

## **Wicked Wiki: Recognizing the Value of Wikipedia as a Resource**

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**Abstract:** Wikipedia is the fifth most visited website in the world, whose fundamental principles include free content that anyone can use, edit, and distribute, neutrality, and collective engagement. The long held belief among educators is that Wikipedia is unreliable, a poor choice for students to use in their quest for knowledge. This view is long since outdated. Today, Wikipedia offers archives and Special Collections a variety of opportunities to highlight collections and teach information literacy skills. It is a vehicle for education, promotion, collaboration, and inspiration. However, before embarking on a Wikipedia project, like an edit-a-thon, and before investing the time in staff development and training, it is essential to ensure there is a need, a desire, and an interest in using Wikipedia as a resource. During Open Access week 2017, staff from Special Collections at the University of Texas at Arlington put together programming to introduce Wikipedia to the library staff and university faculty to explore the possibility of using Wikipedia as a tool for higher learning. A Walk Through the Wikiverse and Wikipedia in the Classroom led to numerous collaborations with community groups and Special Collections and culminated in a partnership with the Women's and Gender Studies program to integrate coursework and an edit-a-thon based around diversifying Wikipedia editors and entries.

### **About the Author:**

*Samantha Dodd* is the special collections archivist at the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA). She holds a Bachelor of Arts in history with a minor in education from UTA (2009), a Master of Arts in History from UT Dallas (2012), and a Master of Library and Information Science from the University of North Texas (2014). Samantha has also earned graduate certificates in archival administration, and advanced library management and became a certified archivist in 2013. She worked as the archivist for the Dallas Historical Society (DHS) from 2011-2015. In 2016 Samantha accepted the archivist position at UTA. Recently Samantha completed the Society of American Archivists' A&D certificate program.