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Wikipedia as a New Media Institution: Issues of Diversity, Regulation and Sustainability in an Open Encyclopedia.

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Abstract.

Wikipedia is an important institution and part of the new media landscape having evolved from the collaborative efforts of millions of distributed users. However it appears to be facing the danger that it has become so rule-bound and entrenched in its processes that it has become increasingly difficult to respond reflexively to change. Evidently it is also facing challenges in creating a culture that attracts and retains new editors to ensure its viability as an open and collaboratively produced encyclopaedia.

This research aims to bring together existing scholarship on Wikipedia as a successful open community together with more critical accounts of diversity in open communities. It will examine how the issues that have been highlighted by conflict within the community have shaped the evolution of Wikipedia from an open wiki experiment to a global knowledge producer. It also aims to develop new theories to account for change in the new media landscape by bringing together the concepts of interpretive flexibility and generative friction with existing theories on the evolution of institutions.

Finally, the research will present possible futures for Wikipedia as part of not only the larger Wikimedia movement, but of an open and accessible web.

Biography.

Kim is a second-year a PhD candidate at the ARC Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries and Innovation at the Queensland University of Technology. Currently investigating the history of Wikipedia as a new media institution, his research interests include regulation and diversity in open environments, the social construction of technologies, and controversies in the history of technology.

Principal Supervisor: Associate Professor Jean Burgess, Deputy

Director, ARC Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries & Innovation.

Kim completed Honours in 2011 and submitted the thesis, "The role of conflict in determining consensus on quality in Wikipedia articles" for which he received First Class Honours.