The **neutrality** of this article is **disputed**.

Please see the relevant discussion on the talk page.

Dynamics of NPOV disputes

Tsila Hassine

Piet Zwart Institute, Rotterdam

Wikipedia NPOV disputes

Wikipedia tries to maintain a "neutral Point of view" approach to article writing

Since everybody has a point of view, one writer's neutrality is another person's bias

Wikipedia maintains a "the neutrality of this article is …" tag

There is a whole list of NPOV disputed articles, waiting to be resolved

And the list is growing….

Important: This page is becoming _very large_.

If appropriate, please try to move content into subtopical articles or categories.

See Wikipedia:Longpages and Wikipedia:Long article layout for more information. To propose reduction methods, use its talk page.

Wikipedia NPOV disputes

This NPOV list brings to life issues that aren't normally in the eye of the media

Controversies that are of no interest to the media are unearthed by those who still care…

Some such subjects are the usual suspects -such as: Arab-Israeli conflict, Abortion in the Unites States, etc.

But some are not as widely known and discussed, - such as Cornwall's claim for independence

On the practice of Web epistemology

The growing availability of information on the web has led to a new kind of epistemological practice.

There are ways of gleaning information from the web, indirectly by going over the machine logs

One good example is the "recommendation lists", known on Amazon as "people who bought this book also bought…"

On the practice of Web epistemology

Information is collected through logging and tracking online actions of web users, and processed in certain ways in order to gain knowledge about users and user activity

Customers who bought this book also bought

A Concise History of the Middle East (7th Edition) by *Arthur Goldschmidt Jr.*

Iraq Since the Gulf War : Prospects for Democracy by *Fran Hazelton*

Islam and Democracy: Fear of the Modern World by *Fatima Mernissi*

The Challenge of Fundamentalism: Political Islam and the New World Disorder by *Bassam Tibi*

A History of the Modern Middle East by *William L. Cleveland*

Peace Process: American Diplomacy and the Arab-Israeli Conflict since 1967, Revised Edition

NPOV list as a recommendation system

Such web epistemological practice can be applied also to Wikipedia NPOV list in order to gain information on several levels.

On the general level one can regard the NPOV list as a recommendation system, such as " wikipedia contributors find these subjects interesting enough to fight about…."

The addition and deletion of subjects are indicators of the level of interest these subjects attract

In and Out

NPOV is a very dynamic list

Changes between May and July: 369 out (Yasser Arafat)

621 in (Terri Schiavo)

Changes between 17 July and 31 July: 156 out (Terri Schiavo)

168 in (Al Qaeda)

This data can serve as a weekely recommendation list: What's in, what's out, possibly indicating arrival of new contributors, a change of attitude towards the subject, etc.

Going in : what's on the discussion page

When diving deeper into the individual discussions, further information can be obtained on the individual discussions. This information can also be compiled into recommendation lists, such as "10 most disputed issues of the week"…

Afrocentrism	Karl Rove
Al Qaeda	State Terrorism
Anarchism	United Nations
Bill Clinton	Vladimir Lenin
Democracy	Yoga

Wikipedia articles: the history page….

Every discussion page has a history page attached

On this page are logged:

Date of editing

Edited content

The editor

These details tell the history of writing history…

What can be learned

What can be learned from simply looking at the history page

Start date of article / discussion

Day it went npov

Volume of edits before / after npov

New actors before / after NPOV (does npov-ing make it hotter ?)

What can be learned

The example of: Bill Clinton

Start date of article: November 2001

Day it went npov: 25 July 2005

Day NPOV was removed: 3 August 2002

Volume of edits before npov 2565 in 1365 (roughly 2 a day)

after npov 70 in 10 days

New actors before / after NPOV yes ("Butcher bob", "agiantman")

In this case it seems tha NPOV made the discussion "hotter"

Taking the temperature

Some NPOV articles are war zones (check out the Yasser Arafat history page), some are of little interest (aluminium, cauliflower)

Yasser Arafat: page created in December 2001

NPOV'd in: August 2002

no. of edits: around 2500

Cauliflower: page created in: January 2003

NPOV'd in: January 2004

no. of edits: 73

Measuring the heat of a dispute

Comparative data - Excel style

dispute	volume	time	temp
Accusations_against_Israel_of_war_crimes_du	43	403	6
Arabs_and_anti-Semitism	224	1275	8
Fatah	147	1277	7
Hamas	501	788	9
History_of_Israel	177	1217	7
History_of_the_Israeli-Palestinian_conflict	113	363	8
Israeli_Gaza_Strip_barrier	70	399	7
Israeli_deaths_due_to_palestinian_terrorism_	8	404	3
Israeli_settlement	328	1267	8
Israeli_terrorism	281	1167	8
Israeli-Palestinian_history_denial	48	329	7
Jenin	165	1052	7
Jews_Against_the_Occupation	49	65	9
List_of_Palestinian_children_killed_by_Israelis	49	28	12
List_of_massacres_committed_during_the_Al-	49	392	7
Operation_Defensive_Shield	65	522	7
Operation_Litani	51	149	8
Palestinian_views_of_the_peace_process	151	1076	7
Rachel_Corrie	500	530	10
Safsaf_massacre	11	406	4
Terrorism_against_Israel_before_2000	76	362	7
Middle_East_Media_Research_Institute	300	508	9
Talk:Media_coverage_of_the_Israeli-Palestinia	165	224	9
Violence_in_the_Israeli-Palestinian_conflict_2	30	1061	5
West_Bank	209	1277	7

Measuring the heat of a dispute visualization

The IBM
History Flow

http://researchweb.watson.ibm.com/history/index.htm

Measuring the heat of a dispute visualization

Animated

Looking at the participants

The history page provides details on the contributors' identity

We can say there is a bunch of "usual suspects" , as in the case of the arab israeli conflict

Sometimes it is interesting to try and find out some more about the identity, - perform a "trace" search on their ip

Who are the actors - the case of the shayetet 13

"shayetet 13" article describes the elite IDF troop,

The related discussion page features a long discussion, authored by allegedly several UN officers

On a first look this page looks pretty "hot"

A closer scrutiny ("whois search") of the IP sources reveals a different picture…

Who are the actors - the case of the shayetet 13

- FEB. 18, 2004-Former U.S. Navy SEAL Instructor Speaks Out!

- From: Brussels, Belgium, and as former UNIFIL Senior Officer with knowledge concerning this action, I weigh in with following facts

- Poole, Dorset UK

 - Nabua Military Headquarters Suva, Fiji

 - Gormanston Air Station, Eire

– COMANDO HUBERT NAGEURS DE COMBAT DE LIBAN

- Gruppo Scuole Comando Ragguppamento Subacquei e Incursori Tesco Tesei Italia

- Creden Hill The Regiment A Squadron Boat Troop

- Fort Story Marine Amphibuous Reconnaissance School

IP: 216.109.1.215 - 240

Alabama School for Math and Science ASMS-109-1 (NET-216-109-1-0-1)
216.109.1.0 - 216.109.1.255

Open problems

Technological: uses "screen scraping" - unstable technique

Platform: Integration within the Wikipedia pages

The value of this tool

Obviously, there is no way a person can follow all the amount of information being edited daily on the web, or even on wikipedia

This tool serves as an indicator to where the "interesting action" is happening, to the nature of this "action", and to its participants

This tool allows an overview of the currents and trends

This tool can be viewed as a derivative, something that indicates the changes and the direction of change of wikipedia content

An information tracer

This tool can also be viewed as an information tracer

While most tools measure information involuntarily provided by users (such as on amazon), this tool measures information provided voluntarily by wikimedians.

Software tools are used to mine quantitative data otherwise not very clear to the human user, and to provide insight on the interaction between different Wikipedians, shedding some light on the dynamics generated by this open content platform.