

Women in Religion – Wikipedia User group meeting Minutes—March 28, 2024

Members participating: JO, WW, CM, HWS, CH, CS, CA, JE.

1. Go round/check-in (2-3 minutes)

CH is using her *Encyclopedia of Women & Religion* to add information to Wikipedia articles, most recently to [Aline Sitoe Diatta](#), whom she has added to our Project page list of new/improved articles.

WW moved to a new apartment yesterday. She has finished reviewing the book edited by Theresa Yugar. Every chapter's author has a project going on Mother Earth. WW will probably pick one of them to propose as a chapter for the next PoWR volume. CH encouraged her to use that volume to update Wikipedia biographies.

CM developed the Wikipedia page on [Syncletica](#) of Alexandria, a Desert Mother (featured as a Did You Know entry on 4/14/24). She is now working on a small article on Tarbula, a Persian martyr accused of sorcery and witchcraft. She has also done some figure-skating Wikipedia work and is leading work on assessment. She also had a DYK for a figure skating topic on March 27th.

HWS has been making Wikipedia edits based on things she reads in various newspapers/magazine to which she subscribes, most recently on Ring Lardner and Oscar Dunn, the first African American Lt. Governor.

CA left Vanderbilt University and will start at Yale in May. He is still involved with the AI Salon. He plans to propose a presentation for the WikiMania gathering August 7 – 10, 2024 in Katowice, Poland.

JO is still doing double duty since a colleague left his university. He shared information on the AI project with a colleague on campus who is doing similar research who found it interesting.

CS thanked everyone who helped to edit the article for the *Global Sister's Report*. She helped at an editathon run at Georgetown University that also included some people from the DC Wikimedia chapter. She also recently wrote an article on the Beverly Hills Little Theater Project and that led her to create a Wikipedia entry for Franc Dillon, a female publicist from Hollywood's golden age.

2. WiR Editathon

Although this monthly meeting is usually held on the second Monday of the month, given the group's interest in observing the April 8th solar eclipse, we have postponed the meeting to April 15 at 4 pm CST.

3. User Group grant/African Circle group

They received a \$4,000 (U.S.) grant and are finalizing how and when to use it. RH is setting up a bank account. Telesia has been a big help. They have a session scheduled with African women leaders for April 17 to train them on editing Wikipedia.

4. 2nd PoWR volume

CH was informed earlier in the day that our liaison to the PoWR and her staff colleagues had been put on furlough until April 15, 2024. It was not clear how this would impact our plans for volume 4 but CH remains hopeful that the project will move forward. She notes that much of the work of the PoWR is carried forward by committees/task forces of volunteers and she will attempt to generate a list of potential subjects for the volume. One might be Lydia Ruyle, who was the subject of the documentary, "Herstory: The Visionary Life of Lydia Ruyle and the Banners of the Divine."

The AAR is reviewing its Women's Caucus and may make changes or dissolve it. DF is the chair of the Women's Caucus, and they are having a "talk back" session. They would like to have a volume highlighting the AAR Women's Caucus members who don't yet have Wikipedia pages but who have been long-time contributors to the field. CH thinks that the PoWR would publish that as their third volume (or fifth volume in the overall series).

5. AI project

CA talked about retrieval augmented generation, i.e., how to get a large language model working together with sources. There is a lot of work going on with this framework. 80% is "data-munching"—getting sources used effectively. Databricks [<https://www.databricks.com/>] overlaps storage of sentences so he will demonstrate Unstructured [<https://unstructured.io/>], which extracts data from difficult-to-use formats to better use it. He looked at an OCR-based document. He's not sure how expensive it is but perhaps we could seek a grant. He then did a demo with an image-based pdf that JO provided of a 1990 article "Three Visions of an Ecological Self," from the journal *UnderCurrents*.

[<https://currents.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/currents/article/view/40530/36257>]

6. Next Meeting

The next user group meeting will be Thursday, April 25 at 4 pm CST.