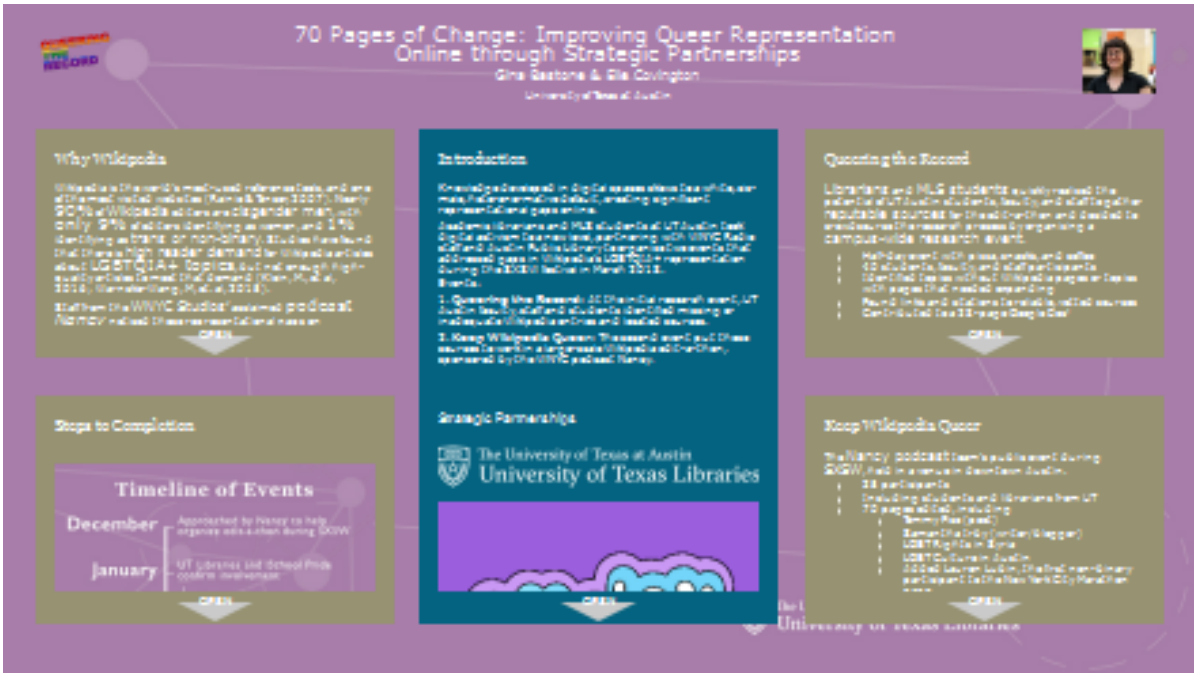
70 Pages of Change: Improving Queer Representation Online through Strategic Partnerships



Gina Bastone & Elle Covington

University of Texas at Austin

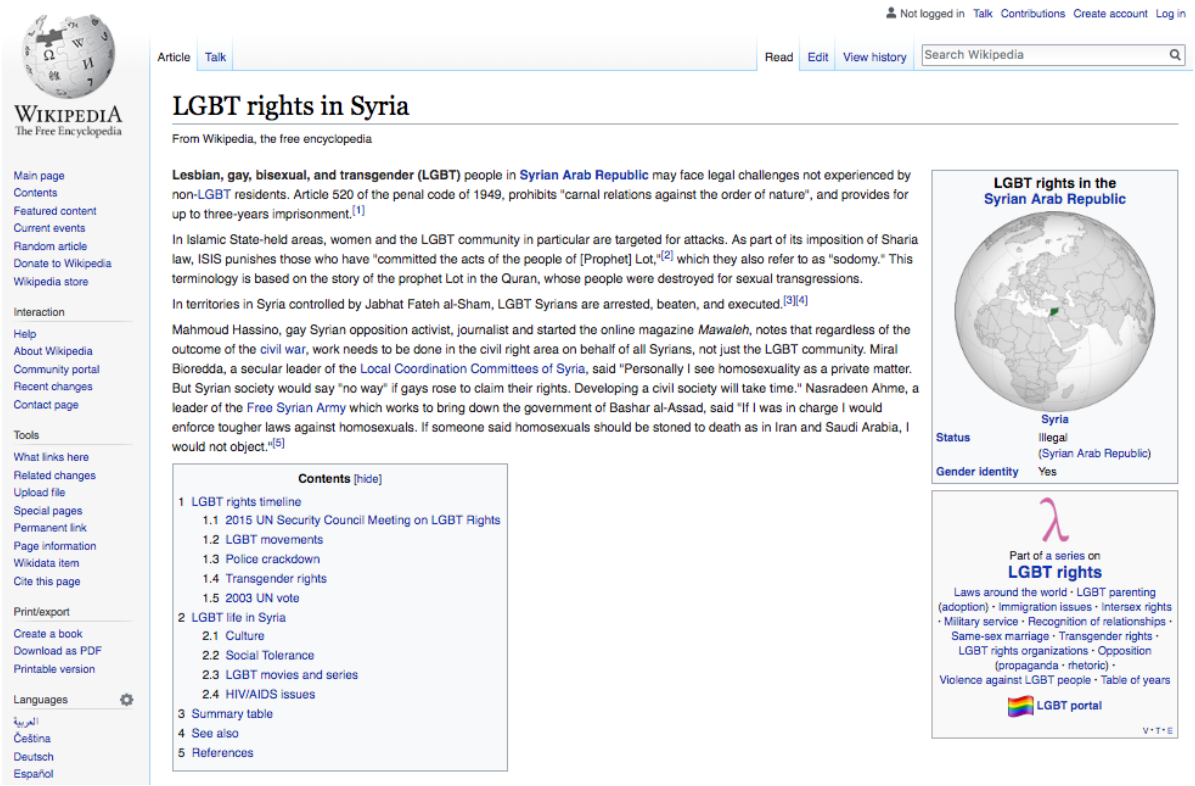
PRESENTED AT:

WHY WIKIPEDIA

Wikipedia is the world's most-used reference tools, and one of the most visited websites (Rainie & Tancer, 2007). Nearly 90% of Wikipedia editors are cisgender men, with only 9% of editors identifying as women, and 1% identifying as trans or non-binary. Studies have found that there is high reader demand for Wikipedia articles about LGBTQIA+ topics, but not enough high-quality articles to meet that demand (Klein, M., et al, 2016; Warncke-Wang, M, et. al, 2015).

Staff from the WNYC Studios' acclaimed podcast *Nancy* noticed these representational gaps on Wikipedia, and decided to host an edit-a-thon during the SXSW tech and music festival. A producer reached out to the UT Libraries, UT's School of Information and Austin Public Library to get help with research and resources for the edit-a-thon.

Wikipedia page about queer indigenous poet Tommy Pico



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WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia

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Languages
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Čeština
Deutsch
Español

LGBT rights in Syria

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people in **Syrian Arab Republic** may face legal challenges not experienced by non-LGBT residents. Article 520 of the penal code of 1949, prohibits "carnal relations against the order of nature", and provides for up to three-years imprisonment.[1]

In Islamic State-held areas, women and the LGBT community in particular are targeted for attacks. As part of its imposition of Sharia law, ISIS punishes those who have "committed the acts of the people of [Prophet] Lot,"[2] which they also refer to as "sodomy." This terminology is based on the story of the prophet Lot in the Quran, whose people were destroyed for sexual transgressions.

In territories in Syria controlled by Jabhat Fateh al-Sham, LGBT Syrians are arrested, beaten, and executed.[3][4]

Mahmoud Hassino, gay Syrian opposition activist, journalist and started the online magazine *Mawaleh*, notes that regardless of the outcome of the civil war, work needs to be done in the civil right area on behalf of all Syrians, not just the LGBT community. Miral Bioredda, a secular leader of the Local Coordination Committees of Syria, said "Personally I see homosexuality as a private matter. But Syrian society would say "no way" if gays rose to claim their rights. Developing a civil society will take time." Nasradeen Ahme, a leader of the Free Syrian Army which works to bring down the government of Bashar al-Assad, said "If I was in charge I would enforce tougher laws against homosexuals. If someone said homosexuals should be stoned to death as in Iran and Saudi Arabia, I would not object."[5]

Contents [hide]

1 LGBT rights timeline
  1.1 2015 UN Security Council Meeting on LGBT Rights
  1.2 LGBT movements
  1.3 Police crackdown
  1.4 Transgender rights
  1.5 2003 UN vote
2 LGBT life in Syria
  2.1 Culture
  2.2 Social Tolerance
  2.3 LGBT movies and series
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3 Summary table
4 See also
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LGBT rights in the Syrian Arab Republic

Syria

Status	Illegal (Syrian Arab Republic)
Gender identity	Yes

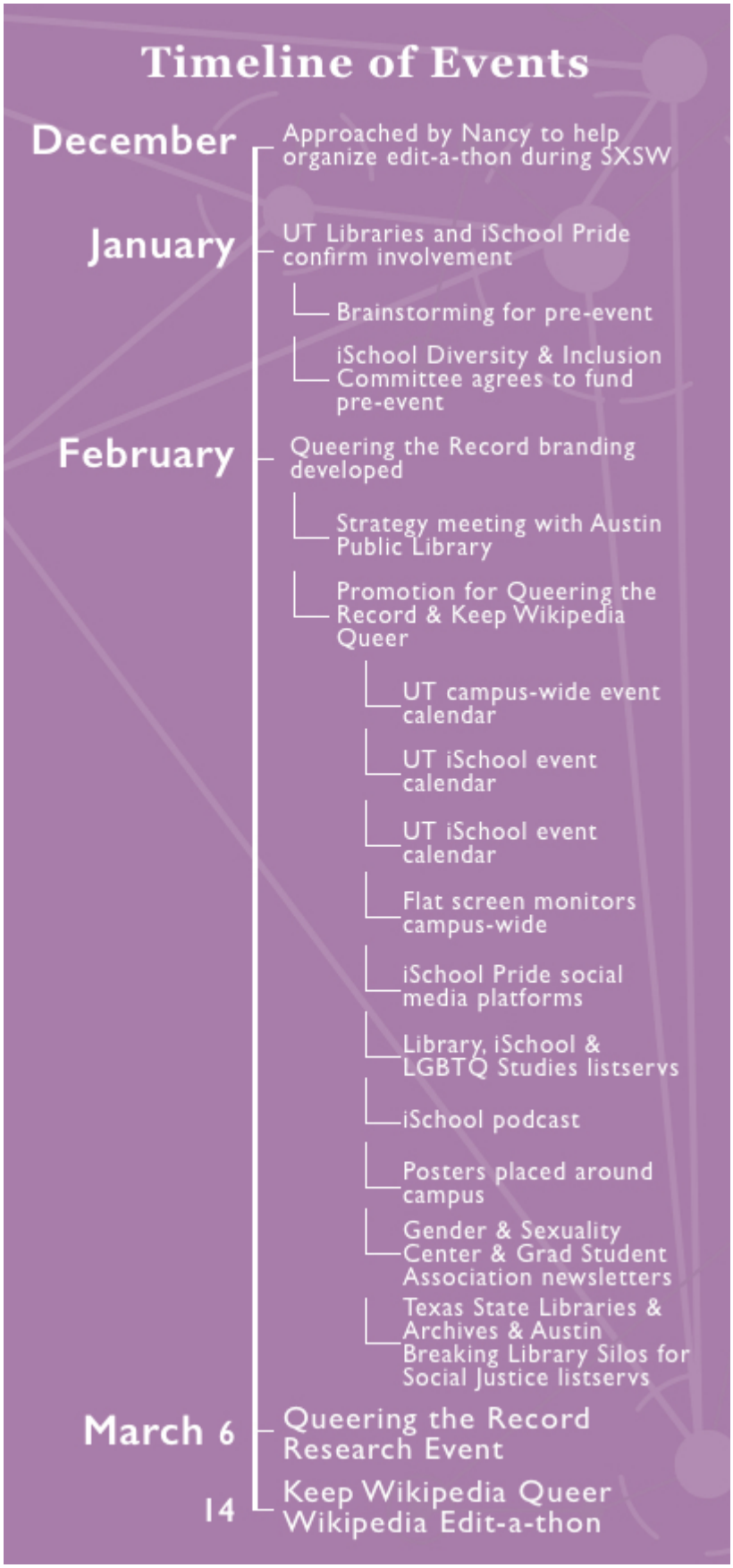
Part of a series on
LGBT rights
Laws around the world · LGBT parenting (adoption) · Immigration issues · Intersex rights · Military service · Recognition of relationships · Same-sex marriage · Transgender rights · LGBT rights organizations · Opposition (propaganda · rhetoric) · Violence against LGBT people · Table of years

LGBT portal

V • T • E

Wikipedia page about LGBT Rights in Syria

STEPS TO COMPLETION


Timeline of Events
December
Approached by Nancy to help organize edit-a-thon during SXSW
January
UT Libraries and iSchool Pride confirm involvement
Brainstorming for pre-event
iSchool Diversity & Inclusion Committee agrees to fund pre-event
February
Queering the Record branding developed
Strategy meeting with Austin Public Library
Promotion for Queering the Record & Keep Wikipedia Queer
UT campus-wide event calendar
UT iSchool event calendar
UT iSchool event calendar
Flat screen monitors campus-wide
iSchool Pride social media platforms
Library, iSchool & LGBTQ Studies listservs
iSchool podcast
Posters placed around campus
Gender & Sexuality Center & Grad Student Association newsletters
Texas State Libraries & Archives & Austin Breaking Library Silos for Social Justice listservs
March 6
Queering the Record Research Event
14
Keep Wikipedia Queer Wikipedia Edit-a-thon

INTRODUCTION

Knowledge developed in digital spaces skews to a white, cis-male, heteronormative default, creating significant representational gaps online.

Academic librarians and MLS students at UT Austin took digital activism to a new level, partnering with WNYC Radio staff and Austin Public Library to organize two events that addressed gaps in Wikipedia's LGBTQIA+ representation during the SXSW festival in March 2018.

Events:

1. **Queering the Record:** At the initial research event, UT Austin faculty, staff and students identified missing or inadequate Wikipedia entries and located sources.

2. **Keep Wikipedia Queer:** The second event put those sources to work in a large-scale Wikipedia edit-a-thon, sponsored by the WNYC podcast Nancy.

Strategic Partnerships

iSchool Pride

AUSTIN
PUBLIC
LIBRARY

QUEERING THE RECORD

Librarians and MLS students quickly realized the potential of UT Austin students, faculty, and staff to gather reputable sources for the edit-a-thon and decided to crowdsource the research process by organizing a campus-wide research event.

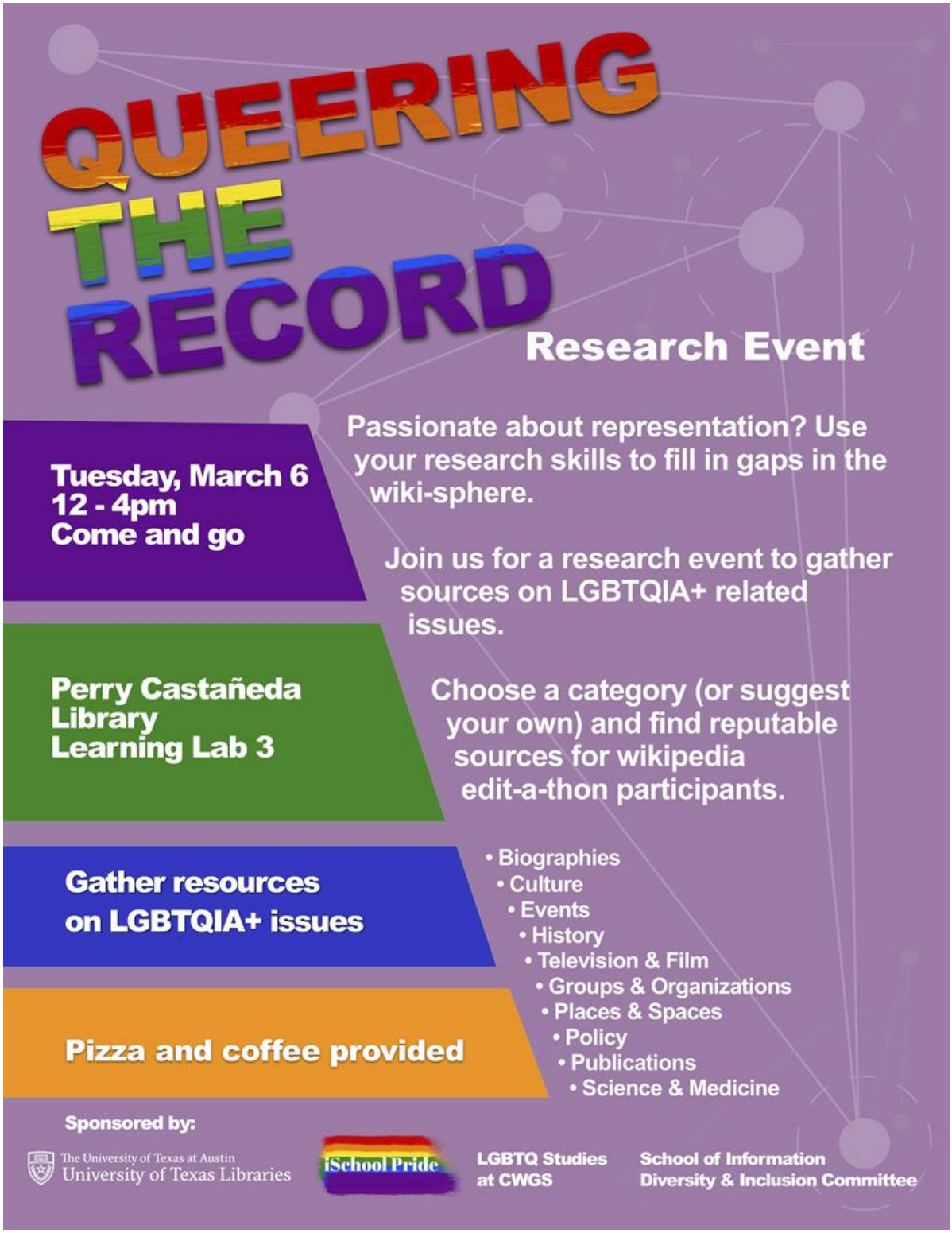
- Half-day event with pizza, snacks, and coffee
- 40 students, faculty, and staff participants
- Identified topics without Wikipedia pages or topics with pages that needed expanding
- Found links and citations to reliable, vetted sources
- Contributed to a 28-page Google Doc!

View event instructions (https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xaMsykAhG-FtSrre6Pn9lxbhz2xcJ3on/view)

Full document of topics and links to resources (https://docs.google.com/document/d/1R0xiN-6L9x3hL3fVZBbybQ5gD2yfINUb0P4Q4hlWCcs/edit)

In the News

- "iSchool Students Lead Pre-SXSW Event in Preparation for Wikipedia Edit-a-thon (https://www.ischool.utexas.edu/news/ischool-students-lead-pre-sxsw-event-preparation-wikipedia-edit-thon)" by Anu Sandlin on UT iSchool's blog
- "70 Pages of Change and Counting (https://blogs.lib.utexas.edu/texlibris/2018/04/02/70-pages-of-change-and-counting/)" by Gina Bastone in TexLibris



[VIDEO] https://www.youtube.com/embed/5EW_JNBhQb4?feature=oembed&fs=1&modestbranding=1&rel=0&showinfo=0
[VIDEO] https://www.youtube.com/embed/Qimlkrk_VRk?feature=oembed&fs=1&modestbranding=1&rel=0&showinfo=0
The event was such a success that it was repeated on March 26, 2019.

QUEERING THE RECORD
Pt 1
Research-a-Thon
Goldfish
ANIMAL CRACKERS

2019 Queering the Record Research Event participants.

KEEP WIKIPEDIA QUEER

The Nancy podcast team's public event during SXSW, held in a venue in downtown Austin.

- 35 participants
- Including students and librarians from UT
- 70 pages edited, including
  - Tommy Pico (poet)
  - Samantha Irby (writer/blogger)
  - LGBT Rights in Syria
  - LGBT Culture in Austin
  - Added Lauren Lubin, the first non-binary participant to the New York City Marathon page
  - The children's book series *Frog & Toad*

See our Wikipedia event dashboard (https://outreachdashboard.wmflabs.org/courses/WNYC/LGBT_editing)

In the News

- "Grindr Sponsors a Queer 'Edit-a-Thon' of Wikipedia at SXSW (https://www.adweek.com/digital/grindr-sponsors-a-queer-edit-a-thon-of-wikipedia-at-sxsw/)" by Ann-Marie Alcántara in *Adweek*

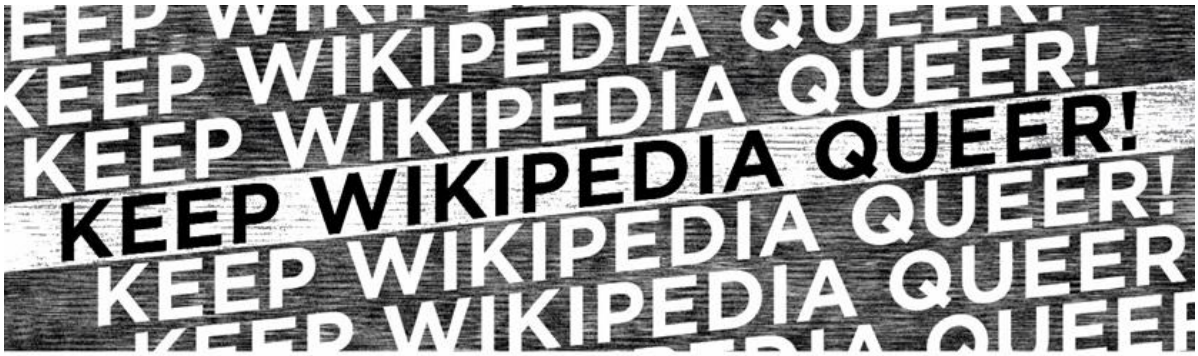
Wikipedia editors at Nancy's SXSW edit-a-thon

Nancy podcast hosts, Tobin Low and Kathy Tu, at Keeping Wikipedia Queer

NY Public Radio Creative Marketing and Partnerships Strategist Nora Keller teaching edit-a-thon participant Selena Aleman how to edit pages

Edit-a-thon participants Rachel Simons and Ginny Barns

Elle Covington editing wikipedia pages at Keep Wikipedia Queer



NANCY'S LGBTQ EDIT-A-THON

WHEN:
Wednesday,
March 14, 2018
10 am–3 pm
(arrive and depart
at your convenience)

WHERE:
Galvanize
Classroom 2
119 Nueces St.
Austin, TX 78701

ADMISSION: Free!

CONNECT:
@NancyPodcast
@NancyPodcast

#NancyHack

MORE INFORMATION:
www.nancypodcast.org/sxsw

EDITING FOR THE GREATER GOOD:

The *Nancy* team has noticed holes in the Wiki-sphere where LGBTQ issues are concerned. This lack of information has served to indirectly skew and damage public outlook and understanding of these issues. Our objective is to see an increase in perspectives contributing to LGBTQ information on Wikipedia and to develop awareness of the knowledge gap online.

Join Team *Nancy* for a day of hacking Wikipedia! We will provide tutorials, reference materials, and refreshments (Free Food)! Come for the day or drop in and out at your convenience.

Beginners welcome! No Wikipedia experience is necessary.

The event is free, but please bring your laptop and charger.

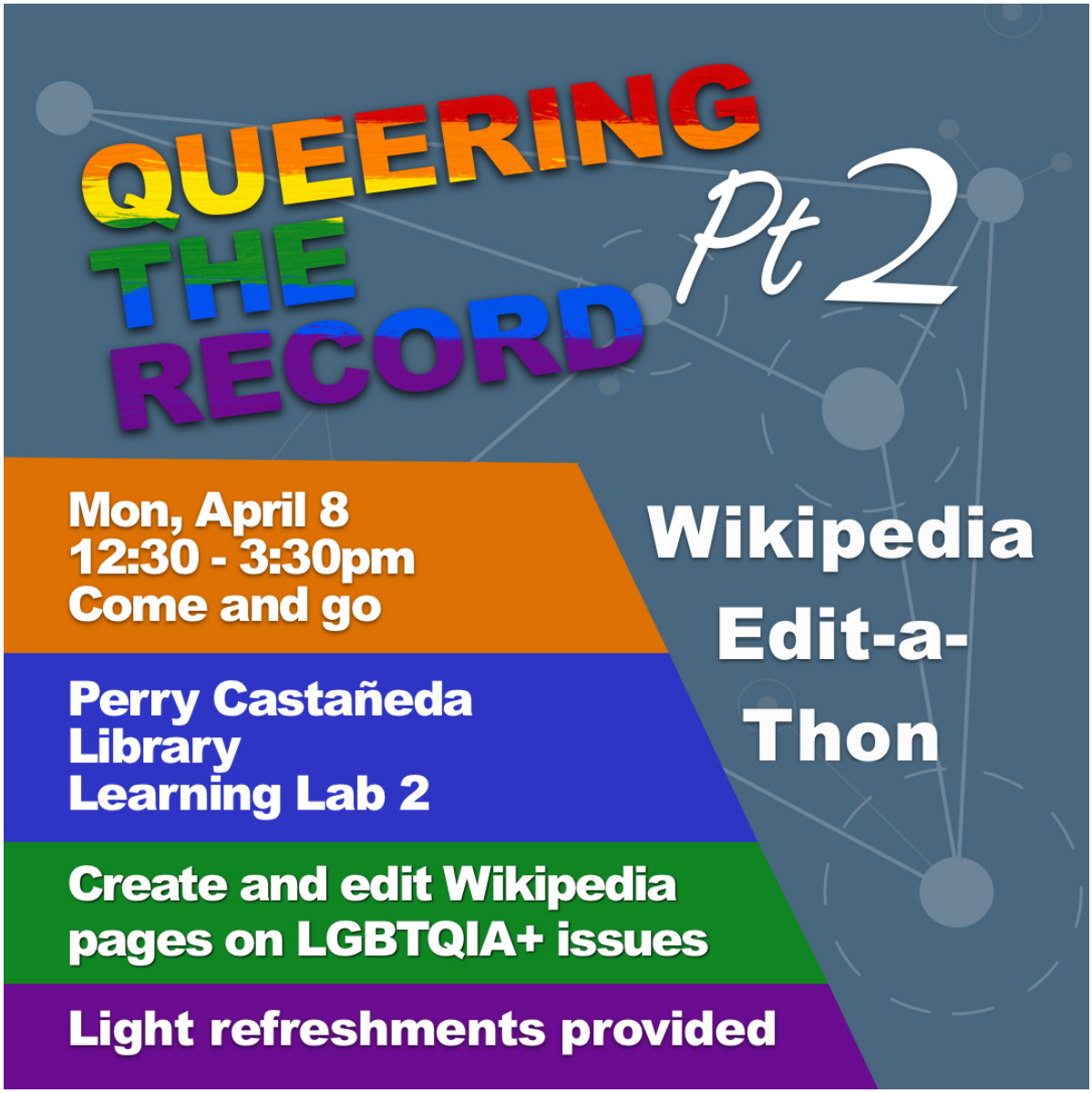
ABOUT NANCY:

WNYC Studios' *Nancy* is a critically-acclaimed podcast featuring queer stories and conversations, and hosted by best friends Tobin Low and Kathy Tu. It's a show about how we define ourselves, and the journey it takes to get there.

NANCY WNYC STUDIOS INTO

TEXAS Libraries iSchool Pride

In 2019, UT Libraries and the Texas School of Information's Diversity & Inclusion Committee partnered to host their own Wikipedia Edit-a-Thon.



Slides from the 2019 edit-a-thon (https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1833HDrH7t0zMmgTgGmthGV7QkDIh2839u8oswPAo-ZY)

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University of Texas Libraries (http://lib.utexas.edu)

ABSTRACT

Much of the knowledge developed in digital spaces skews to a white, cis-male, heteronormative default, creating significant representational gaps online. To tackle these representational inequities, UT librarians and MLS students took digital activism to a new level, partnering with Austin Public Library and WNYC public radio staff to organize two events to address gaps in Wikipedia's LGBTQIA+ representation.

Wikipedia is the world's most-used reference tool, and one of the most visited websites (Rainie & Tancer, 2007). Studies have found that there is high reader demand for Wikipedia articles about LGBTQIA+ topics, but not enough high-quality articles to meet that demand (Klein, M., et al 2016; Warncke-Wang, M, et. al., 2015).

In an initial research event at the library, faculty, staff and students from across campus were invited to help identify missing or inadequate Wikipedia entries and locate sources to fill those gaps. More than 35 people participated over the course of the 4-hour research event. The end product was a 23-page Google documents that identified nearly 100 LGBTQIA+ related topics that needed Wikipedia pages created or updated. Participants located hundreds of sources to be used in the development of those articles.

The second event put those sources to work in a large-scale Wikipedia edit-a-thon, part of SXSW tech and music festival. It brought librarians and students together with community members and festival goers in a 4-hour marathon event to edit as many Wikipedia pages as possible. Participants edited or created more than 70 pages on topics as wide-ranging as LGBTQIA+ rights in Syria, comedy writer/blogger Samantha Irby, and the children's book series Frog & Toad. The event has opened the door for further collaboration between the university library and the public library, and more Wikipedia edit-a-thons are scheduled for 2019.

The success of these events model how academic libraries can develop strategic partnerships to address large-scale problems; engage campus audiences to improve representation in online spaces; and teach research principles to facilitate digital activism.

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Rainie, L., & Tancer, B. (2007). Wikipedia: When in doubt, multitudes seek it out. Pew Internet & American Life Project). Pew Research Center: Washington, DC.

Warncke-Wang, M., Ranjan, V., Terveen, L. G., & Hecht, B. J. (2015, May). Misalignment Between Supply and Demand of Quality Content in Peer Production Communities. In ICWSM (pp. 493-502).