



Wikipedia-Based Assignments and Critical Information Literacy: A Case Study

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Introduction

In higher education, Wikipedia is an academic research tool that has historically caused quite a bit of hand-wringing. It is a popular resource among students, and many professors and academic librarians have grappled with how to teach students to use it responsibly. The general consensus seems to be that Wikipedia is a great resource for gathering background information, but it should not be used as a source for a paper.¹ Students are often aware that they should not cite Wikipedia, and one of the most common reasons they mention is its susceptibility to bias because “anyone can edit it.” This definition of bias on Wikipedia is interesting because it acknowledges the possibility that a political, social, or ideological viewpoint might be overrepresented on any particular article, yet this definition fails to recognize the role that systemic bias plays on Wikipedia. This bias presents itself as an overrepresentation of Western, white, cisgender, straight, and male voices, both in terms of article content and the demographic makeup of Wikipedia editors and administrators. In terms of systemic bias, Wikipedia is not any guiltier than Google, scholarly publishing, the news, or even libraries. However, Wikipedia does make an excellent case study for discussing critical information literacy and the role that power, oppression, and bias play within systems that organize, produce, and provide access to information. Wikipedia also allows students the opportunity to enact a

small but meaningful change by adding new articles about persons from groups that have been historically marginalized. This chapter will discuss one librarian's efforts to implement critical information literacy into LIB 100, a half-semester credit-bearing library course, using a Wikipedia to ground discussions of power and inequality and as a tool of resistance.

Relevant Literature

Numerous publications have discussed the important role that critical information literacy can play in the library's instructional practice.²⁻⁴ These seminal works have laid the foundation for an increased awareness of critical information literacy within the profession and provided a challenge to instructors interested in addressing issues of power and oppression. Over the last decade, numerous librarians have shared their strategies and ideas for implementing critical information literacy in the classroom environment.⁵ Many of these publications have influenced the design and syllabus of the course discussed in this chapter. For example, Swanson's model encouraged building upon students' previous knowledge and developing information-seeking scenarios that acknowledge the relevance of a variety of information formats when evaluating sources.⁶ Drabinski's work highlighting the inherently oppressive nature of Library of Congress subject headings was the catalyst for LIB 100's examination of the organization of information.⁷ Booth's blog post defining "information privilege" provided a working definition for a concept which students were asked to reflect on during the semester.⁸ Branaum's discussion on the myth of library neutrality has been important when considering Wikipedia's own complicated relationship with the term "neutrality" and the underlying assumptions made when Wikipedia asks editors to strive for "neutral point of view."⁹ These readings, among others, were a major source of inspiration when developing a curriculum for LIB 100 that focused around critical information literacy.

Several publications have emerged in recent years which detail various experiences implementing critical information literacy in the credit-bearing environment. Doherty and Ketchner described teaching a first-year seminar wherein they focused on relinquishing instructor control and empowering students as learners.¹⁰ Broidy's work detailed the creation of an upper-level women's studies course that asked students to examine infor-

mation through a critical feminist lens.¹¹ Librarians at the City University of New York developed a three-credit critical information literacy course that used problem-based learning and challenged students to create their own information tool or educational game.^{12,13}

While a credit-bearing course that used Wikipedia-based assignments to explore critical information literacy has yet to emerge in the literature, several librarians have explored the potential uses of Wikipedia in teaching information literacy skills. Jennings advocated for librarians to embrace Wikipedia and outlined an approach for librarians using the ACRL *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education*.¹⁴ In a two-hour one-shot session, Oliver asked students to find unsubstantiated claims on Wikipedia and locate sources for them.¹⁵ Scharf partnered with writing instructors to implement a Wikipedia-based assignment in several technical communication courses, with learning outcomes related to evaluating information and information ethics.¹⁶ California State Maritime has a long history of utilizing Wikipedia projects in its two-unit credit-bearing information literacy course geared toward its Engineering Technology majors.¹⁷ Students in this class had the option to create new pages or edit existing ones, as long as they related to maritime studies or engineering. Jacobs was one of the first authors to identify the potential for Wikipedia to be used to teach critical information literacy. Jacobs encouraged librarians to articulate what about Wikipedia they found problematic, rather than giving students overly simplistic directives to avoid using it.¹⁸ Further, Jacobs outlined several opportunities to use Wikipedia to engage students in critical inquiry, such as examining the Wikipedia talk pages of controversial or contested subjects. Finally, Jacobs proposed that Wikipedia might be an avenue for students to participate in pursuing social change.

To that end, Wikipedia is a fairly common tool used in college courses to discuss and address inequality. Several of the instructors for these courses have shared their experiences teaching students about systematic bias and inequality using Wikipedia on the *WikiEdu* blog. For example, students in Connecticut College's Advanced Readings in Feminist Theory course added content to Wikipedia that "reflected the marginalization of women, people of color, and trans people as subjects and editors."¹⁹ Students taking Concordia University's History of Women Screenwriters added Wikipedia entries for women and transgender screenwriters, who have a history of being ignored and marginalized in their field.²⁰ Additionally,

students enrolled in Rice University's Poverty, Justice, and Human Capabilities course wrote about Muslim women in sport, highlighting issues like the FIFA and FIBA's hijab bans.²¹

Libraries have also positioned themselves as a place where social justice and inequality issues can be addressed on Wikipedia. Dozens of libraries have hosted Wikipedia edit-a-thons centered around documenting the lives of women, people of color, and the LGBTQ community. UNC-Chapel Hill, Yale University, Stanford University, University of Virginia, and Emory University, among many others, have all hosted Art+Feminism Wikipedia edit-a-thons focused on creating new or expanded entries on women in art history.²² UNC-Chapel Hill has also hosted edit-a-thons around themes such as African Americans in North Carolina, Diversity in Comic Books, African Diaspora Women, and Women in Science.²³ These kinds of events have led the way for libraries to explore how to use Wikipedia to discuss and address inequality while teaching academic research skills and information literacy.

Institutional Context

LIB 100: Academic Research and Information Issues is a 1.5 credit, half-semester information literacy course that has been taught at Wake Forest University since 2003. Though the course does not meet any divisional or degree requirements, the library enjoys a healthy enrollment in the course. In the 2016–2017 academic year, four librarians taught a total of twenty-eight sections of LIB 100, each enrolling fifteen to twenty students. Two of these librarians, including the author, teach nine credits of this class, or six sections, per semester. Librarians at Wake Forest University have faculty status, and this is considered a full-time course load for teaching-oriented professors at Wake Forest University. Aside from a couple hours per week at the reference desk and institutional committee service, there is no expectation of performing other librarianship-related work or producing scholarship.

Instructors of LIB 100 share the same set of learning outcomes and have the benefit of a fully developed template course to follow along with if they choose. However, there is no required way to teach LIB 100, and many instructors benefit from the opportunity to exercise creativity in the area of course development. In the summer of 2015, LIB 100 instructors

worked together to revise LIB 100's learning outcomes. Previous learning outcomes had been centered around the research process and heavily inspired by the ACRL *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education*.²⁴ With the emergence of the ACRL *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*²⁵ and increasing pedagogical conversations surrounding critical information literacy, the instructors of the course felt the time was right to reevaluate LIB 100's learning goals. New kinds of learning outcomes emerged from these conversations. Borrowing from the Framework's use of dispositions and knowledge practices, the new learning outcomes moved away from discrete skills sets and moved to concepts like flexibility of mind, persistence in researching, examination of different types of authority, personal responsibilities as members of discourse communities, and awareness and critical reflection on issues involving underrepresentation and marginalization within systems that produce and disseminate information.²⁶

With these new learning outcomes in mind, and inspired by the work done at other institutions, the author chose a Wikipedia-based assignment to be the cornerstone of a revised LIB 100 curriculum. This new assignment asked groups of students to choose a person to write a biographical entry about for Wikipedia. These potential biographical subjects were from a group or groups traditionally marginalized on Wikipedia, but primarily focused on women, people of color, and/or members of the LGBTQ community. Most subjects were semi-local to the university because local history is well-represented in our library's collection. Some class lessons remained from previous iterations of the course, reflecting the continued need to be able to conduct library research. Other class lessons were added or changed, reflecting new classroom content surrounding critical information literacy. This new content centered around four major critical questions:

1. Who writes history?
2. Who provides access to information?
3. Who has access to information?
4. How do I write history?

These questions framed LIB 100's conversations around the ways in which Wikipedia illustrates issues related to critical information literacy, namely the way information is used as a structure of power and oppression and how these power structures can be resisted and changed.

The Four Critical Questions

Who Writes History?

Students in LIB 100 began their critical examination of Wikipedia by taking an inventory of what they already knew about Wikipedia. This was an important first step because building upon prior knowledge helps learners frame new information and give it meaning within a context they already understand.²⁷ Student responses typically included statements like, “anyone can edit Wikipedia,” “Wikipedia is free,” “students shouldn’t cite Wikipedia in their papers,” and “Wikipedia can be biased.” Students’ understanding of bias within Wikipedia was typically limited to the possibility that an article might have a political, religious, or ideological slant. Most students had never considered systemic bias on Wikipedia, even though this kind of bias occurs within article content, impacts the kinds of information available, and exists within Wikipedia’s editing culture.

Once students had shared what they already knew about Wikipedia, then groups were assigned to divide among themselves several short readings related to bias on Wikipedia. The selection of readings included examples of systemic sexism, racism, and transphobia in both Wikipedia articles and within the Wikipedia community.^{28–32} After taking eight to ten minutes to quietly read their assigned article, students were asked to share with their group what their article was about. Once each student had the chance to share, the groups brainstormed new things they had learned about Wikipedia from the articles. Afterward, each group took turns sharing out with the rest of the class. Many students expressed surprise that the gender disparity between men and women editors was so high, with two separate studies putting the number of male editors at 84 percent and 91 percent of the total number of editors, respectively.^{33,34} We continued this conversation by comparing the percentage of men who edit Wikipedia with the number of biographical entries written about men, a number that in 2015 stood at 85 percent of the total.³⁵ Then, the students were asked to brainstorm plausible reasons for the high disparity between men and women, and several possibilities were discussed, including unconscious bias and less information available about women in secondary literature.

Currently, there is limited demographic data available about the representation of other marginalized populations on Wikipedia, which is noteworthy, if not surprising. Despite the lack of data, LIB 100 operated under

the assumption that the disparity between men and women extended to other marginalized groups as well, likely to an even greater extent. To further explore this, the class examined an article written in English that lists “1,000 basic articles every language of Wikipedia should have.”³⁶ Wikipedia is produced in hundreds of languages. Some, like English Wikipedia, are quite robust and contain millions of articles. Other languages, like Māori, have less Wikipedia content, with several thousand articles by comparison. Despite existing in languages that span the globe, the suggested biographical entries on this list skewed largely white and Western. Of the four actors who made the list, three were white actors from American cinema: Charlie Chaplin, Marlene Dietrich, and Marilyn Monroe. On the list of suggested artists, sixteen of the eighteen artists were either American or European, and Frida Kahlo was the only woman represented on the list. In class, small groups were asked to examine the significance of this page. Students were prompted to consider the implications of editors with a Western point of view determining what articles other languages of Wikipedia should include, focusing on the inherent bias presented by such a venture. Many students were unafraid to admit that they had never considered the impact that a predominantly Western, white, cisgender, straight, and male worldview would have on the content available on Wikipedia.

After these discussions were concluded, the class pulled back for a larger discussion on how history is written, with a specific focus on who does the writing and what they write about. We examined the library’s volumes of the *Biographical History of North Carolina from Colonial Times to the Present*,³⁷ and took note of both the authors and the subjects, who were predominately male and white. It was important for students to understand that Wikipedia is not uniquely terrible when it comes to exclusion and that systemic bias in the historical record is both pervasive and nothing new. Wikipedia was merely the lens with which we explored this much larger problem. Following this class discussion, students created individual reflection journals in our course management system. For homework, students were asked a series of questions designed to help them reflect on the new information they had learned and how they saw it impacting their lives and the lives of others.

Who Provides Access to Information?

Building off the classroom discussion of how certain cultures and groups dominate the written historical record, the class turned toward a critical

examination of information access. Class discussion centered around the ways in which groups with power over information access can intentionally or unintentionally negatively impact marginalized groups. With regards to Wikipedia, we examined the ways in which Wikipedia's policies and guidelines have contributed to the overall problem of underrepresentation, particularly Wikipedia's notability guideline and the policy on "neutral point of view." Wikipedia's notability guideline requires a subject to have "significant coverage," a definition which includes "at least one secondary source," but in practice typically must include several secondary sources.³⁸ Given what the students had previously discussed in class regarding the underrepresentation of marginalized groups in secondary literature, it was not difficult for the class to conclude that the notability guideline contributed to systemic bias on Wikipedia, regardless of the guideline's seemingly "good" intentions.

Class discussion also revealed Wikipedia's policy on neutral point of view to be problematic. When Wikipedia refers to maintaining a neutral point of view, it is generally understood to mean whether a single article maintains political, social, and ideological balance.³⁹ While this definition is accurate, neutral point of view should also be viewed from an institutional standpoint. To examine this more closely, students were asked to read about the controversy surrounding Wikipedia's page on "Gamergate," an article that highlighted sexism within video game culture. After months of back-and-forth editing on the page, several editors grew concerned that the page was being used "to promote a misogynist agenda and slander women in the gaming industry."⁴⁰ Opponents believed the page was being used to promote a feminist agenda. The issue went to Wikipedia's arbitration committee and several feminist editors were penalized as a result. Of course, this outcome begged the question of whether a site, where roughly nine out of ten editors are men, was able to maintain a "neutral point of view" when determining what content should be deemed sexist or discriminatory.

Class discussions on neutrality can be tricky from an instructor's standpoint. Many students are used to seeing controversies like Gamergate framed as "pro" and "con" style debates, where all opinions have equal merit and given equal platforms, even if they are factually inaccurate. In an attempt to address this, students were asked to watch part of John Oliver's *Last Week Tonight* segment titled "Scientific Studies" for homework.⁴¹ The

sketch covered a variety of topics related to scientific literacy, neutrality being just one of many. Using the segment as a starting point for discussion, we explored how the anti-vaccination movement has evolved over the last decade and the false equivalency that can arise when arguments that are not backed by evidence are given an equal platform in debates as those that are scientifically sound. It is also worthwhile to note that discussions about sensitive issues like neutrality can be intimidating for students, especially if they are asked to voice their thoughts and opinions to the entire classroom. Implementing strategies like think-pair-shares or small group discussions can go a long way in helping students feel more comfortable discussing these topics and can help them learn from each other with a smaller risk of embarrassment.

As mentioned previously, Wikipedia is not alone when it comes to the suppression of marginalized groups or voices. It was merely the lens through which our class examined these issues writ large. The class also examined how other entities providing information enact oppression through an examination of the categorization and organization of information. To prepare for this discussion, students read the introduction to Bowker's *Sorting Things Out: Classification and Its Consequences*,⁴² Noble's article on the sexism and racism present in Google search results,⁴³ a short newspaper article on the controversy surrounding the Library of Congress subject heading "illegal alien,"⁴⁴ and listened in class to a story by NPR on the creation of Wikipedia's "Women Novelists" category.⁴⁵ While this was a significant amount of reading for one class session, LIB 100 rarely had readings assigned for homework. For this reason, it was easier to make the case that completing roughly twenty pages of readings was neither an unreasonable amount of work nor out of the ordinary within the rigorous academic atmosphere of Wake Forest. After a small group discussion on how the readings detailed institutionalized oppression within systems that organize information, groups were asked to brainstorm possible solutions, using the "Women Novelists" controversy as an example. Following this discussion, groups were asked to select five or more Wikipedia categories for their biographical subject, a difficult task given that Wikipedia categories are arguably more systematically oppressive and less developed than Library of Congress subject headings. After selecting categories, students were asked to prepare a brief oral justification for the categories chosen, given to the instructor before class let out. This exercise allowed students

to practice organizing information using subjects that required thoughtful deliberation due to their marginalized status on Wikipedia. Students were asked to further reflect on this process in their individual journals. Here, they were asked to discuss their process for choosing categories and detail any obstacles they ran into while doing so within an unjust system.

Who Has Access to Information?

During our initial class discussion about what students already knew about Wikipedia, one belief that was repeatedly brought up was that Wikipedia was a “free” resource. Given the costs associated with computer ownership and internet access, and the likelihood that poor communities throughout the globe lack access to the internet at all, this was a belief that deserved to be questioned. Midway through the course, students were asked to read an article on digital redlining and how internet providers discriminate against minority and lower-income neighborhoods.⁴⁶ After a brief review of the article in class, students were given Booth’s definition of “information privilege” and asked to break into small groups to discuss their thoughts on the digital redlining article, the question of whether Wikipedia and similar internet sources were actually “free,” and their thoughts on information privilege.⁴⁷ Booth has pointed out that Wikipedia is a good tool for teaching students how to use their information privilege to benefit those without the same level of information access, saying, “Teaching with Wikipedia helps students see that their access to resources and expertise carries with it a responsibility to the broader information ecology.”⁴⁸ To this point, after the class session, students were asked to write in their reflection journals about their responsibilities as individuals with information privilege, both within the context of the Wikipedia project and outside the classroom.

How Do I Write History?

The fourth and final critical question involved students reflecting on how they write about marginalized groups. This seemed especially important, given the problematic nature of having students at an elite, privileged institution writing about the biographical history of persons from underrepresented groups. To begin this conversation, students read a Wikipedia guide that made suggestions for writing about women.⁴⁹ This guide made simple recommendations like using surnames, gender-neutral language, and not

defining women by their romantic relationships. In class discussion, many students acknowledged previously making these kinds of errors, especially around the use of gender-neutral language. In general, most students found these suggestions reasonable and made an effort to follow through on them in their own writing.

Despite enlisting help from faculty members in history and anthropology, finding a similar guide for writing about other marginalized groups proved difficult. Still, the conversation was much needed, so class discussion on the “Writing About Women” article also included questions about how to extrapolate what students had learned to other underrepresented groups. For example, the first sentence on many Wikipedia biographies about people of color mention their race or ethnicity before their accomplishments. Alternatively, a white person’s race is almost never brought up in their biography, let alone as a qualifier to their accomplishments. This observation made a great starting point for class discussion on the dangers of assuming that white, male, straight, cis-gendered, and without a disability was the “default” identity, and that everyone else who does not fall into these categories needs a label that identifies them as the “other.” However, in many cases, demographic distinctions were relevant and important to a person’s biographical history, and erasing that aspect of their identity by omitting it might be inappropriate. Class discussion encouraged students to be intentional in their writing and to give careful consideration as to where and when they decided to give demographic identifications. With regard to how to approach this issue, Wikipedia’s guide on writing about women suggested that if identification was needed, “wherever possible start with her own position or accomplishments” before giving demographic information.⁵⁰

At least once or twice per semester, a student would express their belief that these kinds of considerations were “too PC” or “over the top.” These statements were almost always made within small groups and were overheard as the instructor walked around the room. In one example, a student disagreed with the need to avoid gendered pronouns like “her” and “his” when writing about our subjects or referring to authors of secondary sources. When this statement was offered, the instructor invited the student to elaborate on their thinking by asking, “Could you tell me a little bit more about why you said that?” The student replied, “Well, it just doesn’t bother me if someone refers to me as a ‘her.’” The instructor responded by

asking the student, “Could you imagine a scenario in which it might bother someone else?” and the student conceded that they could. Later, the class discussed several scenarios in which using gendered pronouns could be harmful, such as when a gendered pronoun misidentifies a person’s gender, as often happens to members of the transgender community. These conversations were difficult to have with students, but parsing out these beliefs and pointing out their flaws, albeit respectfully, was necessary to foster an inclusive classroom environment and inclusive writing on Wikipedia. Following these discussions, students were asked to reflect individually on what they had learned and asked to discuss with their groups they might write thoughtfully and intentionally about their biographical subject taking these considerations into account.

Additionally, through class discussions of Chevalier’s experience of being a genderqueer Wikipedia editor,⁵¹ it became apparent that many students struggled with LGBTQ vocabulary and using correct gender pronouns. To focus on this issue, a new activity was added to the class before discussion on the Chevalier article commenced. For this activity, students broke into their groups and completed a quick vocabulary matching game from our university’s SafeZone workbook. After the class went over the vocabulary answers, students were asked to review the Chevalier article and determine which gender pronoun Chevalier prefers. Since including this activity, students have shown greater intentionality around this issue, and fewer errors have been made when using gendered pronouns in classroom discussions and in student’s written work.

The Assignment Sequence

LIB 100’s Wikipedia-based assignments were hosted by the Wikipedia Education Program (*WikiEdu*). This program offered Wikipedia training modules for students and instructors and an online course landing page and assigned LIB 100 a Wikipedia Content Expert to assist both the instructor and students with any issues or questions. At the beginning of the semester, students created *WikiEdu* and Wikipedia accounts and enrolled in the course. Once enrolled, students were asked to complete several Wikipedia training modules that gave them experience editing articles in the Wikipedia environment. Fortunately, Wikipedia’s user-friendly Visual Editor negated the need for students to learn Wikipedia’s complex back-end markup language.

While students were completing these training modules for homework, they also selected a potential biographical subject to create an article on. Finding biographical subjects that met Wikipedia's notability requirements, and for whom the library provided several secondary sources, was difficult and time-intensive. For this reason, the instructor preselected several potential biographical subjects for students to choose from. The project was done in groups, so three or four students were assigned to the same article. For a class of eighteen students, eight or nine potential biographical subjects were preselected with the understanding that we may only write about five or six. To familiarize students with the biographical subjects, each student was assigned one potential person to read about for homework. Using the jigsaw reading approach, students were grouped together with several other students who were assigned different people. After the students shared what they knew with each other, they individually ranked their top three candidates and were assigned to groups based on their preferences.

Around the same time students were assigned jigsaw readings, they were also given their first assignment, the Wikipedia Biography Critique. This individual assignment asked students to critique a Wikipedia biographical entry on someone they knew a lot about, like their favorite musician, professional athlete, or politician. Students were asked to critique the article based on an extensive examination of writing style, sources, and viewpoints. The first goal of the assignment was to familiarize students with the genre of encyclopedia writing. Because of the prevalence of persuasive and opinion-based writing in college, shifting to a fact-based style of writing was a difficult transition for many students. Assigning a close read of an encyclopedia-style article allowed them to explore how this style of writing was different from the writing style they were used to. The second goal of this assignment was to examine the sources of a Wikipedia article. In class, we practiced evaluating sources based on author(s), publisher, objectivity, currency, accuracy, and purpose, which students then used to discuss the reliability and appropriateness of the sources used in the article. We reflected on the possibility that not all information would come from scholarly articles or books, and that students would be required to think critically about the internet sources they found. This skill was much needed later when we moved on to our biographical subjects, many of whom secondary literature had mostly ignored. In addition to source evaluation, students

were asked to check the articles for facts that were missing sources, for links in the References section that were broken, and whether they noticed any direct plagiarism, which several students found evidence of. The third goal of the assignment was to examine the viewpoints presented in the article. In class, we discussed Wikipedia's policy on maintaining a "neutral point of view" and discussed the various ways in which conscious or unconscious bias may have presented itself in the articles. Students were quite good at locating instances of bias in individual articles and were quick to point out if a particular point of view or controversial experience in their subject's life was over- or underrepresented.

The main assignment in the course, the Wikipedia biographical entry, was completed over the course of several drafts. The first draft of the students' Wikipedia article required at least five references, one or two lead paragraph sentences, and one main body paragraph. The references were located through searches on Summon, internet search engines, Google Books, and Google Scholar. There were no requirements that sources be in any particular format (e.g., book, scholarly article). Instead, students were asked to aim for sources that reflected a variety of publication methods and viewpoints. The lead paragraph requirement reflected Wikipedia's standard format for biographical entries in which the first paragraph of the article was a brief summary of the person's accomplishments. This paragraph was one of the more troublesome for students to write, so beginning this section earlier in the process allowed for several opportunities for instructor feedback. Each draft was returned in class and given verbal and written feedback from the instructor. Concerns about writing style, sources, or content were discussed with the group at this time. The feedback sessions also allowed the instructor to give technical feedback related to Wikipedia editing. Drafts were graded for completion and, therefore, they were rarely penalized.

The second draft of the article required at least eight references, two additional main body paragraphs, organized section headings, four to six assigned Wikipedia categories, and a filled-out infobox. Section headings referred to the headings found in most Wikipedia biographical entries, such as "Early Life" or "Education." There were no standard heading titles, but students were encouraged to make use of headings found on similar pages. The infobox on a Wikipedia article typically included information like the dates of birth and death, hometown, and a photograph of the per-

son, if available. In many cases, there were several photographs of the person available, but due to copyright restrictions, they could not be used. The process of determining whether a photograph could be used was confusing for students, so some class time was devoted to teaching the basics of copyright and the Creative Commons, specifically as they applied to the reuse of photographs.

After students received instructor feedback on their second draft, they were assigned to individually review another group's article. Typically, each group received three or four reviews from other students in the class. This assignment was helpful because it allowed students to receive feedback from someone other than the instructor. It was also helpful because providing peer feedback allowed students to reflect on the strength of their own articles in comparison to others and locate areas for improvement. While students were asked to pay attention to grammatical errors, the main focus was to give constructive feedback on the content of the article. Asking students to identify two things the article was doing well and two things that could be improved upon ensured that peer feedback was helpful and constructive.

The final draft of the Wikipedia biographical entry was published on the last day of class. Students were graded on how well they followed Wikipedia's writing style and conventions, the thoroughness of their research as demonstrated by their footnotes and references, and the comprehensiveness of their content. Because groups were given several opportunities to receive instructor and peer feedback, articles were typically of high quality and students generally did well on the assignment.

Student Responses to the Wikipedia Assignment

Preliminary evidence has shown that college students find Wikipedia-based assignments engaging and satisfying. In the fall of 2016, *WikiEdu* surveyed students and instructors participating in their program. When completing Wikipedia-based assignments, over 90 percent of students said they were "proud" of their work.⁵² Students in that survey also reported that they were more satisfied with their Wikipedia assignments than assignments given in other classes. Anecdotally, students in LIB 100 reported that they preferred creating Wikipedia articles over alternative assignments, like pa-

pers or annotated bibliographies, because they write so many papers for other classes.

One of the major learning outcomes for LIB 100 involved awareness and critical reflection on issues involving underrepresentation and marginalization within systems that produce and disseminate information. Because this was new territory for the instructor and LIB 100, student feedback was sought, outside of individual reflection journals, on whether these learning outcomes were met. In the fall of 2016, students in LIB 100 were asked to respond anonymously and voluntarily to a series of Likert scale questions about their experiences in the class following the Wikipedia-based assignment. Seventy-one of 102 (69.6 percent) students responded to the survey. Of the students who responded to the survey, 94 percent agreed or strongly agreed that the class increased their awareness that systems which produce and/or disseminate information (e.g., Wikipedia, scholarly journals, libraries) can be systematically biased against traditionally underrepresented and marginalized groups. An overwhelming majority of the class (91 percent) also agreed or strongly agreed that the class encouraged them to think more deeply about societal systems of power, privilege, and oppression. Later in the survey, students were asked open-ended questions, including, “In what ways did the Wikipedia project encourage you to think about issues of bias, power, privilege, and oppression?” Several thoughtful responses were received, including:

It really made me realize that oppression, privilege and bias can look different than typical examples. By having little to no information on black women, for example, we are essentially rendering them nonexistent or unimportant.

The Wikipedia page really encouraged me to think about the person I wrote on and how this person and his accomplishments were not recorded, but people from other privileged groups had more information.

When asked whether their thinking about information had changed or evolved because of the course, students wrote:

I now think that information should be much more accessible. I used to not really think about that topic or problem at all but now I can see how detrimental restricting access to information can be. I also think that information needs to better reflect all types of people.

I never realized all of the things on the Internet that could be biased. I knew that the Internet was slightly biased in certain ways before the course, but the class opened my eyes to what was actually considered biased.

Other students provided shrewd analysis of the concept of neutrality, information privilege, and issues like the digital divide. Overall, the results of the survey affirmed that students were aware of and reflecting on issues related to critical information literacy.

Conclusion

To conclude, LIB 100's Wikipedia-based assignments made a good case study for instructors interested in pursuing the inclusion of critical information literacy in their courses. Since the fall of 2016, LIB 100 students have added fifty-five Wikipedia articles on worthy biographical subjects, such as Dorothy Lee Bolden, Katharine Smith Reynolds, Simon Green Atkins, Addie Waites Hunton, Mary Martin Sloop, Mariette Pathy Allen, Anna DeCosta Banks, and Lourdes Casal. According to LIB 100's *WikiEdu* dashboards, the students' articles have been viewed 60,000 times, grounding this project in an authentic context which makes a small, yet meaningful difference in counteracting systemic bias. While we remained true to the traditional learning goals of the course surrounding academic research and library use, the course was also able to explore underrepresentation and systemic bias using Wikipedia as a case study and encouraged students to consider how power, privilege, and oppression operate within systems that produce, organize, and provide access to information.

Endnotes

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