be developed. So, is Wikipedia cool? Shapiro thinks that baseball fans think that Wikipedia is cool. A lot of these articles on baseball are really good because they are based on information in a non-controversial area instead of a mixture of clichés and real knowledge in controversial areas, as in many articles. During his talk, Alan showed some examples in the [Baudrillard](#) article at Wikipedia. In this example one of the clichés is that Baudrillard would be a philosopher; but Baudrillard never considered himself to be a philosopher so you can't describe him that way according to Shapiro. Another example is that Baudrillard also has been described as a sociologist, but he disliked sociology, was skeptical towards the concepts of politics, and did not consider himself to be a sociologist. The Wikipedia article mentions Baudrillard's collaboration with CTHEORY (which really happened, and they published translations of many of his essays), but fails to mention his crucial and essential collaborations with the French journals *Utopie* and *Traverses*. During his long enumeration, Shapiro received a question from the audience if ever pushed the submit button. He [did](#), and he is now going to undertake the project of trying to submit step-by-step revisions of the Wikipedia articles on



Baudrillard, Star Trek, and Flaubert's novel Bouvard and Pecuchet. Alan Shapiro would also want to address the question of how the structure of the database as technological artifact will be upgraded by the [New Computer Science](#); but unfortunately he was running out of time. What he did say was that Wikipedia is a conventional database whereas what we need is a new logic engine, which applies Derrida's deconstruction in computer science, we need to deal with post-structures instead of structures in the database of Wikipedia.

[Varghese Mathews: Clustering the Contributors to a Wikipedia Page](#)

Posted: March 28, 2010 at 7:35 pm | By: admin | Tags: [amsterdam](#), [clusters](#), [conference](#), [CPoV](#), [Hans Varghese Mathews](#), [report](#) | *By Nadesh van der Post*



First of all I want to apologize because I'm not sure that I fully understood Hans Varghese Mathews core message during the CPOV conference. So I hope that with a little more research, I will be able to enlighten Varghese Mathews main conception.

There are a lot of discussions going on how to obtain crucial information that concerns Wikipedia's ever growing body of knowledge. One Wikipedia page is even considered to be a textual dynamic research object because of continuous augmentation and revision. As Varghese Mathews puts it: The sheer volume of the website necessitates – and its digital form abets – the automated

essay of its contents for evidence upon which to found such inference and interpretation as is proper to the eliciting of such history. And so he has developed an algorithm that will provide a way to collect data that goes beyond human interpretation. Through realizing the page editing history or as he calls it the narrative, Varghese Mathews wants to detect pack editing behavior. He elaborated the tool intentions by introducing us to the algorithm instead of giving a PowerPoint presentation. To do so he used the retrieved data, and explained that the tool clusters the contributors to a Wikipedia page. The Evolution is an example of such a Wikipedia page. The various editors of the frequently edited Evolution Wikipedia page can provide inside when particular interests are clustered. With the help of his tool one could distinguish different editors and cluster them together by some particular interest. The tool functions with minimal human intervention. And despite the fact the some supervening of human judgement is needed, Varghese Mathews - or anyone else of that matter – could use the tool for interesting insides. This tool is aimed at producing information that will allow anyone to analyze editing behavior on Wikipedia.

It is too bad that we couldn't see more of the collected data or results. Okay, I admit he did show some results. But the main issues there is that his story wasn't structured enough. The only message that I could distill was that he had developed a tool for massive analytical use. Non the less I do find his tool exciting.

- [REPORT OF AN EXPERIMENT IN CLUSTERING](#) by Hans Varghese Mathews, The Centre for Internet and Society, Bangalore
- [Analysing Wikipedia : A First Attempt at Clustering](#) by Sriram Rangan
- [Analysing Wikipedia: A First Attempt at Clustering. Report of an Experiment in Clustering](#) by Kiran Jonnalagadda

[Van der Velden: When Knowledges Meet: Database Design and the Performance of Knowledge](#)

Posted: March 28, 2010 at 2:29 pm | By: Erinc Salor | Tags: [conference](#), [CPoV](#), [database design](#), [knowledge](#), [report](#), [Van der Velden](#), [wikipedia](#) | [1 Comment](#)



I would like to talk about my research which, I believe, could help us approach some of the questions related to Wikipedia. For this research, I was interested to know, how knowledge is translated/ traveled; from people to things. I focused on community healers in rural India and observed the process by which their knowledge recorded, collected and disseminated through larger geographical areas. During its many transformations, the wisdom of the local healer goes through numerous phases and inevitably loses some of its essential characteristics. This observation has lead me to the

question;

Can we define databases that makes these different ways of knowing things visible?

I believe this question relates to the equal treatment of different knowledges in technology design, ultimately aiming for a technology that contributes to knowledge diversity. So, with this talk, I am hoping to bring the issue of database design to the forefront concerning Wikipedia.

To illustrate her point on different database desing approaches to varying knowledges, Maja van der Velden then presents the following examples;

- [Mukurtu archive](#) (features collective tagging but also implementation of exclusionary login procedures)
- [Tami](#) (ontologically flat database - Minimizes Western assumptions on data collection by only categorizing by media type. No tagging, only a list of items listed by picture/sound/video etc. Each object can be connected to each other)
- Storyweaver (focus, again, is creating connectivities. Storytelling is a form of performative mapping. 3 protocols underlying; -Autonomous local knowledge mapping -Local ontology mapping -Merging mapping through making connections; Connections are made through context to context, not object to object in another context)

These databases have the underlying idea that Knowledge can be understood as performance. Implying that the design of a database is not preconfigured, but they emerge through usage over time.

Seen under this light of these examples, Jimmy Wales's quote regarding the ultimate goal of Wikipedia (Imagine a world in which every single person on the planet is given free access to the sum of all human knowledge.) emerge as a warning. Given this understanding, Wikipedia's understanding of knowledge becomes hegemonic. Such a definition of knowledge is very singular, other 'knowledges' are ignored. Aboriginal knowledge links back to traditional knowledge in English language Wikipedia, which is not recognized as proper knowledge. In this sense, Wikipedia becomes a master narrative about knowledge.

I would propose the creation of a third space, a contact zone where different knowledges not clash, but interact and co-exist. As Donna Haraway calls them; "world-making entanglements", which is the meaning I want to carry over to Wikipedia. If Wikipedia aims to provide sum of all knowledge to everyone, how can it provide dissenting knowledge claims?

I argue that Wikipedia's decentralized production system can be taken further as a model for its ontological stance as well, rendering a database that is more respectful to differing knowledge claims.

[Ortega: Wikipedia's Self-Regulating Patterns in Open Numbers](#)

Posted: March 28, 2010 at 9:04 am | By: Korinna Patelis | Tags: [amsterdam](#), [conference](#), [CPoV](#), [ortega](#), [quantitative analysis](#), [report](#)



Developing open source software Ortega xeroxed the ten top language Wikipedia sites to present us with an impressive quantitative corpus of data. In his presentation he cast a critical eye in the development and publication of quantitative data in on-line research worldwide, calling for more open practices. He pointed to the lack of comparative studies, the need for open data to assist global comparisons. Indeed, Ortega experienced the lack of a worldwide perspectives in quantitative studies at first hand when he started his research, as most data was not available in the public domain or didn't use open software, or even worse used categories that made comparisons impossible. His work is to a large extent a reaction to this lack.

Ortega created wikixray- the ultimate [open wiki machine](#), instead of using of the shelf software. Wikixray is now made available to researchers worldwide, together with the pull of data findings of his research. Ortega was eager to note that the software is easy to use on any wiki website.

In his research design, Ortega, decided to include some open questions such as "is Wikipedia a sustainable project" or "what type of parameter affect Wikipedia" to analyse somewhat 7 terra bytes of content, that is the 10 most popular language wikipedia sites! Ortega found there are 4,805,713 registered editors in the top ten languages Wikipedias. These users use Wikipedia at least 346.9 days in time, something like 141,6 in average.

His analysis shows that in all language versions growth follows an exponential growth pattern, i.e. it starts slowly and then accelerates. This is particularly surprising in the light of the difference in the number of contributors. The same pattern repeats in creation of pages in all ten languages. For Ortega these patterns point to a key question: *Does Wikipedia reach a maturity stage where activity stops progressing, and if this is so why cant it grow?* Ortega mentioned that in answering this question the media have interpreted his data in opposite ways!

Ortega also compared tiny vs standards articles. For example in the english version 80% of pages are talk pages, in the polish Wikipedia there are no talk pages.

With regard to the sustainability issue Ortega was keen to show that the number of edits by people has remained stable since 2007. He also briefly pointed to the Wikipedia general survey of 130,576 people, which showed that 65% of users are readers, 10% are regular contributors (50% of answers came from russia), and only 13% are women. He was careful, however, to point to the fact that the survey does not sample users and therefore is limited in terms of how one can interpret the results.

Ortega also noted the inequality of contributions amongst editors. For example 5% of authors accounts for more than 90% of total number of revisions. Finally Ortega showed that 4 years ago the inequality in distribution reached a plateau and has been equal each month worldwide since then.

In Ortega's view in order for Wikipedia to remain sustainable better ways to use Wikipedia in education need to be carved. Furthermore ways to improve the interface and the reviewing processes are needed. Together these can be used for improving their user experience overall. Ortega argued that Wikipedia needs better community building and maintenance tools. Furthermore that Wikipedia needs to exploit the power of academia.

March 26-27, 2010. 2nd CPOV: Wikipedia Conference. Institute of Network Cultures, Amsterdam. [\[slides\]](#)

Fuster Morell: The Role of the Wikimedia Foundation

Posted: March 27, 2010 at 9:06 pm | By: Eric Salor | Tags: [conference](#), [CPOV](#), [Fuster Morell](#), [report](#), [wikimedia foundation](#)



I will present results of my research concerning governance on digital commons, which was a research based on a comparative analysis of case studies, one of which was Wikipedia. It is noteworthy that most research focused on governance on online communities focus on the interaction between participants of the community, which is an important issue. But my focus on this research is on the providers of the infrastructures of these communities and the relationship between the community and these providers. In the case of Wikipedia, the provider is the Wikimedia foundation.

The goal of this research is to gain insight on whether different kind of providers effect the community that emerge. I analyzed the relationship between the type of provider and merging communities -In types of scale - Types of collaboration and -Level of self-governance within the community.

First, I would like to demonstrate my analysis of infrastructure providers and then provide the example of Wikipedia and the Wikimedia foundation.

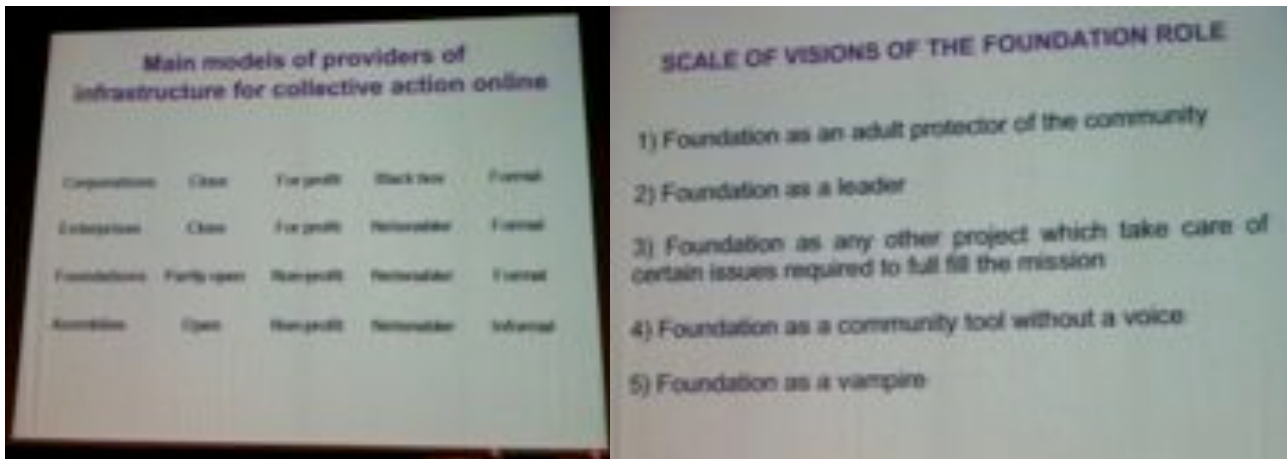
I identified four elements that define the characteristics of an infrastructure provider; I) Openness vs. Closeness with respect to community participation
II) Sustainability; Whether the provider is for-profit or non-profit
III) Level of freedom and autonomy the community is given. 'netenabler' vs. 'blackbox' infrastructures;
Whether the platform is based on open-source software or proprietary protocols and data management. This determines the fork-ability and data mobility.

IV) Formal vs. Informal of the organization.

I analyzed 50 cases according to these parameters and identified 4 main categories (Illustrated by slide below)

Case Study of Wikipedia - Role of Wikimedia foundation

CPOV blog has previously published Maya Fuster Morell's analysis of the evolution of the Wikimedia foundation, which can be accessed [here](#). The involvement of the foundation seem to have evolved on a case-by-case basis and the power relation between the community and the foundation seems to be in flux and is actively discussed in the community. The opinion of the community regarding the involvement of the foundation into the activities of Wikipedia can be placed on a scale [See slide 2] Based on this analysis, the Wikimedia foundation represents a very formal structure with a high degree of professionalization. These



characteristics are against many features of the Wikipedia community. Why? Also, how do these radically different modes of organizations co-exist? It is noteworthy that both the foundation and the community have adopted different governance styles and power structures depending the need and task at hand and have moved from one to another fluidly, even applied two concurrently to different parts. While consensus is central, sometimes the founder exercises his monarchical power for example.

It appears that the foundation has adopted this formal and professional outlook in order to provide technical infrastructure to the community but also to handle legal support and public relations on a professional level. The community, on the other hand, creates the content and the rules and regulations that relate to the creation of content. Ownership is also representative, the Wikipedia logo and other PR material are owned by the foundation while the community can claim ownership of the content they create.

This creates a mutual dependency between the foundation and the community. This does not necessarily mean the power and rights of ownership of the foundation and the community are symmetrical, but it means their contrasting systems co-exist and work for the benefit of the project together. This also creates a very interesting dialogue between the foundation and the community where there is a continuous negotiation of power between them, rendering the power distribution fluid. In understanding this relationship, the concepts of lateral source of authorship and parallel governing.

The hybrid model of Wikipedia can be a model for other institutions of rethinking global institutions of the public and political in the 21st cent. We have to remember that the issue is not how to criticize Wikipedia. They constitute a new form of providing public goods, we have to think about our responsibility to Wikipedia, to improve and learn from it, since it is so important in our lives.

[Stuart Geiger: What is in Control of Wikipedia?](#)

Posted: March 27, 2010 at 4:45 pm | By: Bas Wijers | Tags: [bots](#), [CPoV](#), [geiger](#), [policy](#), [power](#), [wikipedia](#) | [2 Comments](#)

Triple the number of African elephants, so when they do get extinct we still have ourselves a [wikiality](#). A jolly suggestion coming from [Stephen Colbert](#) which got embraced by Wikipedia critics. It was basically what happened on the encyclopedia: vandalization to make a point. But what really happened was the elephant



page being protected. It was solely editable by administrators for about two weeks before being given to the public again.

Who is in control of Wikipedia? Jimmy Wales? Wikilawyers? It's a question based on fear. The idea of a leviathan (he shows [this image](#)), a totalitarian ruler, applying body politics. One of severe oppression.

But this is not the most interesting, Stuart Geiger argues. He is a researcher at Georgetown University in the Communication, Culture, and Technology program. People are important, he says, but not solely. Because, in addition, technology is important. The

technocal structure makes the social possible. With this in mind, the question becomes: *what* is in control of Wikipedia?

Order in Wikipedia is increasingly produced through technical means. There are bots, deployed to ban users, enforce policy and to inform admins on debates. Tools, such as specialised scripts that automate various social actions, like nominating an article for deletion. Code, in the form of wiki-software, with for instance 'flagged revisions'. And analytics, which are being used as arguments in themselves, making judgements of the future.



Geiger gives a quick definition of bots: actors who perform repetitive and mundane tasks. But, they are most definitely important. Bots are becoming more and more sophisticated. Checking language use and censorship, moving into the sphere of admins. It has become a quite complex phenomenon, plus, the amount of bots is still growing. Therefore, more research is needed (considering the different languages).

His main example, or case study if you will, is [HagermanBot](#). A bot which added the `{{unsigned}}` template to edits which were not signed. It was meant to let people know that they forgot to sign their comment, which wasn't a controversial guideline. However, what the

bot did was fixing the comments in real time, leading to the point that signatures became one of the most enforced policies. The thing to remember is that bots are not allowed to act by default; they have to be approved.

The case of the HagermanBot is interesting, because it seems to be a non-controversial bot, but it nevertheless can show us some of the mechanics of power and policy. Because there is a bot policy, a bot approval group. In order to install a bot, people need to submit a proposal, whereafter it gets approved or declined. HagermanBot got accepted fast.

Because new software reveals inconsistencies, a big discussion on Wikipedia commenced. People didn't want to sign their comments. A loose social norm was turned into a very strong law, they said. Geiger shows some of this debate on slides. In the end, the introduction of the HagermanBot triggered a debate of the role of bots in general.

The solution to solve these complaints came in the form of an opt-out list. But these solutions to controversies are 'black boxed', Geiger argues. The opt-out mechanism became a standard reply to every objection. It showed the technical structure.

So, does society dominate technology? Or does technology dominate society?

Determinist narratives are easy, he says. But dialectics of socio-technical systems are hard. Kinds of things people talk about change as technology changes. Beyond "code is law", Geiger notes that social structures and technological systems are co-productive. Compromises are forced to happen.

The opt-out list as a compromise, for example, turns out to be a standard. What we need to be thinking about then, is how technology and society affect each other.

During the Q&A and via Twitter Stuart Geiger notes that he wanted to incorporate Kelly's theory in his speech, proposing it as a more contemporary frame.

[O' Neil: Wikipedia is Sovereign, Macho On-Line Habitus Fueled by Charisma](#)

Posted: March 27, 2010 at 11:57 am | By: Korinna Patelis | Tags: [amsterdam](#), [conference](#), [CPoV](#), [Mathieu O'Neil](#), [Wiki Theory](#), [wikipedia](#)

With a love for technoculture, a research past in Californian cyberculture, and a present in French critical intellectual new media thought, O' Neil presented a compelling talk on wikipedia user culture or rather "tribal culture". O' Neil presented his stream of consciousness in tags (projected on a large screen) as he developed his approach to on-line tribes. Interested in the hacker habitus and how its production, his talk opened with a brief discussion of the shortcomings of critical sociology. Despite O' Neil's pessimism with regard to the conspiratorial and disempowering aspects of critical sociology, he went on to focus on the [work of Boltanski](#) and the field of justification, which Boltanski understands as "open". Before linking Boltanski with Wikipedia O' Neil was careful to frame his understanding of Wikipedia within the context of new media political economy mentioning that 13% of Wikipedia editors are female, and that this means that certain types of behaviors are more tolerable, that for example aggressive commentary and flaming are accepted as standard practice. Machismo, in other words, frames the wiki habitus.



O' Neil proceeded to literally map the different orders of online justification, and how these can possibly come into existence in different tribal formulations in different network cultures. Central to understanding the map was the term "on-line tribal bureaucracy of social organisations" coined in his [book Cyberchiefs Autonomy and Authority in Online Tribes](#). O' Neil understands charisma, hacking, sovereignty, and the archaic, as central to conceptualizing how on-line user tribes work. Situating Wikipedia in a map showing a sovereignty and charisma in each end of the vertical and horizontal axis, O' Neil concluded that charisma and sovereignty are in particular very important in understanding how Wikipedia as tribe works, and that charisma is actually more important. O' Neil also discusses ethical issues arising when conducting research with wikipedia editors.

[Weltevrede and Borra on visualising controversy and Wikipedia structures](#)

Posted: March 31, 2010 at 10:55 am | By: Korinna Patelis | Tags: [borra](#), [controversy](#), [digital methods initiative](#), [dmi](#), [weltevrede](#)

How does intense debate articulate on Wikipedia? How could we visualize the evolution of conflict on Wikipedia, does it have a pattern? These are more questions regarding the structure of Wikipedia wars were asked and answered by E. Weltevrede and E. Borra, as well as R. Rogers in absentia!. Weltevrede and Borra argued that the aims of the methodology explored is the detection of conflicts and the development of new metrics for the evaluation of the Wikipedia system.



The presenters focused on the climate change debate as a case study for understanding the evolution of controversy within the Wikipedia framework. The network of climate change debates was made after the thorough study of the number and timing of edits, the article length, the number of watchers, the number of discussion topics, the number of edits on these, the number of reverts and the bot activity, on climate change on Wikipedia. Using visualization software Weltevrede and Borra mapped out the climate change controversy network, that is the full quantity of articles on climates and how they link and relate to each other on Wikipedia, too inquire on if and how Wikipedia structures such network. Their findings were compelling: according to their analysis editorial activity is a definite indicator of heated debate as the dense parts of the map clearly indicated times where real controversy was caused due to the publication of more scientific data on climate change and so on.

They furthermore used network analysis software to discover role of the sub-issues in the developing of the wider network of issues. They asserted that editors shifting to related articles are an indicator of displacement. In other words when debate reaches a critical plateau issues tend to fork. In fact forking and

splitting, in general, are forms of controversy management within the Wikipedia structure. The central idea being that Wikipedia affect the debating of an issue in a certain way, and that it neutralizes opinion by splitting controversy into smaller interlinked parts.



[Liang: De-Classify and Un-Authorize](#)

Posted: March 29, 2010 at 4:53 pm | By: Bas Wijers | Tags: [authority](#), [classification](#), [CPoV](#), [knowledge](#), [liang](#), [taxonomy](#), [wikipedia](#)

Lawrence Liang is an Indian legal researcher and lawyer residing in Bagalore. With his speech he tries to place current debates into a historical context. There are a variety of controversies which he tries to place in perspective.

Throughout the latest years there have been different responses considering the rise of Wikipedia:

- Refutation: It is not as reliable as Britannica.
- Intentionality: What's the motor behind all this?
- Pragmatic steps: How to improve upon?

Overall a rather somber tone dominated, Liang argues. What remained stable and unchallenged was the authority of knowledge. Therefore Liang tries to point us to a manner which is a little more realistic.

He continues with an early history of the book itself, the book as an object of knowledge. His goal is bringing the notion of the authority of knowledge back, in a sense, to the contemporary realm. It's an important debate, not confined to Wikipedia, he says.

The book has not always been seen as reliable; there were various inherent problems of copy. During the print revolution, the volume of the total amount of books increased tremendously. The reliability of book were constantly challenged. He shows some quotes of people contesting the supposed inherent truth of books. It not only happened in the realm of religion. Also science struggled how to classify things constantly, of which Borges has given [a famous example](#).

The physical copy introduced simultaneously the right to grant permission to copy it. It was not just accessing. The popular account of pre-print cultures is that of slavish copying, but - as many might not





realize - also that of annotators, compilers and correctors. Medieval book owners and scribes actively shaped the text they read. Authority was never given. Readers didn't have the tools to check this either. It was a question of trust. Tracking the original source was very difficult.

The emergence of authority was born later on. We now take for granted things like the publisher's name, the cover design etc. They are all meant to make the total package appear to be reliable. His end argument, then, is to try to de-classify and un-authorize encyclopedias and Wikipedia in particular. Encyclopedias are an attempt to authoritatively classify the world, an act to create

certainty that doesn't exist. We should move to a certain idea of the uncertainty of knowledge. Not as reform or to make Wikipedia better, but as a precondition to just think of the production of knowledge.

[Grievink: A Real Challenge Would Be to Think of Wikimedia Commons As a Goal in Itself](#)

Posted: March 29, 2010 at 3:44 pm | By: Bas Wijers | Tags: [art](#), [CPoV](#), [creative commons](#), [graphic design](#), [grievink](#), [wikimedia foundation](#), [wikipedia](#)



The mission statement of the [Wikimedia foundation](#) says: "Imagine a world in which every single human being can freely share in the sum of all knowledge. That's our commitment." If we want to achieve this, [Hendrik-Jan Grievink](#) states, we have to take it literally: imagine a world in images. He holds a Master in Design from the [Sandberg Institute](#), the postgraduate course of the Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam.

What follows is a brief overview of his previous work. For instance the posters he made for the [MyCreativity](#) and [New Network Theory](#) conferences. His approach is remixing the world around him. "Not very unique", he confesses, but "remix is something of our time."

Illustrating this, is his successful project [Fake For Real](#), a memory game which draws attention to fake/real counterparts. "As a designer, I try to make sense of the world through images", he continues.

His recent, work in progress, project is called [Wiki Loves Art](#). One part of it consists of a competition for the best illustrated Wikipedia articles. People are competing to take the best pictures of existing art. The photos, with aspects like depth of field and alternate point of views shed new light on pieces of art. Something that opens up museums to new audiences. By uploading these pictures to Flickr under the Creative Commons license, a database is slowly constructed. [The result](#) is a lot of free content, available for other artists, which enables remix. For instance, [Bruegel's painting of The Tower of Babel](#) was documented many times, presenting the artwork in various ways, which was then picked up by some to be digitally edited. Something that wouldn't happen with professional artists.

The other part is very much under construction. Actually, Grievink gave us some insight into this book that wasn't even shown to those involved in the project. The book is going to be a sort of documentation of and reflection on the Wiki Loves Art project. It will be structured completely like an index from A to Z. It has to be kaleidoscopic, almost like browsing through Wikipedia: "a source, but also an experience to be there". That's something he wanted to remake in book form.

The book does three things:

1. A visual documentation of the WLA project.
2. A reflection of related topics.
3. Produce new works, hoping to create a never ending loop.

This is a relatively small project, "but we must not forget: images sometimes do change the world", like [the first photograph of planet earth](#). Thirty years after it was made, this photo was re-used by Al Gore in his documentary [An Inconvenient Truth](#). The movie is overwhelming, partially due to the fact of the powerful imagery. In an open society, docs like this presentation by Al Gore should be available to anyone, Grievink



argues. Not only the presentation, but also every image and everything in it: "A real challenge would be to think of Wikimedia Commons as a goal in itself."

It is like the [logo of Wikipedia](#): with puzzle pieces still missing. A tower of babel that will never be finished, but nevertheless is worth pursuing. "Well, Wiki might love art, but there is a long road before art loves Wiki."

Amit Basole: Wikipedia is irrelevant, and it's not

Posted: June 14, 2010 at 9:30 am | By: julianabrunello | Tags: [amit basole](#), [conference](#), [CPoV](#), [report](#) (Wikipedia Critical Point of View Conference March 26-27 2010) by Karlijn Marchildon

"*The interesting thing about Wikipedia is that it's irrelevant, and at the same time it's not.*" With this statement Amit Basole opens his talk on the global issues and outlooks of Wikipedia and the broader context in which it exists. Basole explains that although the majority of the world's population hasn't ever heard of Wikipedia (making it quite irrelevant), the collaborative knowledge platform at the same time does represent a new social order, and a new economy that very much impacts the lives of exactly those people who haven't ever heard of it. In that sense, Wikipedia could be understood as relevant indeed.

Amit Basole has come to Amsterdam to give a talk about the implications of this new social order. As many before him have claimed, there has been a shift from an industrial, to a knowledge based society. This shift has many far reaching implications for the world's population, it's cultures and knowledge hierarchies. In fact, Basole ultimately claims that in this new social order, new (knowledge) hierarchies have been born. Basole, together with the India-based Vidya Ashram collective on whose behalf he speaks, has taken it upon himself to "*investigate these dynamics of knowledge in society, production and transmission, values, its relationship to the state, the market and so on*".

Vidya Ashram is a collective that believes that a radical intervention in the world of knowledge is necessary for a radical transformation of society. As society is changing, so is knowledge. With the driving philosophy that a people's knowledge movement (as in Lokavidya) is part of mass movements of people on the less fortunate side of the digital divide, can lead to a new philosophy of knowledge required for a radical pro-people transformation of society. With this socialist background, Vidya Ashram aims at bringing people from all over together to share, debate and explore the new knowledge hierarchies.

In a way, Wikipedia as an embodiment of this virtual knowledge, reflects and flattens hierarchies of knowledge as it presents different approaches of content, as it is collaborative.

More concretely, Vidya Ashram makes an effort to open debate and interaction on knowledge hierarchies and flows, in order to give shape to this new pro-people society where all types and flows of knowledge are respected from Lokavidya knowledge (evolving tacit people's practical knowledge) to traditional (scientific) knowledge. As the Vidya Ashram web site states; it calls on all college and university educated people to deliberate on the following actions:

- Opposition to the building of elite institutions of higher education.
- Recognition of knowledge in society, knowledge with peasants and artisans, and reflection of this in our writings and public stands.
- Support for proper economic returns on Lokavidya; at a minimum buying Lokavidya products, and campaigning for it.
- Opposition of policies that restrict peasants and artisans from using their knowledge for economic activity. Opposition to the expropriation of lokavidya by the corporations.
- Campaign for public spending on research in the fields and work-sites by peasants and artisans.
- Work for the dignity of Lokavidya by building overlaps between formal education at all levels and Lokavidya.

This call is a clear action towards the exploration of the ruling knowledge paradigm. In that sense, Basole's talk on the concept of knowledge and society is radical and relevant in the same sense as he claims Wikipedia is. In his words: "*Although the content is conservative, the form is radical.*"

Cramer: Objectivism and the Fictions of Collaborative Media

Posted: March 29, 2010 at 1:04 pm | By: julianabrunello | Tags: [amsterdam](#), [conference](#), [CPoV](#), [epicpedia](#), [Florian Cramer](#), [objectivism](#), [wikipedia](#) | [3 Comments](#)

The German WikiWars and the Limits of Objectivism

Presentation by **Florian Cramer** for the [Critical Point of View \(CPoV\)](#) conferece in Amsterdam, 27.03.2010

Cramer started his presentation by pointing out to some fictions about collaborative media. He believes it is mostly a utopia, what leads to a big history of disappointments.

On the positive side, Wikipedia, with all its problems, is nevertheless the only large-scale working community of collaborative authorship. The implications of that are not all positive though: If one considers the hypertext/hyperfiction utopia by Nelson, Bolter and Landow in the 1990s, their ideas, especially when applied to literature, have gone almost nowhere. The notion of collective intelligence by Pierre Levy has also failed in most cases, if one considers the huge amount of single authors and single articles. Wikipedia, in this case, is what comes closer to his ideal of collaborative writing. The p2p, another utopia, ended up being used for consumption instead of being a media for cultural production. Finally, the creative commons idea, whose works are rarely re-used. He thinks that these hopes for collaborative media are 'a bit old European', and the one that persists the most is the hope for a CPoV instead of a NPoV. This means, that Wikipedia is founded precisely on the opposite of CPoV. This is a question of what inspired the creation of Wikipedia.

He continues his critique by showing the Wikipedia page on [Jimmy Wales](#) ('largely edited by himself') and emphasizing his influences, which involve [Ayn Rand's Objectivism](#) - which is 'hard core neo-liberalism' and 'capitalist philosophy'. This philosophical stream believes that there is an objective reality and that therefore it is possible to have a NPoV of things.

He believes that Wikipedia is the only successful appropriation of the notion of Open Source for works other than software. Free marked and the free flow of ideas were also incorporated (see 1998s the Cathedral and the Bazar). In other words, the NPoV is the translation of Ayn Rand's school of thought and other libertarian influences into the project.

Wikipedia, as well as other FLOSS movements, are built on consensus. The main problem is that this consensus is built on fictions. In Wikipedia there are implicit social contracts based on objectiveness, what holds the community of editors in Wikipedia together. However, this fiction/myth of having an objective reality does not scale. Once the project grows and controversies arise, it leads to subsequent disappointments.

A further design problem in Wikipedia is that it tries to create its neutrality/consensus/objectivity by the way the article page is designed. It looks like one unitary source of information that does not reflect the actual editing history.

Cramer finalizes his presentation by introducing Annemieke van der Hoek, who developed a tool called [Epicpedia](#). EpicPedia (based on the epic theater by Bertold Brecht) is a tool that translates Wikipedia pages into a theatrical kind of way.



[#CPoV on the Twitter Backchannel](#)

Posted: March 29, 2010 at 2:16 pm | By: Anne Helmond | Tags: [backchannel](#), [twitter](#)

During the conference there was a lot of activity on Twitter on the backchannel [#cpov](#). Fanatic tweeter and co-organizer Nishant Shah even got temporarily barred from Twitter due to "excessive tweeting." On top of that Twitter search is amnesic and the [#cpov](#) conference tweets will not be available anymore in two weeks. Fortunately Daniel Mietchen made a small movie from his favorite [#cpov](#) conference tweets. It's wonderful to see how a Twitter backchannel could provide information for those [not being able to attend](#) the conference. [Summary of CPOV 2010 \(March 26-27, Amsterdam\)](#) from [Daniel Mietchen](#) on [Vimeo](#).



[Full video report of CPOV](#)

Posted: April 12, 2010 at 3:34 pm | By: margreet |

We were very happy with the large amount of people attending the CPOV Wikipedia conference in Amsterdam. However, for those of you who could not make it, there is a full video report of all presented lectures to be found here.

Credits:

The Critical Point of View conference is organized by the Institute of Network Cultures in collaboration with the Centre for Internet & Society in Bangalore, India. Supported by Centre for Internet & Society, Applied Sciences, School of Design and Communication, Foundation Democracy and Media, Public Library Amsterdam. The video are produced by <http://www.mtime.nl>

[Archive tweets of the event in Amsterdam](#)

Posted: April 15, 2010 at 12:47 pm | By: julianabrunello | Tags: [amsterdam](#), [archive](#), [CPOV](#), [tweet](#), [twitter](#)

If you were at the conference in Amsterdam, you have probably noticed that there was a parallel tweet conversation going on. For the ones who would like to read them again, and for the ones who would like to read them for the first time, just click on the following link:

<http://www.twapperkeeper.com/hashtag/cpov>

[Pictures](#)





All photos by [Anne Helmond](#) for the Institute of Network Cultures. [More pictures on Flickr.](#)

Who is in control of Wikipedia?

Encyclopedia Histories

The word made durable. In this session we want to get a better understanding of the cultural specific histories of the encyclopedia. D'Almeida's Phrasies European Enlightenment, and the Encyclopedie as Enlightenment becomes durable, tangible and digital.

Imaging the world: E Wikipedia image co

Wiki Art

Art at the gates: Wikipedia was considered contr knowledge production the rejection of art?

Designing Debate

The paradox of neutrality. The Neutral view held by a corporate lobby, using be impacted by the actions of the corporate political agnality, as a battle for

Wikipedia Analytics

Knowledge in the neighborhood of software notification systems are such an important much of the dirty work and general knowled win principles themselves need to be debated expertise or lead to an empowerment of the media as a platform. What is the relation bet

Global Issues and Outlooks

Knowledge in flux: The Western tradition of Enlightenment be Media. Mirroring the Enlightenment itself universal - e.g. in the formulation of vision models and so on. The ways in which further attention. Indeed, the 'grand narra 'computerized societies' continue to inform once referred to this as the 'persistence of status. Likewise, this resonates with Fouca

Wiki Theory

Radical Wiki(media) critique: Bes

Critikal Point of View