



Wikipedian Self-Governance in Action

Motivating the Policy Lens



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Ivan Beschastnikh

Travis Kriplean

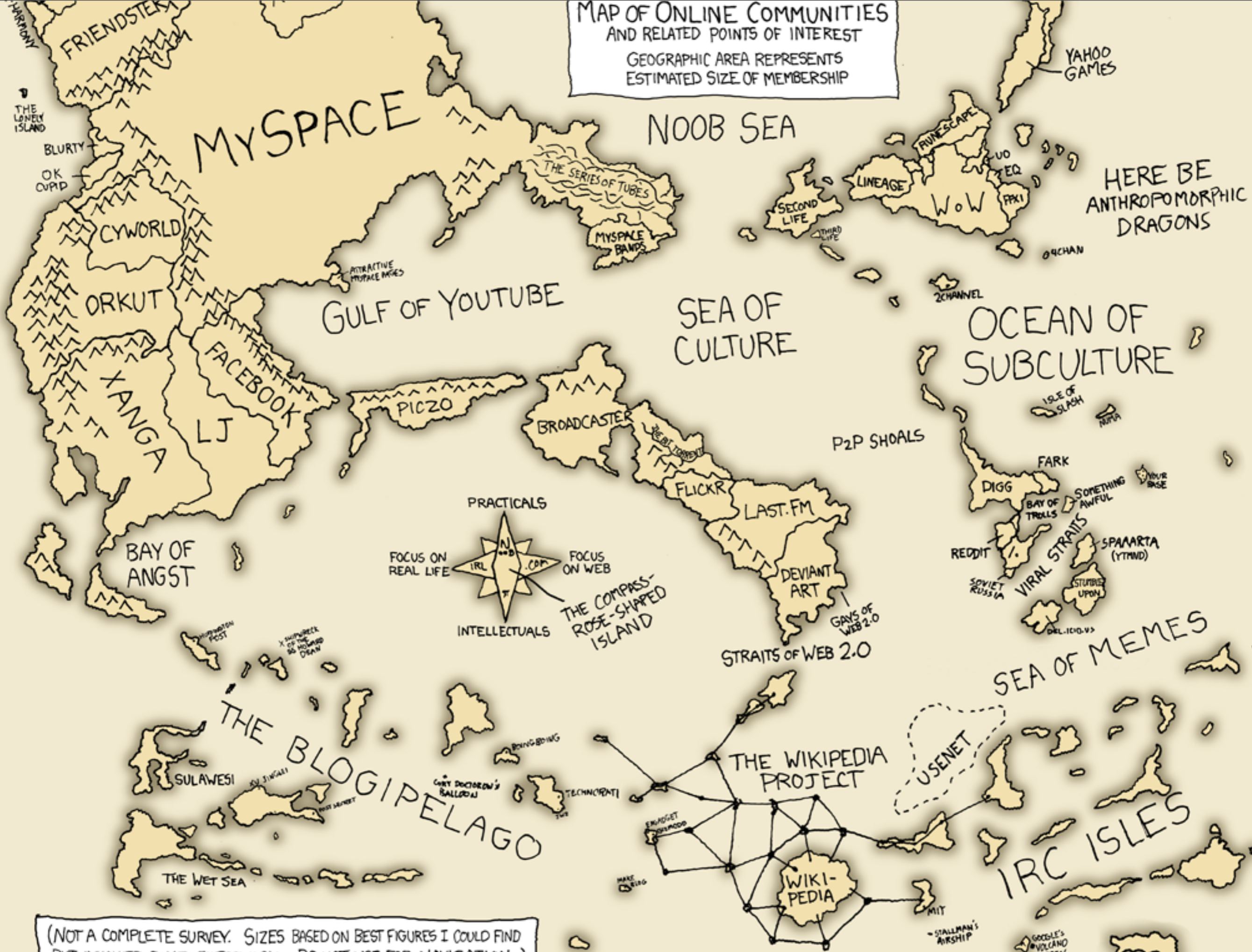
Computer Science and Engineering
University of Washington

Joint with:

David W. McDonald

Information School
University of Washington

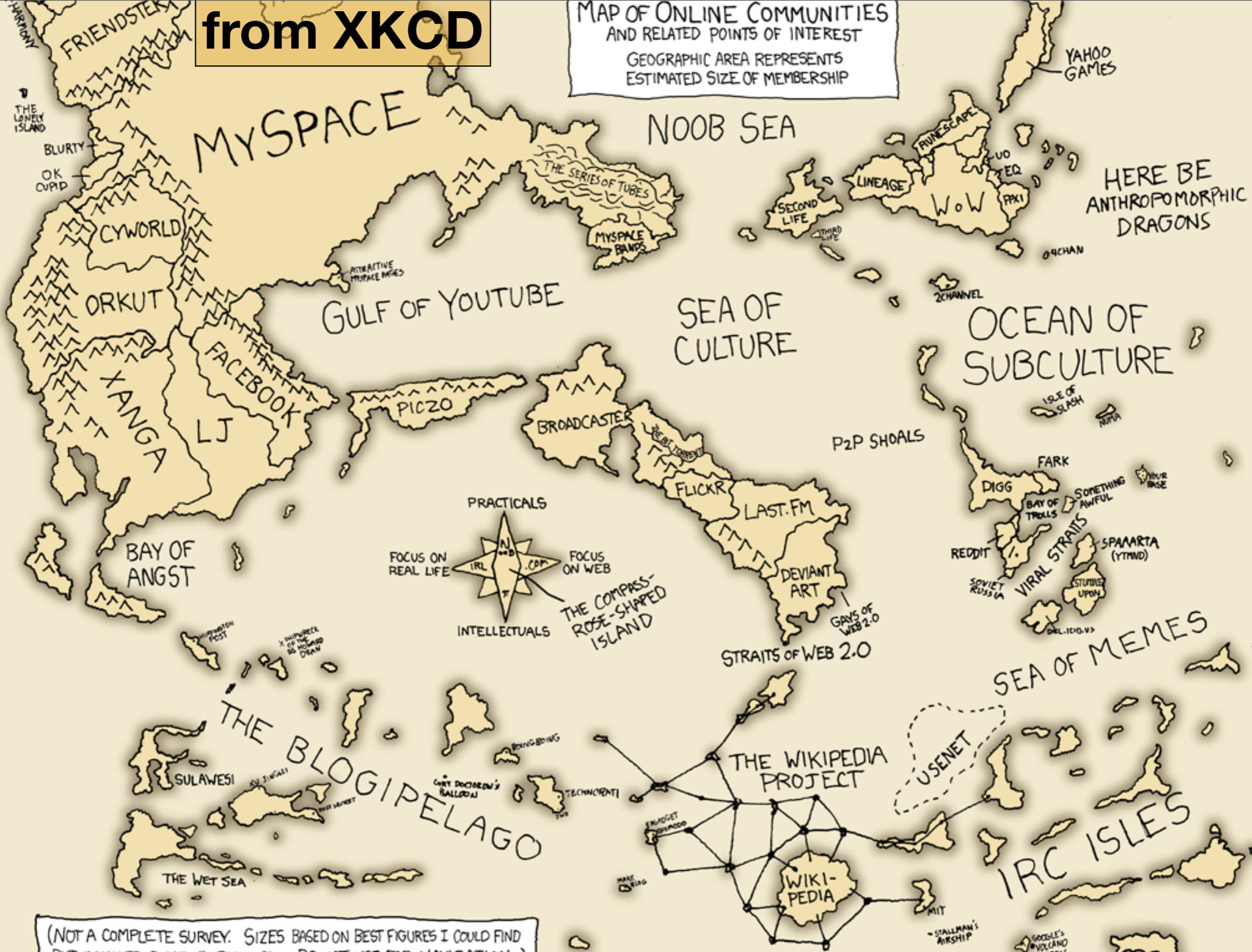
MAP OF ONLINE COMMUNITIES AND RELATED POINTS OF INTEREST
 GEOGRAPHIC AREA REPRESENTS ESTIMATED SIZE OF MEMBERSHIP



(NOT A COMPLETE SURVEY. SIZES BASED ON BEST FIGURES I COULD FIND BUT INVOLVED SOME GUESSEWORK. DO NOT USE FOR NAVIGATION.)

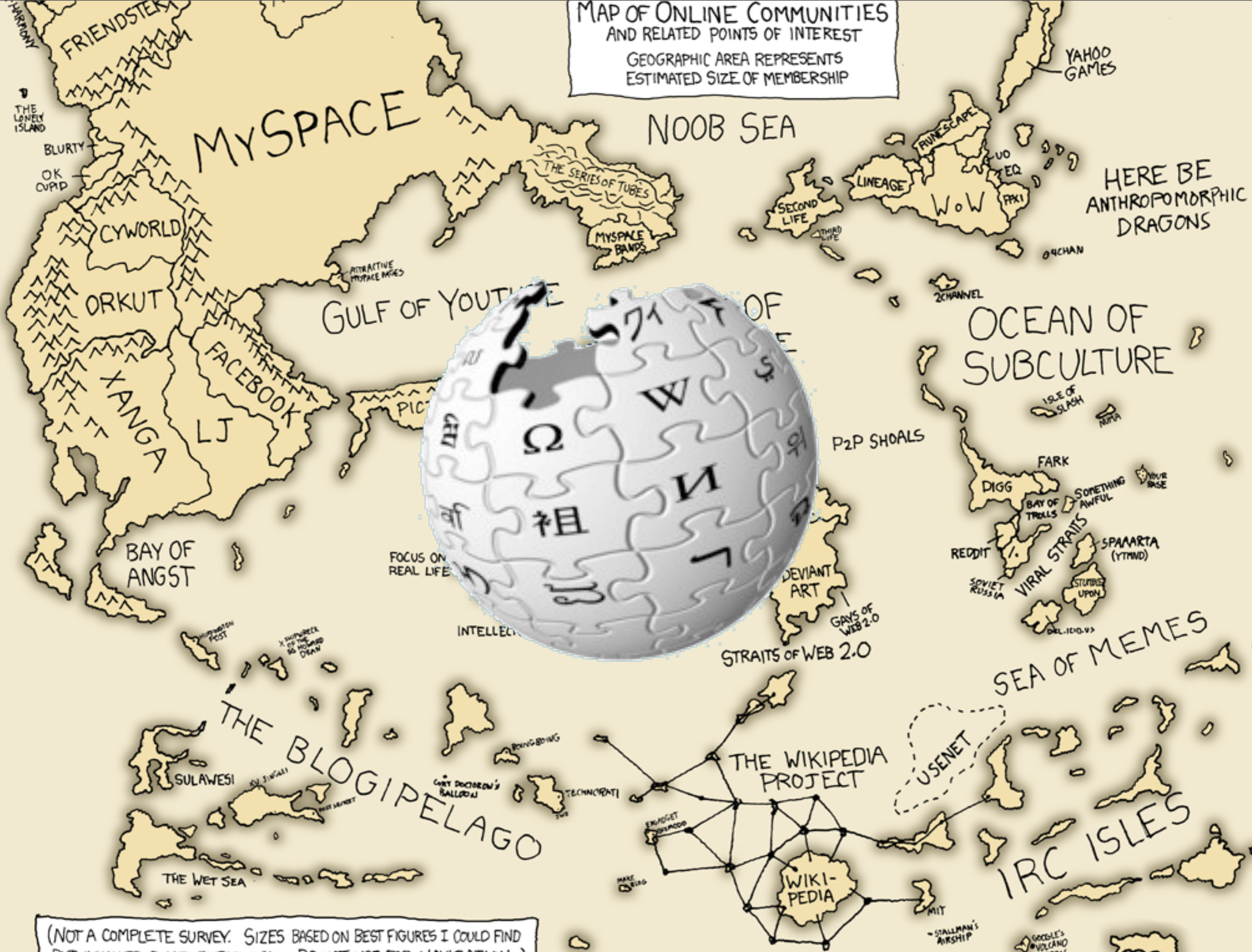
from XKCD

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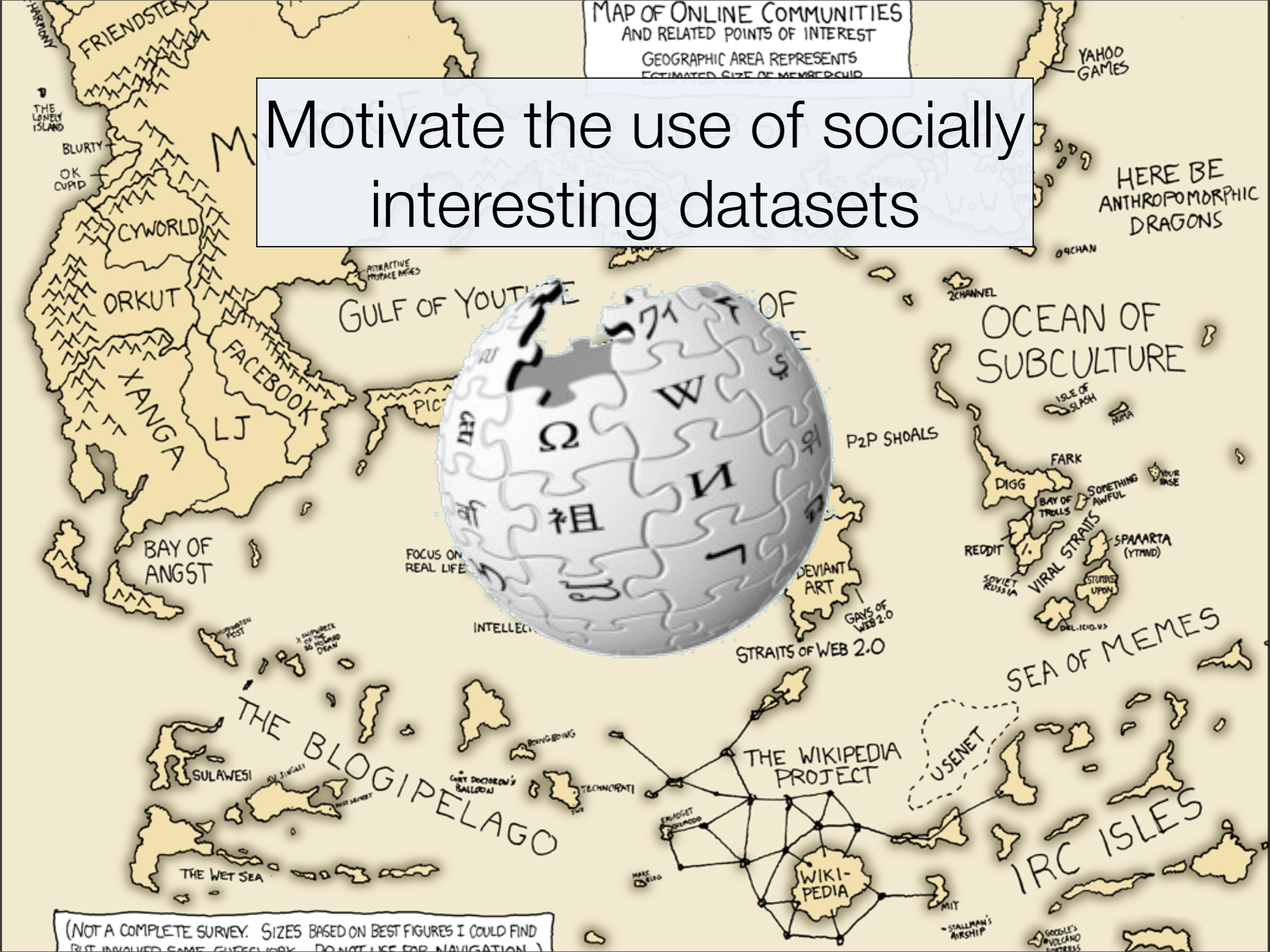
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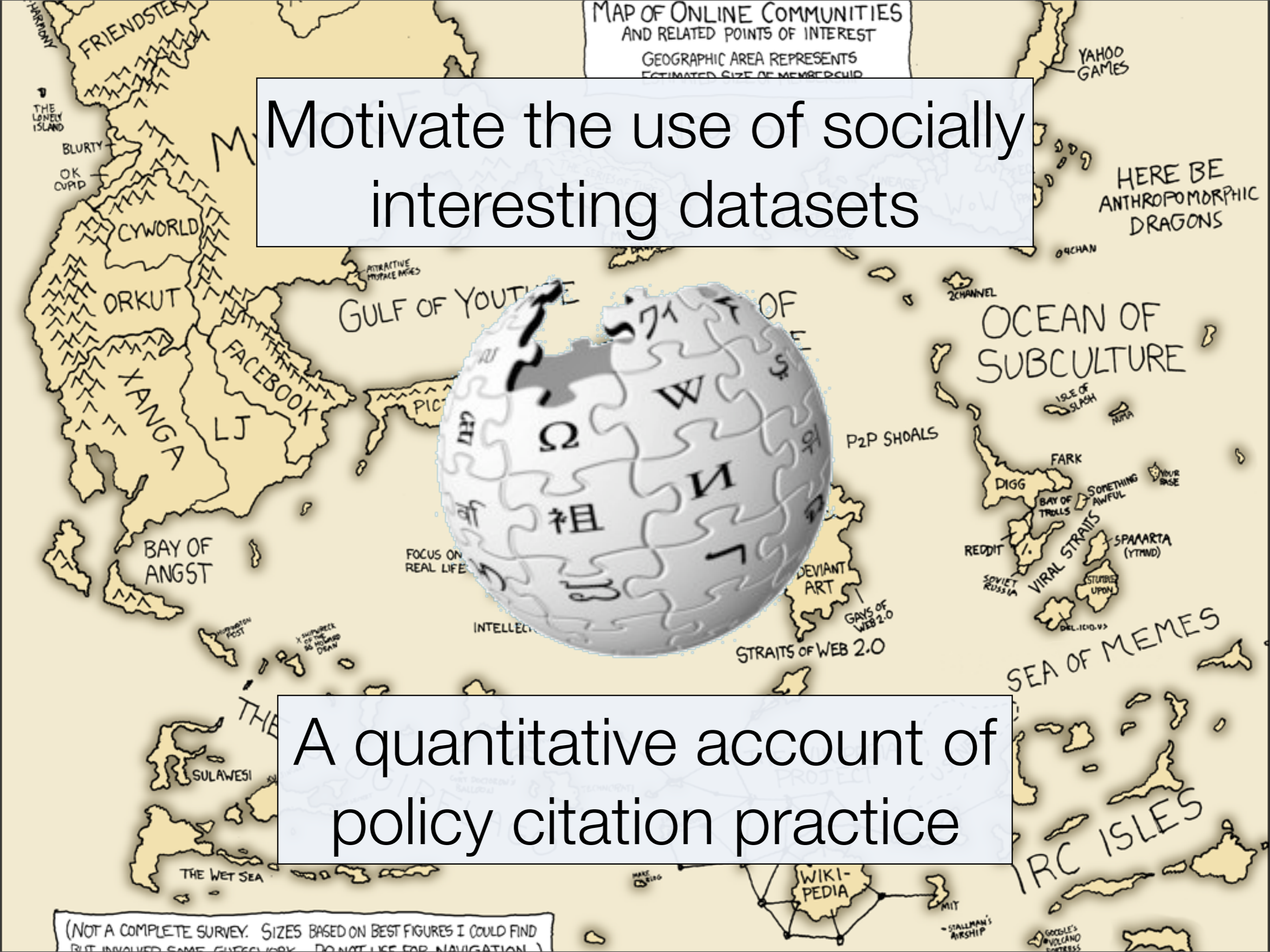
Motivate the use of socially interesting datasets



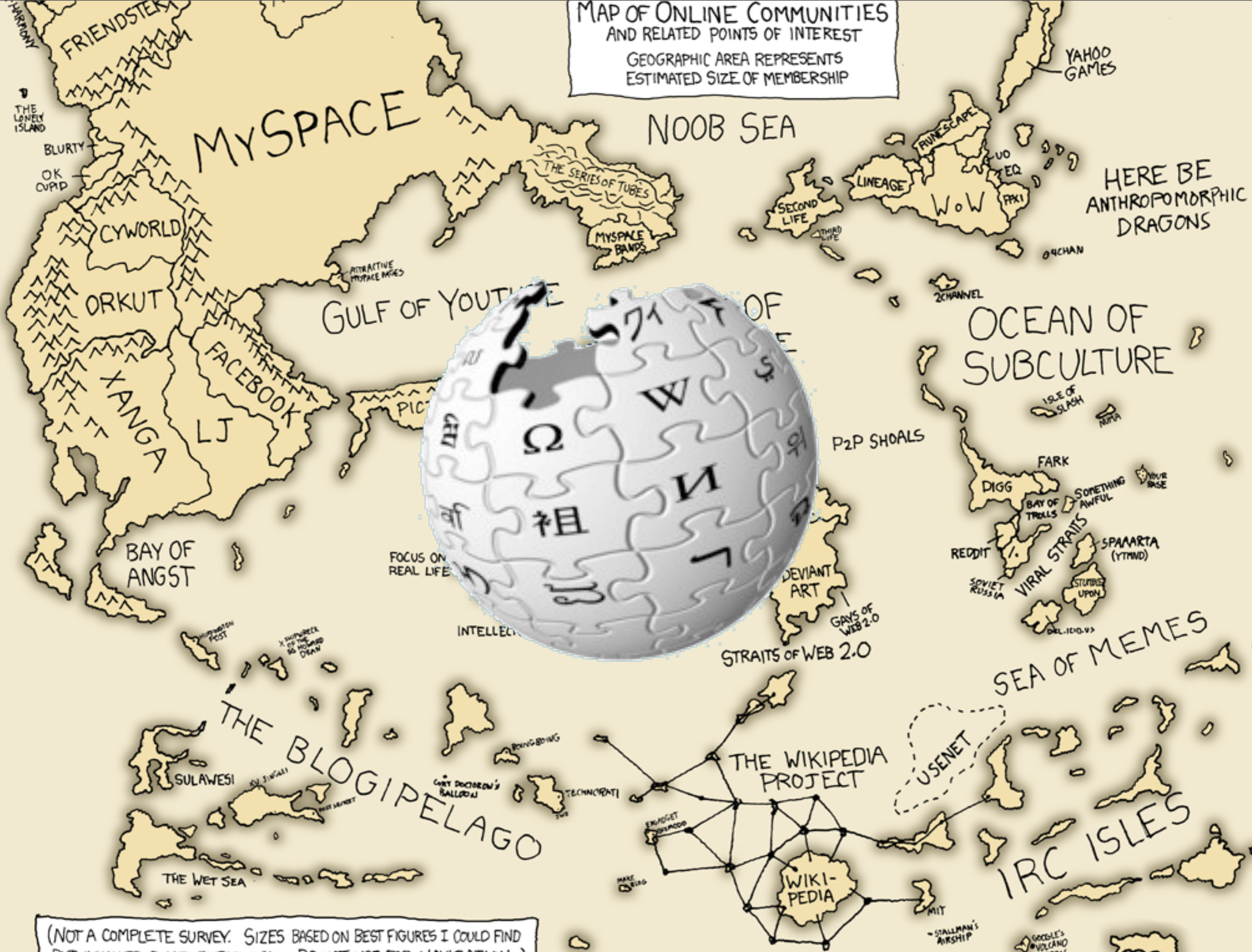
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Motivate the use of socially interesting datasets

A quantitative account of policy citation practice



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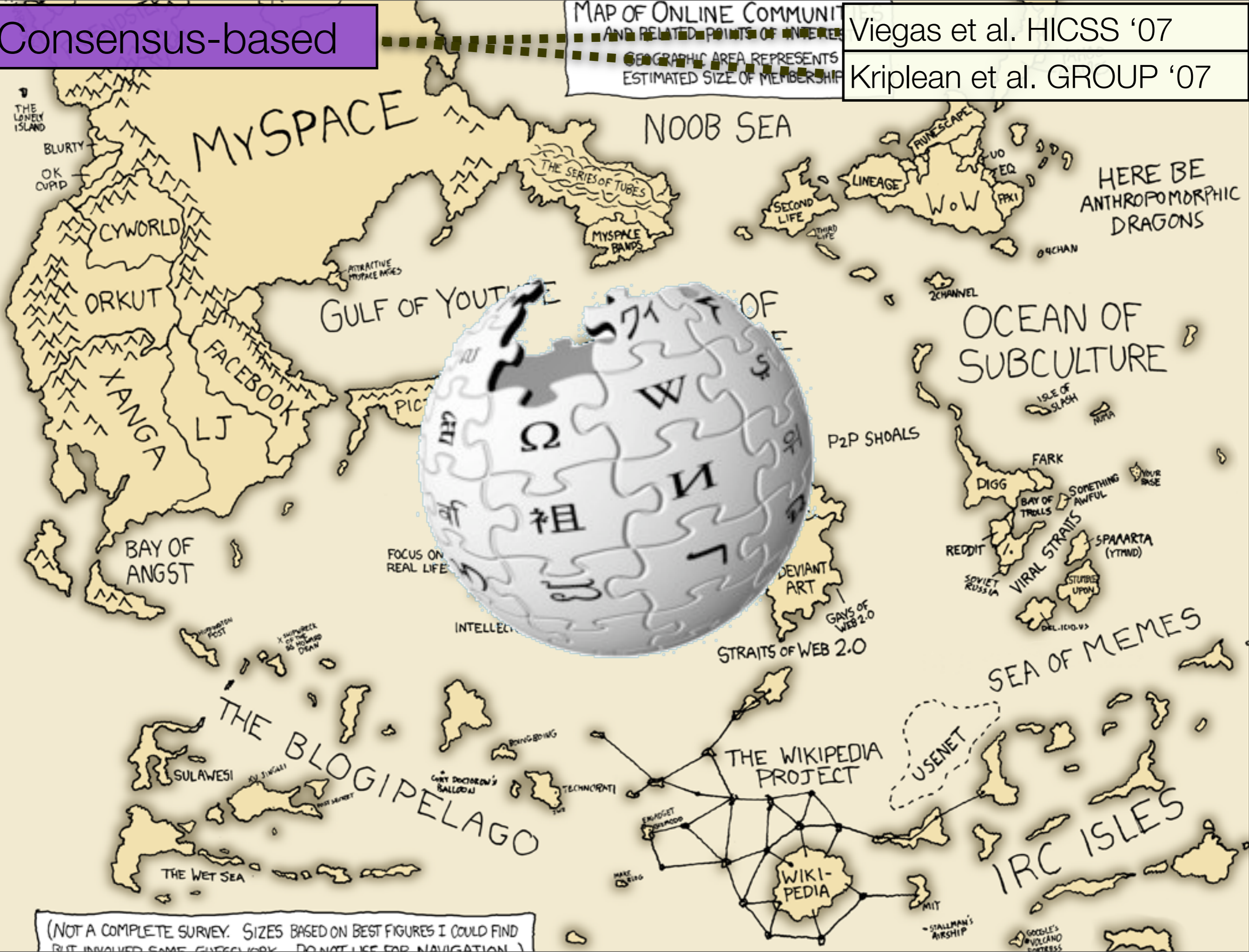


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Consensus-based

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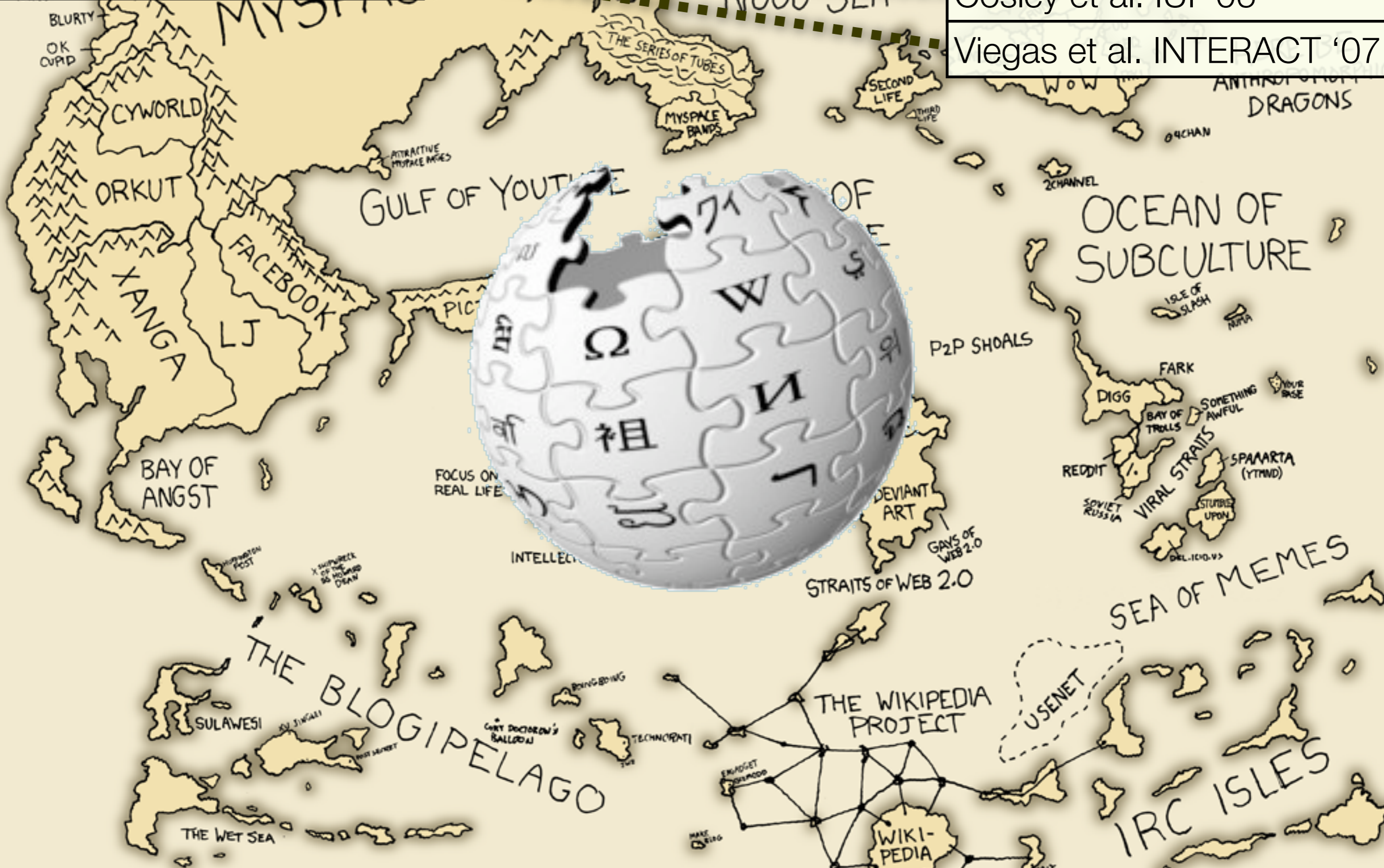


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Consensus-based
Division of work

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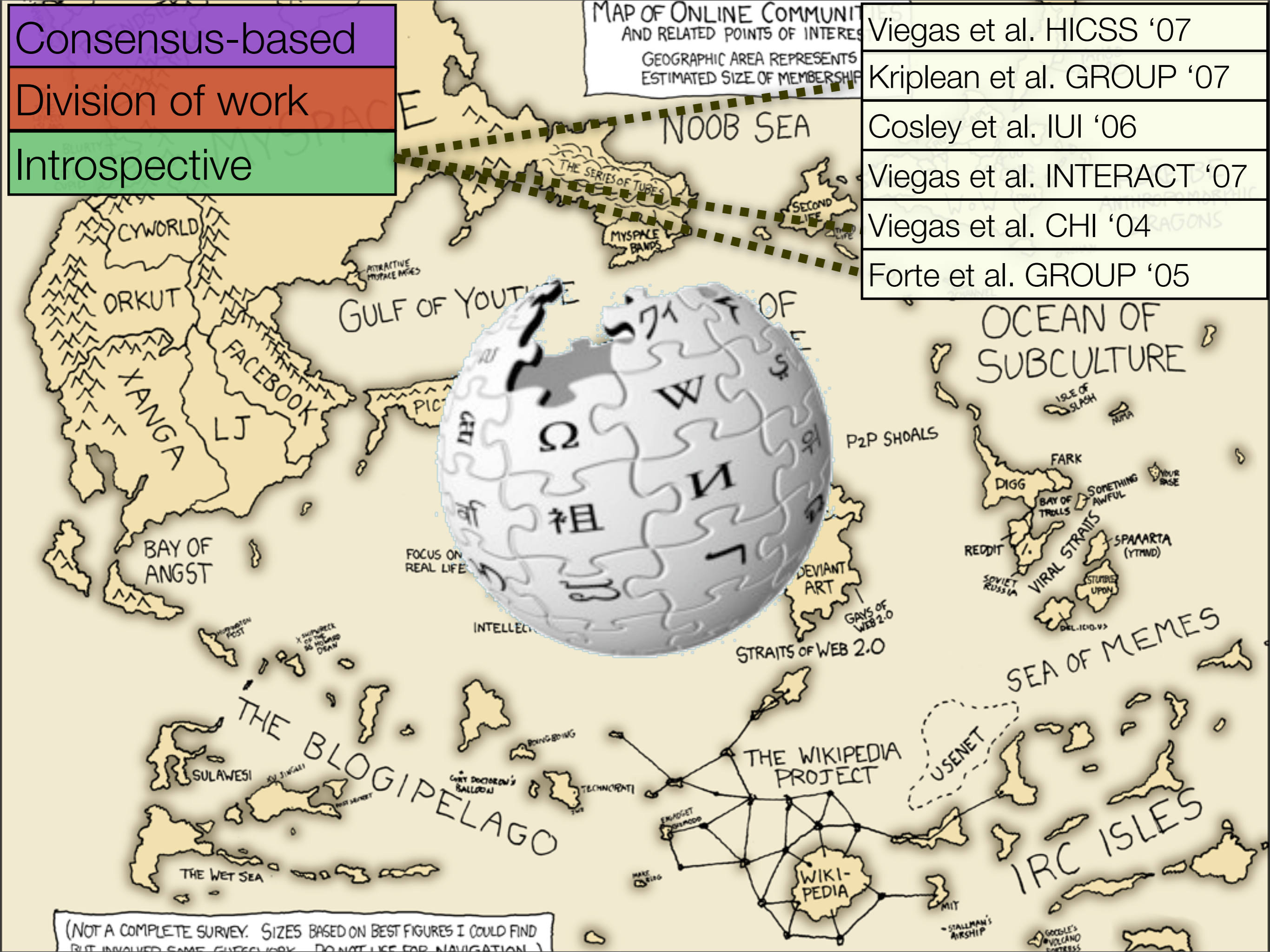


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Consensus-based
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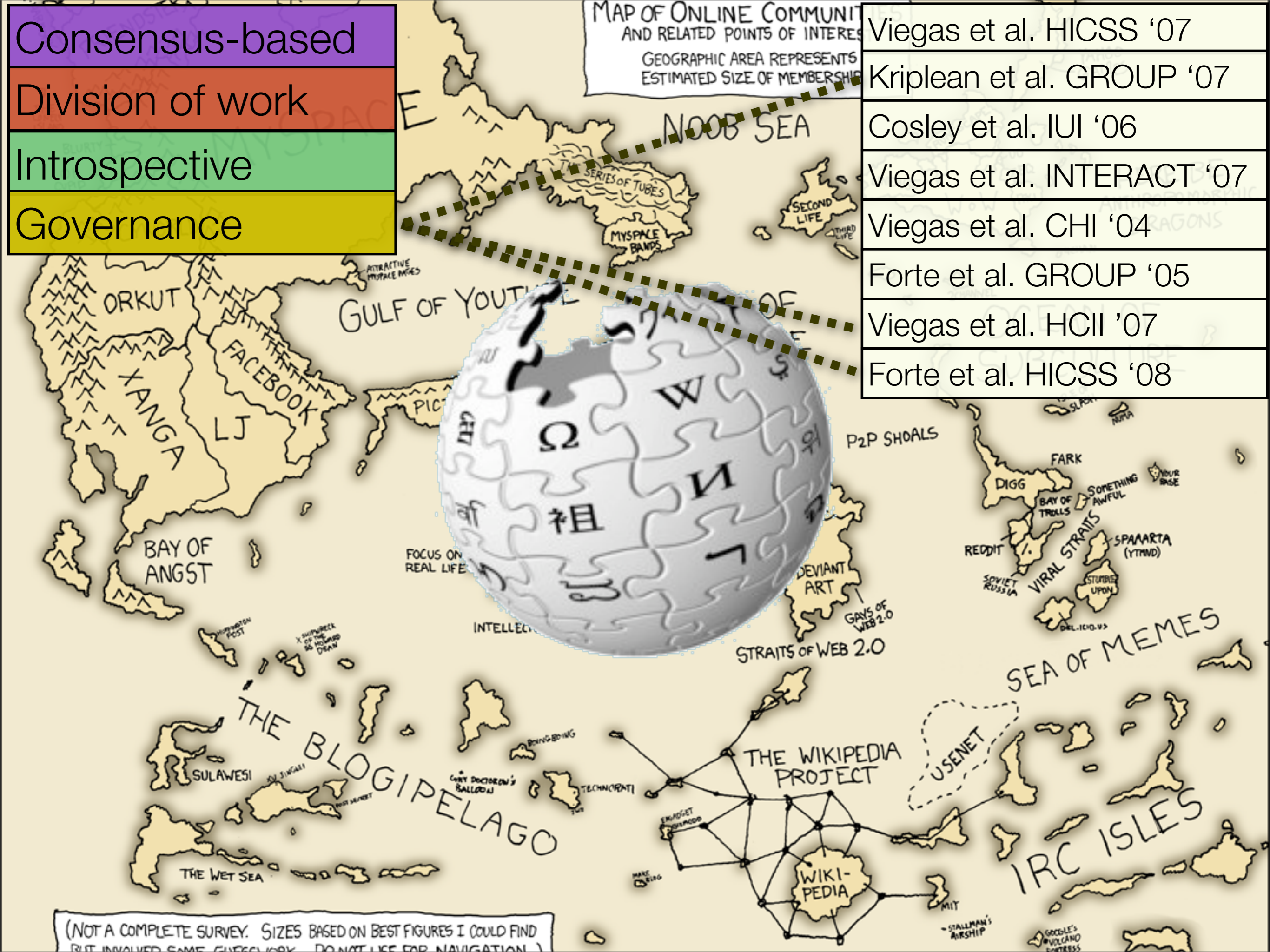
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- Consensus-based
- Division of work
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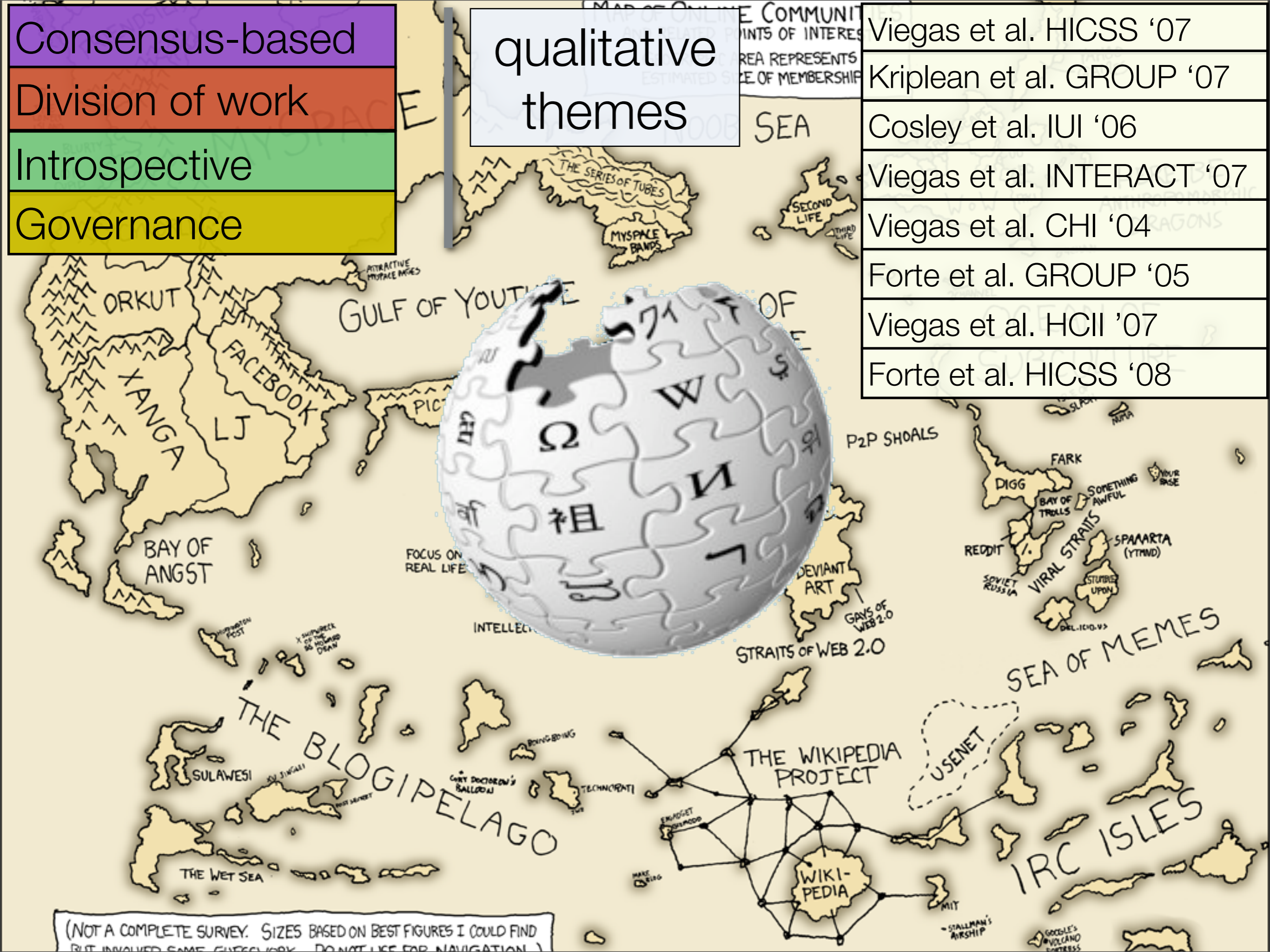


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qualitative themes

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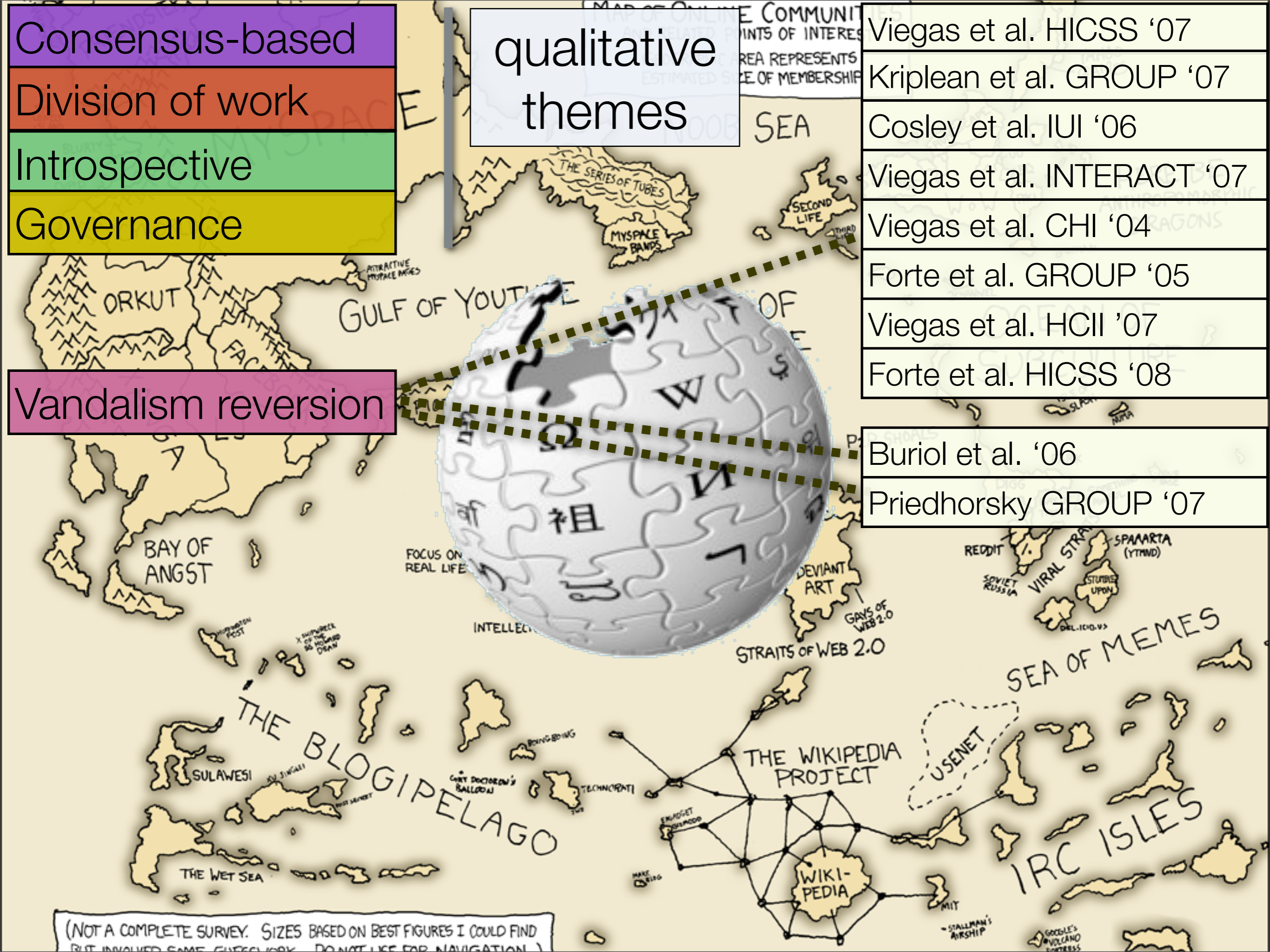


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- Buriol et al. '06
- Priedhorsky GROUP '07

Vandalism reversion



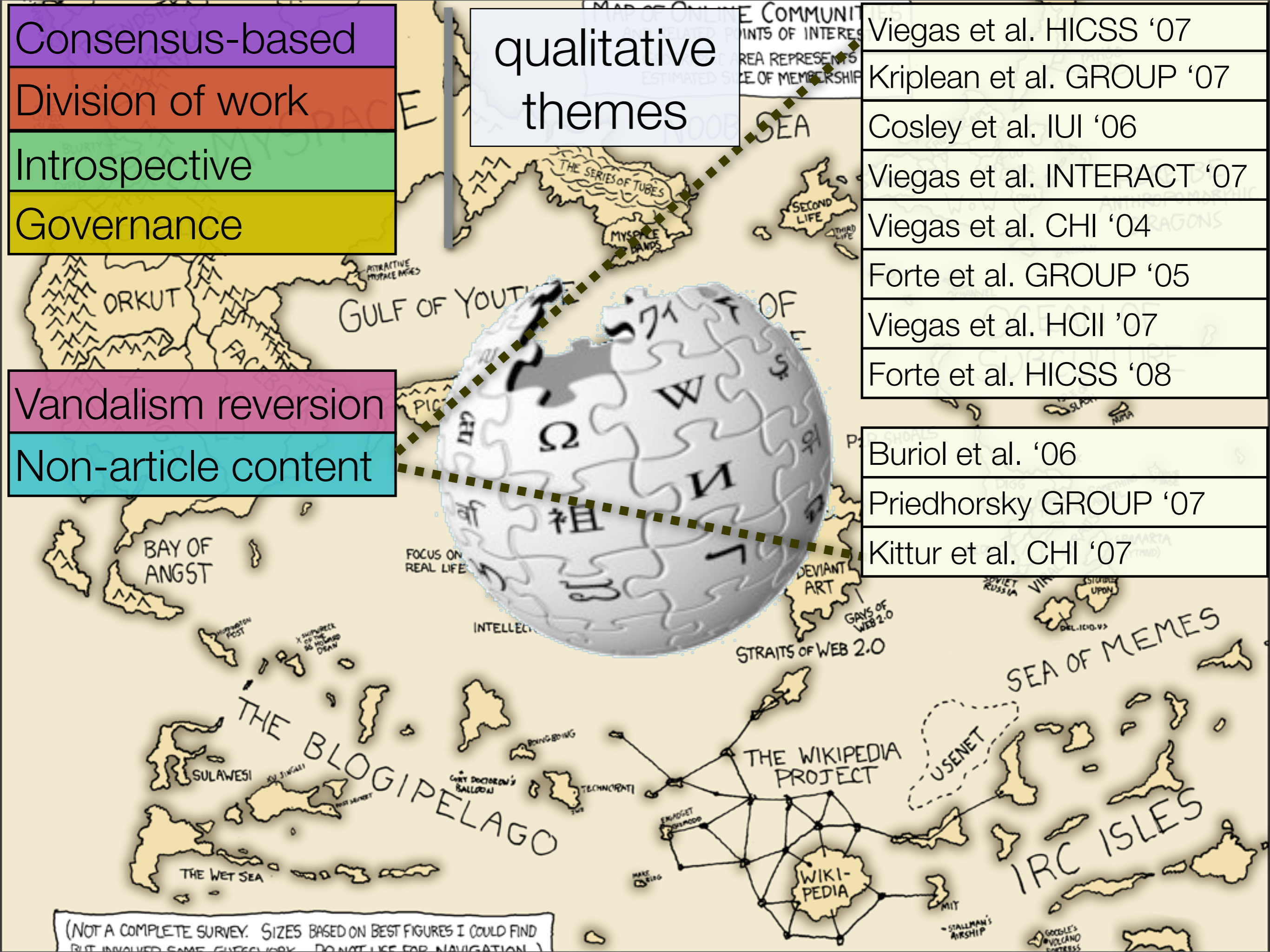
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Vandalism reversion
Non-article content

Buriol et al. '06
Priedhorsky GROUP '07
Kittur et al. CHI '07



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Vandalism reversion
 Non-article content
 Author activity
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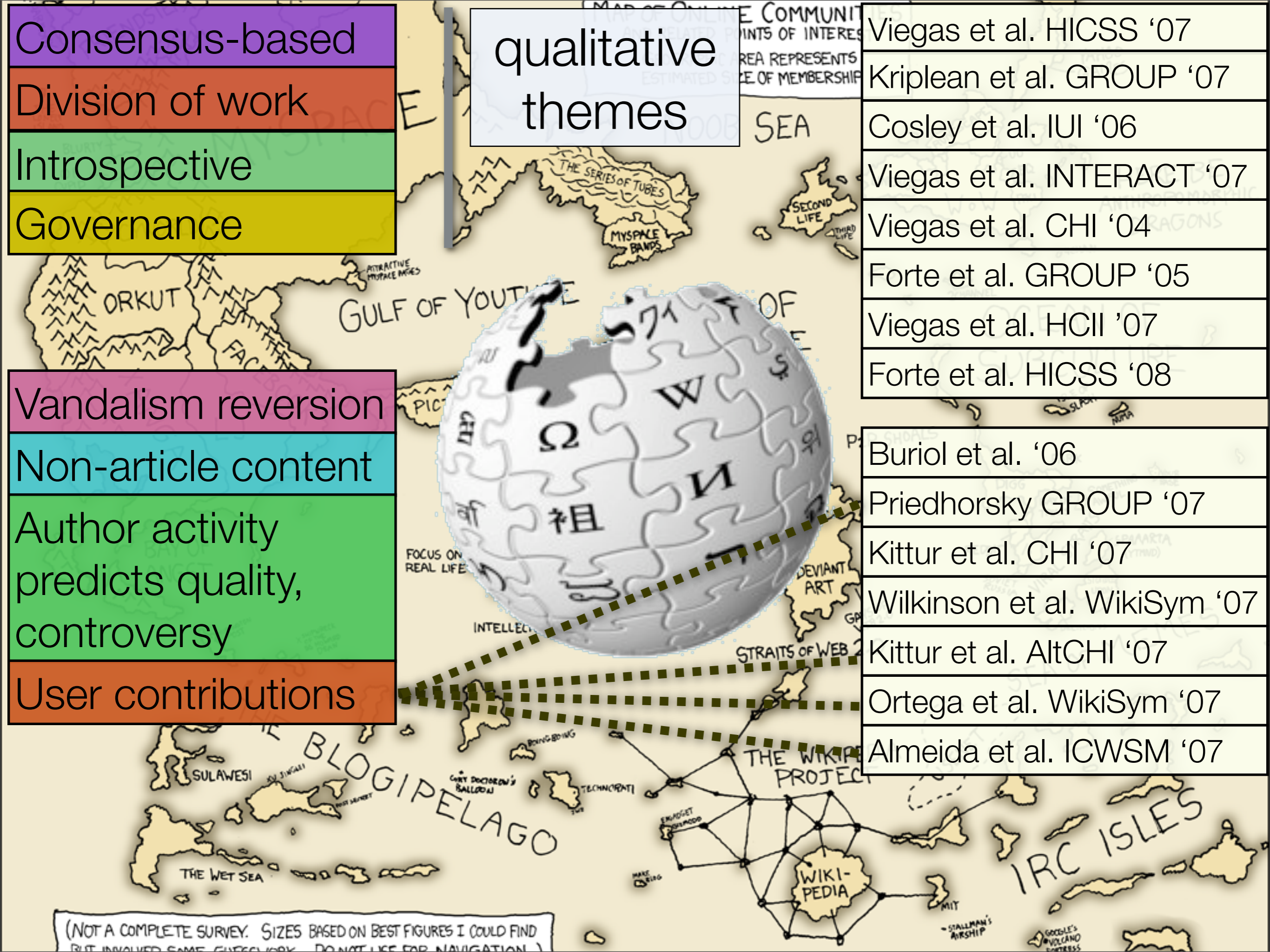
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Affordances:

- nuanced data
- identify social structures

Challenges:

- temporal analysis
- generalizability

Qualitative methods

- interviews
- ethnography
- case studies
- grounded analysis

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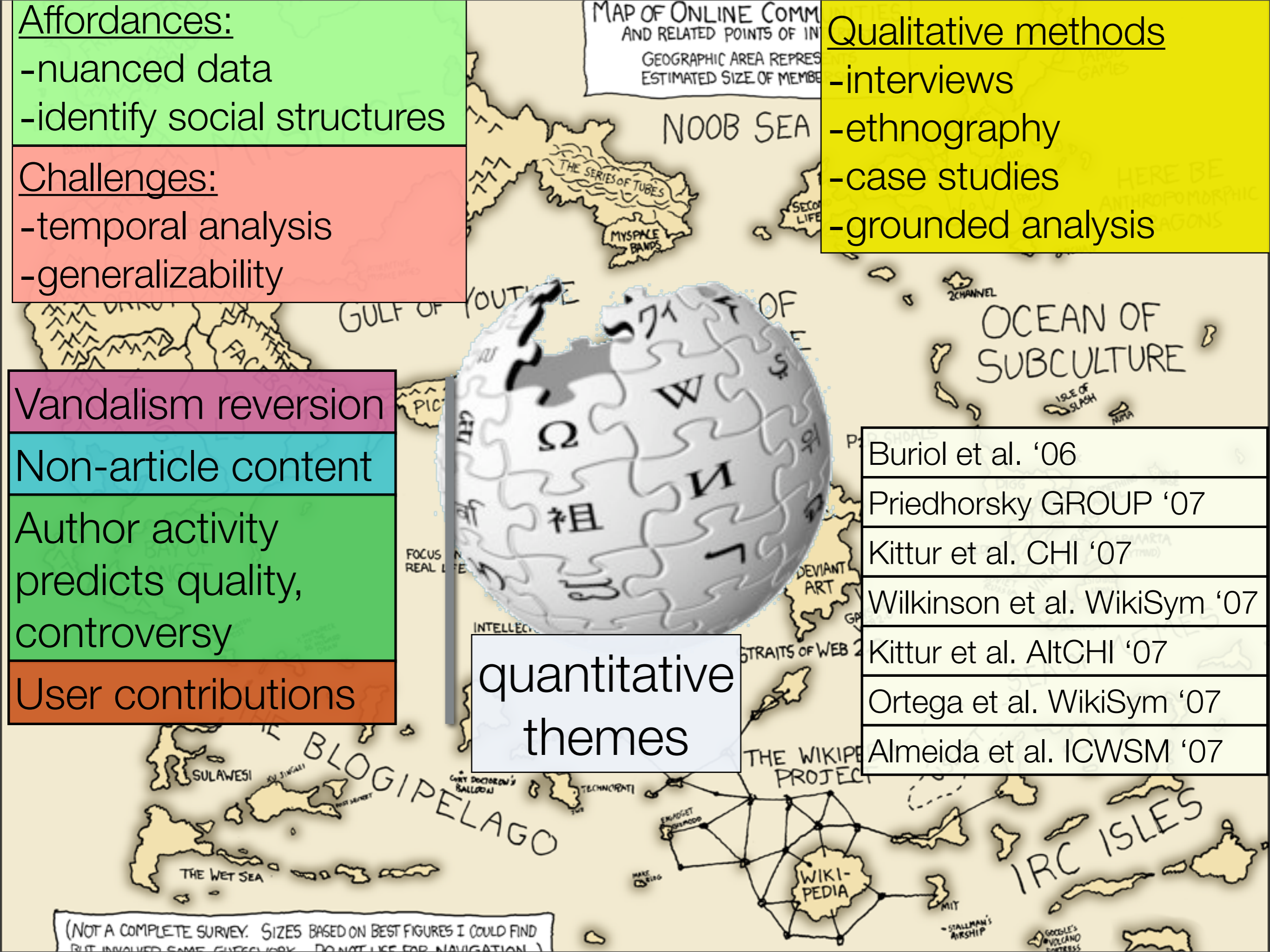
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Affordances:

- nuanced data
- identify social structures

Challenges:

- temporal analysis
- generalizability

Actions of individuals
& formation of
institutions

Affordances:

- tracking micro-actions
- global level analysis

Challenges:

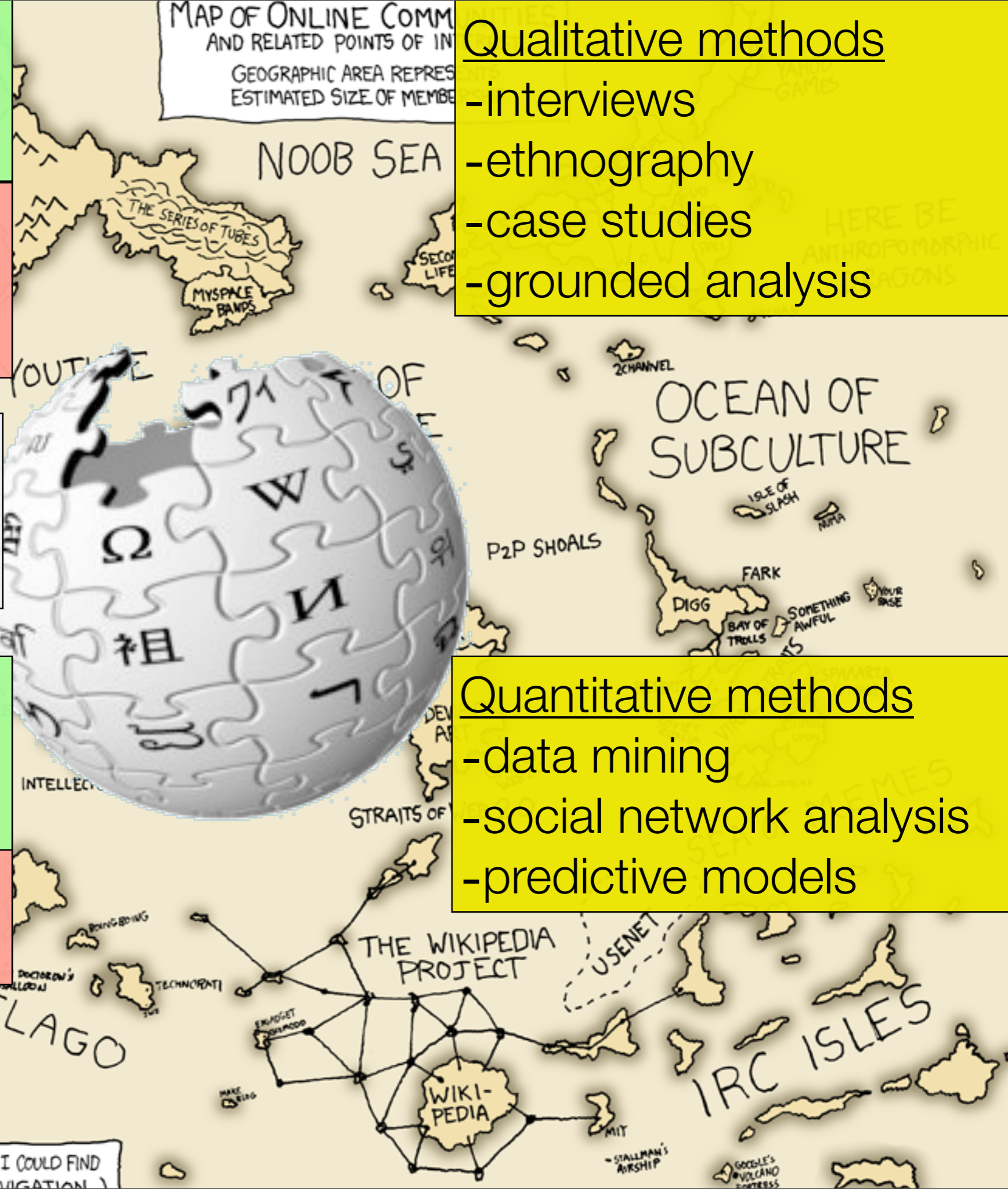
- grounded interpretation

Qualitative methods

- interviews
- ethnography
- case studies
- grounded analysis

Quantitative methods

- data mining
- social network analysis
- predictive models



Quantitative studies have been...
–focused article editing practices
–overly constrained by the format of the
database dump



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Jimmy Wales

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Jimmy Donal "Jimbo" Wales (born 7 August 1966^[2] in Huntsville, Alabama^{[3][4]}) is an **American Internet entrepreneur** known for his role in founding **Wikipedia**^{[5][6][7]} and other wiki-related projects, including the charitable **Wikimedia Foundation** and the for-profit company **Wikia, Inc.**^[8]

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Personal life

[\[edit\]](#)

Jimmy Donal "Jimbo" Wales



Born August 7, 1966 (age 41)
Huntsville, Alabama, U.S.

Occupation President of *Wikia, Inc.*; Board member and Chair Emeritus of the *Wikimedia Foundation*

Spouse Christine^[1]

Quantitative studies have been...
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The screenshot shows the Wikipedia interface for the article "Jimmy Wales". The top navigation bar includes "article", "discussion", "edit this page", "history", and "watch". The "edit this page" button is circled in yellow. Below the navigation bar, a progress bar indicates that 9,924 people have donated. The main heading is "Revision history of Jimmy Wales". Below the heading, there is a legend for the revision history table. The table lists revisions with columns for "timestamp" and "who". A "comment" column is also present. The first revision is highlighted with a dashed box.

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Revision history of Jimmy Wales

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Revision history
View logs for this page

(Latest | Earliest) View (previous 50) (next 50) (20 | 50 | 100 | 250 | 500)

For any version listed below, click on its date to view it. For more help, see [Help:Page history](#) and [Help:Edit summary](#).

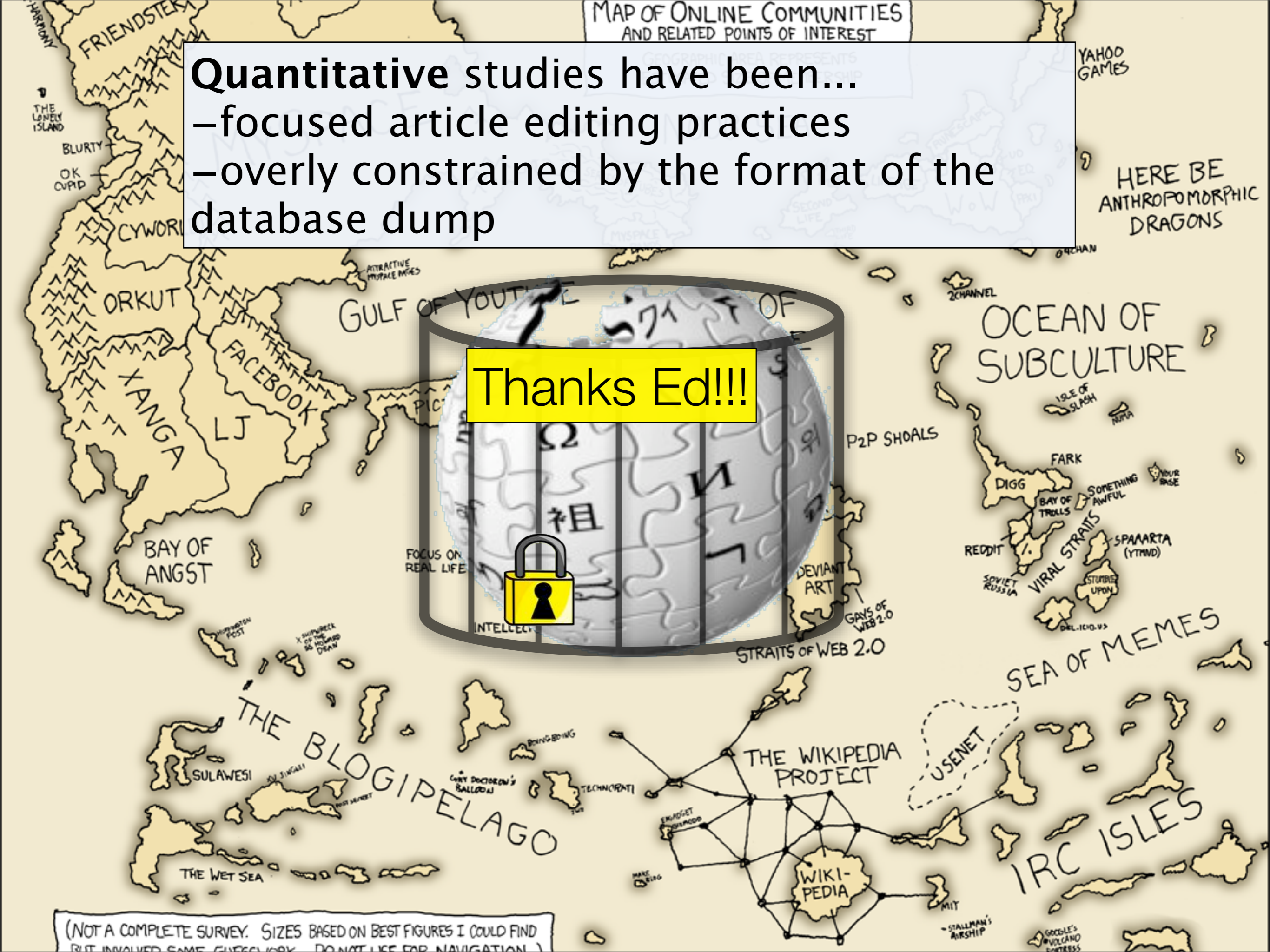
(cur) = difference from current version (last) = difference from preceding version,
m = minor edit, → = section edit, ← = automatic edit summary

Compare selected versions

(cur)	(last)	21:49, 30 October 2007	Jossi (Talk contribs)	m	(36,148 bytes)	(Reverted edits by Vondort (talk) to last version by Kathleen.wright5) (undo)
(cur)	(last)	21:48, 30 October 2007	Vondort (Talk contribs)		(36,195 bytes)	(→ Education) (undo)
(cur)	(last)	21:48, 30 October 2007	Vondort (Talk contribs)		(36,197 bytes)	(→ Personal life) (undo)
(cur)	(last)	03:12, 30 October 2007	Kathleen.wright5 (Talk contribs)	m	(36,148 bytes)	(→ Wikipedia and Wikimedia Foundation) (undo)
(cur)	(last)	00:52, 29 October 2007	A.Z. (Talk contribs)	m	(36,151 bytes)	(Undid revision 167745491 by Shaggman47 (talk)) (undo)
(cur)	(last)	00:51, 29 October 2007	Shaggman47 (Talk contribs)		(35,315 bytes)	(→ Personal life) (undo)
(cur)	(last)	22:03, 28 October 2007	AlleborgoBot (Talk contribs)	m	(36,151 bytes)	(robot Adding: <i>tg:Чимбо Вейлс</i>) (undo)
(cur)	(last)	17:22, 28 October 2007	Jhurlburt (Talk contribs)		(36,122 bytes)	(→ External links - Trimming excessive external links as per Wikipedia guidelines WP:EL.) (undo)
(cur)	(last)	06:02, 27 October 2007	LaraLove (Talk contribs)	m	(38,353 bytes)	(→ Wikipedia biography - Oops. Removing double closing parenthesis.) (undo)

Quantitative studies have been...
-focused article editing practices
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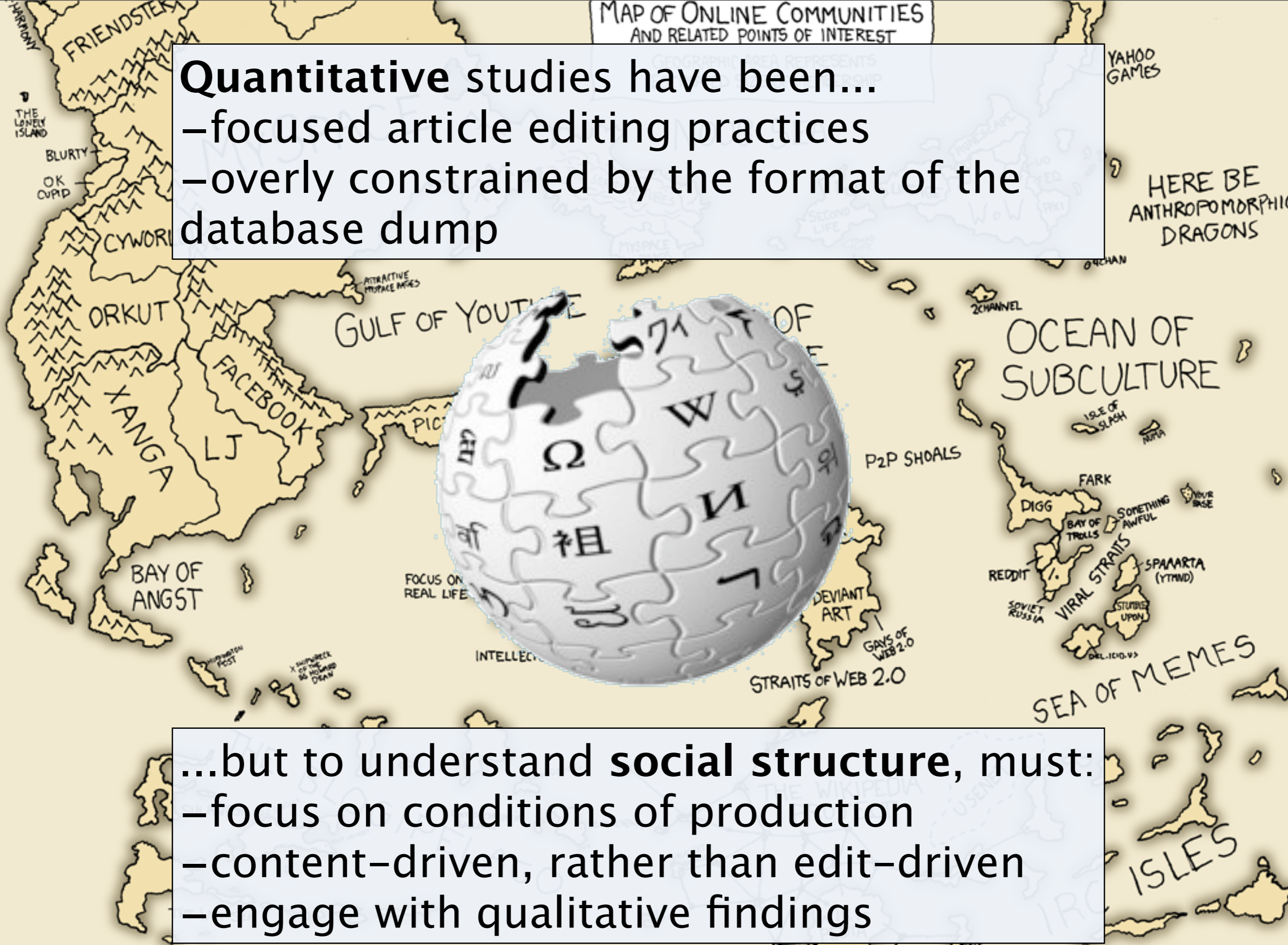
Thanks Ed!!!



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Quantitative studies have been...

- focused article editing practices
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...but to understand social structure, must:

- focus on conditions of production
- content-driven, rather than edit-driven
- engage with qualitative findings

Consensus-based
Division of work
Introspective
Governance

Vandalism reversion
Non-article content
Author activity predicts quality, controversy
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Viegas et al. HICSS '07
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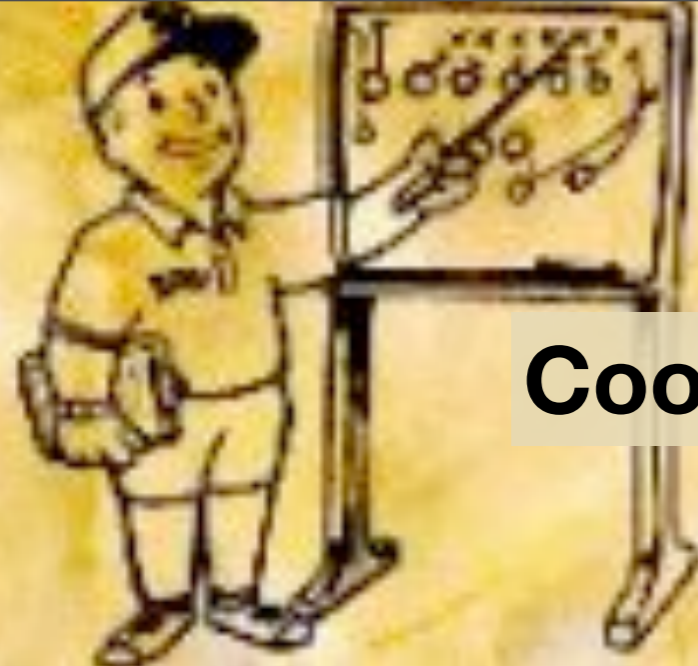
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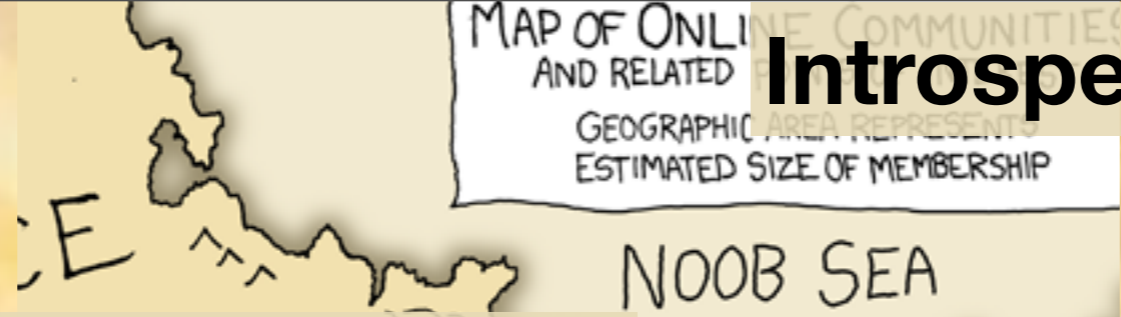
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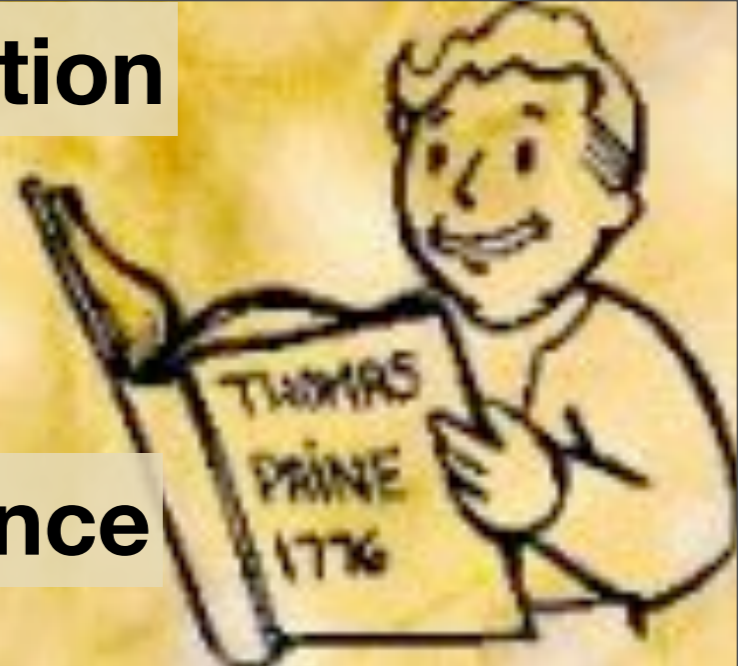
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Coordinated action



Introspection



Governance



Quality control



Dispute resolution



Power and authority



Outline


- ✓ Study motivation
- Wikipedia anatomy
 - namespaces: main, talk
 - policy & governance
- Policy citation investigation
- Discussion



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Anatomy: article pages



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Jimmy Wales

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia


Jimmy Donal "Jimbo" Wales (born [7 August 1966](#)^[2] in [Huntsville, Alabama](#)^{[3][4]}) is an [American Internet entrepreneur](#) known for his role in founding [Wikipedia](#)^{[5][6][7]} and other [wiki-related projects](#), including the charitable [Wikimedia Foundation](#) and the for-profit company [Wikia, Inc.](#)^[8]

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Personal life

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Occupation [President of Wikia, Inc.](#); [Board member and Chair Emeritus of the Wikimedia Foundation](#)

Spouse [Christine](#)^[1]

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Anatomy: article pages



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Leafman my talk my preferences my watchlist my contributions log out

[article](#) [discussion](#) [edit this page](#) [history](#) [watch](#)

9,924 people have donated [\[Show more\]](#)

Jimmy Wales


From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Jimmy Donal "Jimbo" Wales (born 7 August 1966^[2] in Huntsville, Alabama^{[3][4]}) is an **American Internet entrepreneur** known for his role in founding **Wikipedia**^{[5][6][7]} and other wiki-related projects, including the charitable **Wikimedia Foundation** and the for-profit company **Wikia, Inc.**^[8]

Contents [\[hide\]](#)

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- 2 Education
- 3 Career
 - 3.1 Wikipedia and Wikimedia Foundation
 - 3.2 Wikia
 - 3.3 Media appearances and honors
- 4 Issues and Controversy
 - 4.1 Bomis
 - 4.2 Wikipedia biography
 - 4.3 Birthdate
- 5 Personal philosophy
- 6 Published work
- 7 References
- 8 External links
 - 8.1 Audio/video

Jimmy Donal "Jimbo" Wales



Born August 7, 1966 (age 41)
Huntsville, Alabama, U.S.

Occupation President of **Wikia, Inc.**; Board member and Chair Emeritus of the **Wikimedia Foundation**

Spouse Christine^[1]

[\[edit\]](#)

Anatomy: article pages

Talk page

WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia

navigation

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interaction

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Personal life

[\[edit\]](#)

Jimmy Donal "Jimbo" Wales



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Anatomy: talk pages



The screenshot shows the Wikipedia article for Jimmy Wales. At the top, there is a navigation bar with tabs for 'article', 'discussion', 'edit this page', 'history', and 'watch'. The 'discussion' tab is highlighted with a yellow circle. Below the navigation bar, there is a green progress bar indicating that 9,924 people have donated, with a link to '[Show more]'. The article title is 'Jimmy Wales', and it is described as 'From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia'. The main text of the article begins with 'Jimmy Donal "Jimbo" Wales (born 7 August 1966^[2] in Huntsville, Alabama^{[3][4]}) is an American Internet entrepreneur known for his role in founding Wikipedia^{[5][6][7]} and other wiki-related projects, including the charitable Wikimedia Foundation and the for-profit company Wikia, Inc.^[8]'. Below the main text is a 'Contents' section with a '[hide]' link, listing sections from '1 Personal life' to '8 External links', with sub-sections under '3 Career' and '4 Issues and Controversy'. On the right side of the article is a portrait of Jimmy Wales and a biographical information box. The biographical box includes fields for 'Born' (August 7, 1966 (age 41) in Huntsville, Alabama, U.S.), 'Occupation' (President of Wikia, Inc.; Board member and Chair Emeritus of the Wikimedia Foundation), and 'Spouse' (Christine^[1]). There is an '[edit]' link at the bottom right of the biographical box. On the left side of the page, there is a sidebar with navigation links (Main page, Contents, Featured content, Current events, Random article), interaction links (About Wikipedia, Community portal, Recent changes, Contact Wikipedia, Donate to Wikipedia, Help), a search box with 'Go' and 'Search' buttons, and a toolbox with links like 'What links here', 'Related changes', 'Upload file', 'Special pages', 'Printable version', 'Permanent link', and 'Cite this article'.

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- 8 External links
 - 8.1 Audio/video

Personal life

Jimmy Donal "Jimbo" Wales



Born August 7, 1966 (age 41)
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Occupation President of Wikia, Inc.; Board member and Chair Emeritus of the Wikimedia Foundation

Spouse Christine^[1]

[edit]

Anatomy: talk pages



The screenshot shows the Wikipedia interface for the talk page of Jimmy Wales. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'article', 'discussion', 'edit this page', 'history', 'move', and 'watch'. Below this, a green progress bar indicates that 9,927 people have donated. The main heading is 'Talk:Jimmy Wales', with a sub-heading 'From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia'. A yellow box at the top right contains the text '↓ Skip to table of contents ↓'. Below this, a yellow box with a pencil icon states: 'Jimmy Wales has had a peer review by Wikipedia editors which is now archived. It may contain ideas you can use to improve this article.' Another yellow box with a clipboard icon states: 'This page was previously nominated for deletion. Please see prior discussions before considering re-nomination:' followed by a list of three items: 'Speedy Keep, 2007-08-31, see discussion.', 'Speedy Keep, 2007-08-14, see discussion.', and 'Keep, 2005-05-31, see discussion.' A third yellow box with an information icon states: 'If you need to contact Jimbo about something, please do so at User talk:Jimbo Wales, not here. As Jimbo explains...' followed by a quote: '"People who are trying to leave messages for me will likely be more satisfied if they leave messages on my user talk page than if they leave them here. This is the talk page for the article about me, not a place to talk to me. I rarely read this. --Jimbo Wales 06:05, 23 August 2005 (UTC)"'. At the bottom, a yellow box states: 'This is the talk page for discussing improvements to the Jimmy Wales article. This is not a forum for general discussion about the article's subject.' The left sidebar contains navigation links, interaction links, a search box, and a toolbox.

Leafman my talk my preferences my watchlist my contributions log out

article discussion edit this page + history move watch

9,927 people have donated [\[Show more\]](#)

Talk:Jimmy Wales

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

↓ *Skip to table of contents* ↓

 **Jimmy Wales** has had a [peer review](#) by Wikipedia editors which is now **archived**. It may contain ideas you can use to improve this article.

 **This page was previously nominated for deletion.**
Please see prior discussions before considering re-nomination:

- **Speedy Keep**, 2007-08-31, see [discussion](#).
- **Speedy Keep**, 2007-08-14, see [discussion](#).
- **Keep**, 2005-05-31, see [discussion](#).

 **If you need to contact Jimbo about something, please do so at [User talk:Jimbo Wales](#), not here.** As Jimbo explains...

"People who are trying to leave messages for me will likely be more satisfied if they leave messages on my [user talk page](#) than if they leave them here. This is the talk page for the article about me, not a place to talk to me. I rarely read this. --[Jimbo Wales](#) 06:05, 23 August 2005 (UTC)"

This is the [talk page](#) for discussing improvements to the [Jimmy Wales](#) article.
This is not a forum for general discussion about the article's subject.

Please sign and date your posts by typing four tildes

[Article policies](#)

navigation

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interaction

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search

toolbox

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Anatomy: talk pages

The image shows a screenshot of a Wikipedia talk page. On the left, there is a sidebar with navigation and interaction links. The main content area displays a conversation thread. Two yellow ovals highlight specific parts of the thread: the first sentence of a post and the word 'Birthdate' in a post title. The text of the posts is as follows:

explain the change and its purpose.
Tualha (Talk) 19:38, 13 July 2007 (UTC)
I will use a more relevant quote. Thanks for your concern. Please review. **QuackGuru talk** 20:05, 13 July 2007 (UTC)
That one will do, though it can be trimmed. Thanks. **Tualha (Talk)** 21:17, 13 July 2007 (UTC)

First sentence in the education section [edit]

That part I fixed yesterday in the education section is logically inconsistent. It reads like the school was donating the software to itself. It's not Jimbo's user page so I have right to fix it, right? Why has it been undone then? **greg park avenue** 13:23, 23 July 2007 (UTC)

Birthdate [edit]

I just blogged about this [↗](#).--**Jimbo Wales** 09:34, 8 August 2007 (UTC)
Supposedly, he was born on the 8th, and *Britannica* also thinks its the 7th. See [this blog entry](#) [↗](#) from *The Oregonian* newspaper. Also see [the previous, related blog entry](#) [↗](#) about an interview with him, [Ward Cunningham](#) and the newspaper, as well as a print article, [Open-source thinking](#) [↗](#). **Jason McHuff** 22:49, 27 July 2007 (UTC)
It looks like a reporter from a major newspaper has reported on a public records search, confirming what I have been saying for a long time. According to my birth certificate, August 7th is not my birthdate. Perhaps someday I will produce a note from my mom for another reporter. And perhaps I will just continue to have a bit of fun with this. :)--**Jimbo Wales** 09:12, 8 August 2007 (UTC)
Mr. Wales has stated that his birthday is Aug. 7th, 1966. Links to these admissions can be found [here](#) [↗](#) and [here](#) [↗](#). Also, both *Current Biography* and *Who's Who is America* list his birthday as being the 7th. **68.117.211.187** 07:21, 28 July 2007 (UTC)
I hope I am not the only one who is amused that this anonymous ip number calls a discussion of my date of birth an "admission". :) Perhaps I shall next confess to having brown hair. --**Jimbo Wales** 18:36, 8 August 2007 (UTC)
Thanks for the links. I don't think I saw the archive of this page when I came here. I'm not seeing the first edit you link to in the page history, but the second one does seem somewhat conclusive. Its interesting, because here (at your links) he seems pretty firm that its the 7th, yet the blog post (written by [a reporter](#) [↗](#) for a major metro newspaper, so hopefully a reliable source) really sounds like he said that its not the 7th. Overall, it does seem that a difference of a day isn't much to worry about. **Jason McHuff**

Anatomy: talk pages

Per Wikipedia policy, Wales' statement cannot be used as a source. See [Wikipedia:Verifiability](#), "Articles and posts on Wikipedia may not be used as sources." This certainly includes statements in user space. [Quatloo \(talk\)](#) 00:34, 3 March 2008 (UTC)

We can adhere to the letter of the policy and pretend that they aren't seperated, even though there is clear evidence that they are. Or, we can recognize that sentence as being a measure to prevent people from posting OR and then sourcing it elsewhere, and accept the man's statements about his life as definitive. I prefer the latter. -[Amarkov moo!](#) 00:45, 3 March 2008 (UTC)

There is no need to pretend anything. We can adhere to the policy by not addressing the matter, since it is not important and doesn't need to be in the encyclopedia. If it were important, there'd be a [WP:RS](#). There is not. [Quatloo \(talk\)](#) 01:38, 3 March 2008 (UTC)

Also, your argument seems to be "I want this poorly sourced statement,

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Also, your argument seems to be "I want this poorly sourced statement, which violates both [WP:Verifiability](#) and [WP:BLP](#), to remain in Wikipedia to prevent someone from possibly adding original research to the encyclopedia." I suggest that this is not a very good argument to justify a violation of policy. [Quatloo \(talk\)](#) 01:44, 3 March 2008 (UTC)

Anatomy: talk pages

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Anatomy: talk pages

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Structure negotiation of article content [1,2]

- provide a common language and strategies of action
- policies require interpretation
- often enacted in **power plays**
- similar to FAQ citations in Usenet [3]

[1] Viegas et al. HICSS '07

[2] Kriplean et al. GROUP '07

[3] Kollock & Smith '96

Anatomy: talk pages

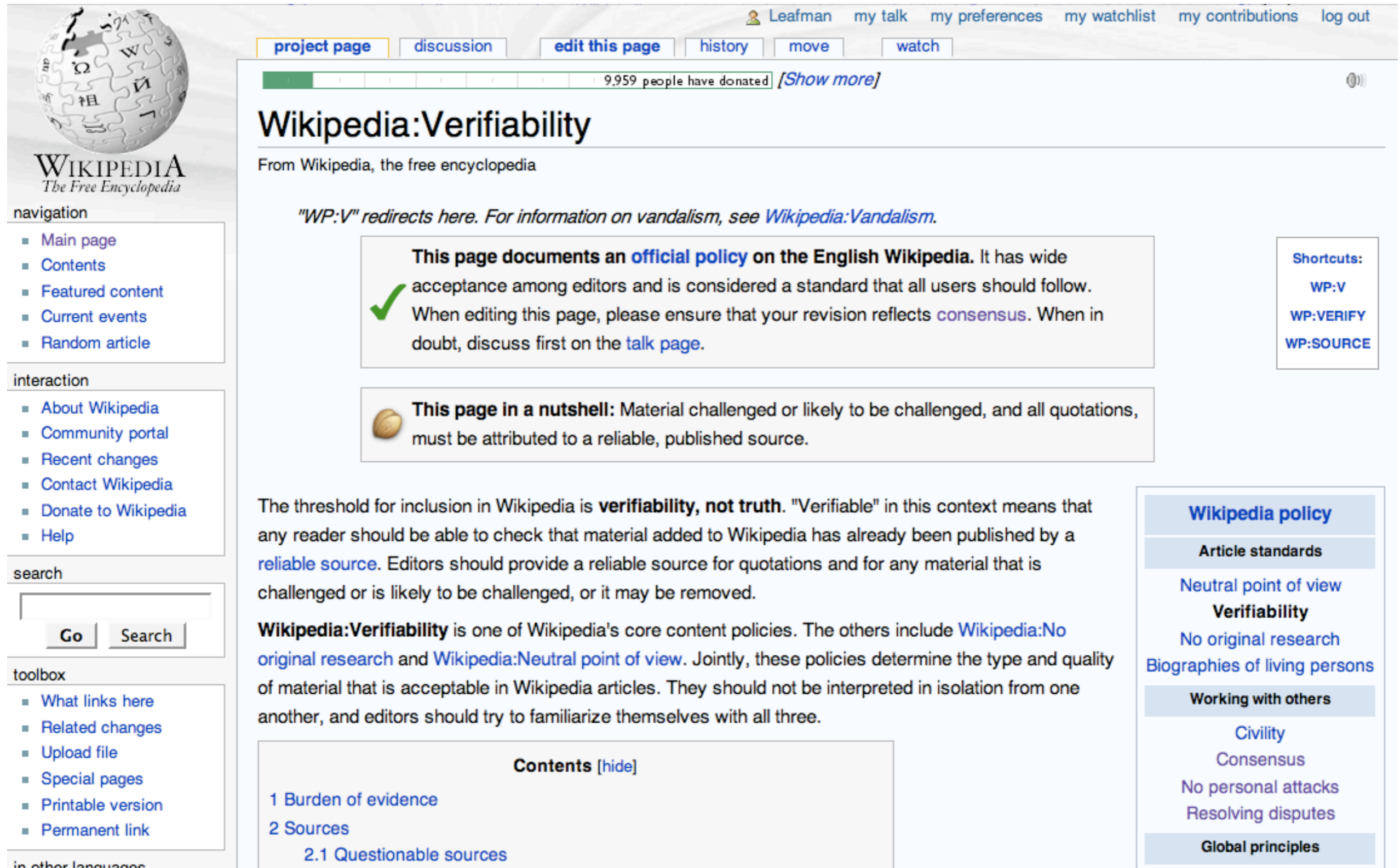
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Anatomy: policy environment



The screenshot shows the Wikipedia:Verifiability page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'project page', 'discussion', 'edit this page', 'history', 'move', and 'watch'. A user profile for 'Leafman' is visible with links for 'my talk', 'my preferences', 'my watchlist', 'my contributions', and 'log out'. A green progress bar indicates that 9,959 people have donated, with a '[Show more]' link. The main heading is 'Wikipedia:Verifiability' with the subtitle 'From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia'. A note states: '"WP:V" redirects here. For information on vandalism, see Wikipedia:Vandalism.' Below this are two callout boxes. The first, marked with a green checkmark, states: 'This page documents an official policy on the English Wikipedia. It has wide acceptance among editors and is considered a standard that all users should follow. When editing this page, please ensure that your revision reflects consensus. When in doubt, discuss first on the talk page.' The second, marked with a brown egg icon, states: 'This page in a nutshell: Material challenged or likely to be challenged, and all quotations, must be attributed to a reliable, published source.' To the right of these boxes is a 'Shortcuts:' section with links for 'WP:V', 'WP:VERIFY', and 'WP:SOURCE'. The main text explains that the threshold for inclusion is 'verifiability, not truth', meaning material must be published by a reliable source. It lists other core policies: 'Wikipedia:No original research' and 'Wikipedia:Neutral point of view'. A 'Contents' section is visible at the bottom, listing '1 Burden of evidence', '2 Sources', and '2.1 Questionable sources'. On the left side, there is a sidebar with 'navigation' (Main page, Contents, Featured content, Current events, Random article), 'interaction' (About Wikipedia, Community portal, Recent changes, Contact Wikipedia, Donate to Wikipedia, Help), 'search' (input field, Go, Search), and 'toolbox' (What links here, Related changes, Upload file, Special pages, Printable version, Permanent link). At the bottom left, it says 'in other languages'.

Anatomy: policy environment

The screenshot shows the Wikipedia:Verifiability page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'project page', 'discussion', 'edit this page', 'history', 'move', and 'watch'. Below this, a green progress bar indicates that 9,959 people have donated. The main heading is 'Wikipedia:Verifiability', with a sub-heading 'From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia'. A red warning box at the top states: '"WP:V" redirects here. For information on vandalism, see Wikipedia:Vandalism.' Below this, a green checkmark icon is next to a text box that reads: 'This page documents an official policy on the English Wikipedia. It has wide acceptance among editors and is considered a standard that all users should follow. When editing this page, please ensure that your revision reflects consensus. When in doubt, discuss first on the talk page.' A green arrow labeled 'Status' points to this text. To the right of this text is a 'Shortcuts' box containing links for 'WP:V', 'WP:VERIFY', and 'WP:SOURCE'. Below the green checkmark box is a yellow warning box with a bomb icon, stating: 'This page in a nutshell: Material challenged or likely to be challenged, and all quotations, must be attributed to a reliable, published source.' A green arrow labeled 'Summary' points to this text. The main body of the page contains a paragraph: 'The threshold for inclusion in Wikipedia is **verifiability, not truth**. "Verifiable" in this context means that any reader should be able to check that material added to Wikipedia has already been published by a **reliable source**. Editors should provide a reliable source for quotations and for any material that is challenged or is likely to be challenged, or it may be removed.' Below this is another paragraph: '**Wikipedia:Verifiability** is one of Wikipedia's core content policies. The others include [Wikipedia:No original research](#) and [Wikipedia:Neutral point of view](#). Jointly, these policies determine the type and quality of material that is acceptable in Wikipedia articles. They should not be interpreted in isolation from one another, and editors should try to familiarize themselves with all three.' At the bottom, there is a 'Contents [hide]' section with links to '1 Burden of evidence', '2 Sources', and '2.1 Questionable sources'. On the right side of the page, there is a 'Wikipedia policy' sidebar with a list of policies: 'Article standards', 'Neutral point of view', 'Verifiability', 'No original research', 'Biographies of living persons', 'Working with others', 'Civility', 'Consensus', 'No personal attacks', 'Resolving disputes', and 'Global principles'.

Leafman my talk my preferences my watchlist my contributions log out

project page discussion edit this page history move watch

9,959 people have donated [Show more]

Wikipedia:Verifiability

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

"WP:V" redirects here. For information on vandalism, see Wikipedia:Vandalism.

This page documents an official policy on the English Wikipedia. It has wide acceptance among editors and is considered a standard that all users should follow. When editing this page, please ensure that your revision reflects consensus. When in doubt, discuss first on the talk page.

This page in a nutshell: Material challenged or likely to be challenged, and all quotations, must be attributed to a reliable, published source.

The threshold for inclusion in Wikipedia is **verifiability, not truth**. "Verifiable" in this context means that any reader should be able to check that material added to Wikipedia has already been published by a **reliable source**. Editors should provide a reliable source for quotations and for any material that is challenged or is likely to be challenged, or it may be removed.

Wikipedia:Verifiability is one of Wikipedia's core content policies. The others include [Wikipedia:No original research](#) and [Wikipedia:Neutral point of view](#). Jointly, these policies determine the type and quality of material that is acceptable in Wikipedia articles. They should not be interpreted in isolation from one another, and editors should try to familiarize themselves with all three.

Contents [hide]

- 1 Burden of evidence
- 2 Sources
 - 2.1 Questionable sources

Shortcuts:
WP:V
WP:VERIFY
WP:SOURCE

Wikipedia policy

- Article standards
- Neutral point of view
- Verifiability**
- No original research
- Biographies of living persons
- Working with others
- Civility
- Consensus
- No personal attacks
- Resolving disputes
- Global principles

Anatomy: policy environment

Leafman my talk my preferences my watchlist my contributions log out

project page discussion edit this page history move watch

9,959 people have donated [\[Show more\]](#)

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Shortcuts:
[WP:V](#)
[WP:VERIFY](#)
[WP:SOURCE](#)

The threshold for inclusion in Wikipedia is verifiability, not truth. "Verifiable" in this context means that the material is supported by reliable sources. Editors should provide a reliable source for quotations, and for any material that is challenged or is likely to be challenged, or it may be removed. Wikipedia:Neutral point of view. Wikipedia:Verifiability. Wikipedia:No original research. Wikipedia:Biographies of living persons. Wikipedia:Civility. Wikipedia:Consensus. Wikipedia:No personal attacks. Wikipedia:Resolving disputes. Wikipedia:Global principles.

navigation

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in other languages

Contents [\[hide\]](#)

- Burden of evidence
- Sources
 - Questionable sources

Anatomy: policy environment

The image shows a screenshot of the Wikipedia:Verifiability page. A large text box is overlaid on the page, containing the text: "Policy pages elaborate on strategies for applying the policy and possible exceptions". The page itself features a navigation bar at the top with links like "project page", "discussion", "edit this page", "history", "move", and "watch". Below the navigation bar, there is a green progress bar indicating that 9,959 people have donated. The main content area includes a section titled "Wikipedia:Verifiability" with a sub-header "From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia". The text explains that the threshold for inclusion in Wikipedia is **verifiability, not truth**. It states that "Verifiable" in this context means that any reader should be able to check that material added to Wikipedia has already been published by a **reliable source**. Editors should provide a reliable source for quotations and for any material that is challenged or is likely to be challenged, or it may be removed. The page also lists other core content policies: **Wikipedia:No original research** and **Wikipedia:Neutral point of view**. A table of contents is visible at the bottom, listing sections such as "1 Burden of evidence", "2 Sources", and "2.1 Questionable sources". On the right side, there is a "Shortcuts" box with links to "WP:V", "WP:VERIFY", and "WP:SOURCE". At the bottom right, there is a "Wikipedia policy" sidebar with a list of policies including "Article standards", "Neutral point of view", "Verifiability", "No original research", "Biographies of living persons", "Working with others", "Civility", "Consensus", "No personal attacks", "Resolving disputes", and "Global principles".

Leafman my talk my preferences my watchlist my contributions log out

project page discussion edit this page history move watch

9,959 people have donated [Show more]

Wikipedia:Verifiability

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Policy pages elaborate on strategies for applying the policy and possible exceptions

✓ acceptance among editors and is considered a standard that all users should follow. When editing this page, please ensure that your revision reflects **consensus**. When in doubt, discuss first on the **talk page**.

🥚 **This page in a nutshell:** Material challenged or likely to be challenged, and all quotations, must be attributed to a reliable, published source.

The threshold for inclusion in Wikipedia is **verifiability, not truth**. "Verifiable" in this context means that any reader should be able to check that material added to Wikipedia has already been published by a **reliable source**. Editors should provide a reliable source for quotations and for any material that is challenged or is likely to be challenged, or it may be removed.

Wikipedia:Verifiability is one of Wikipedia's core content policies. The others include **Wikipedia:No original research** and **Wikipedia:Neutral point of view**. Jointly, these policies determine the type and quality of material that is acceptable in Wikipedia articles. They should not be interpreted in isolation from one another, and editors should try to familiarize themselves with all three.

Contents [hide]

- 1 Burden of evidence
- 2 Sources
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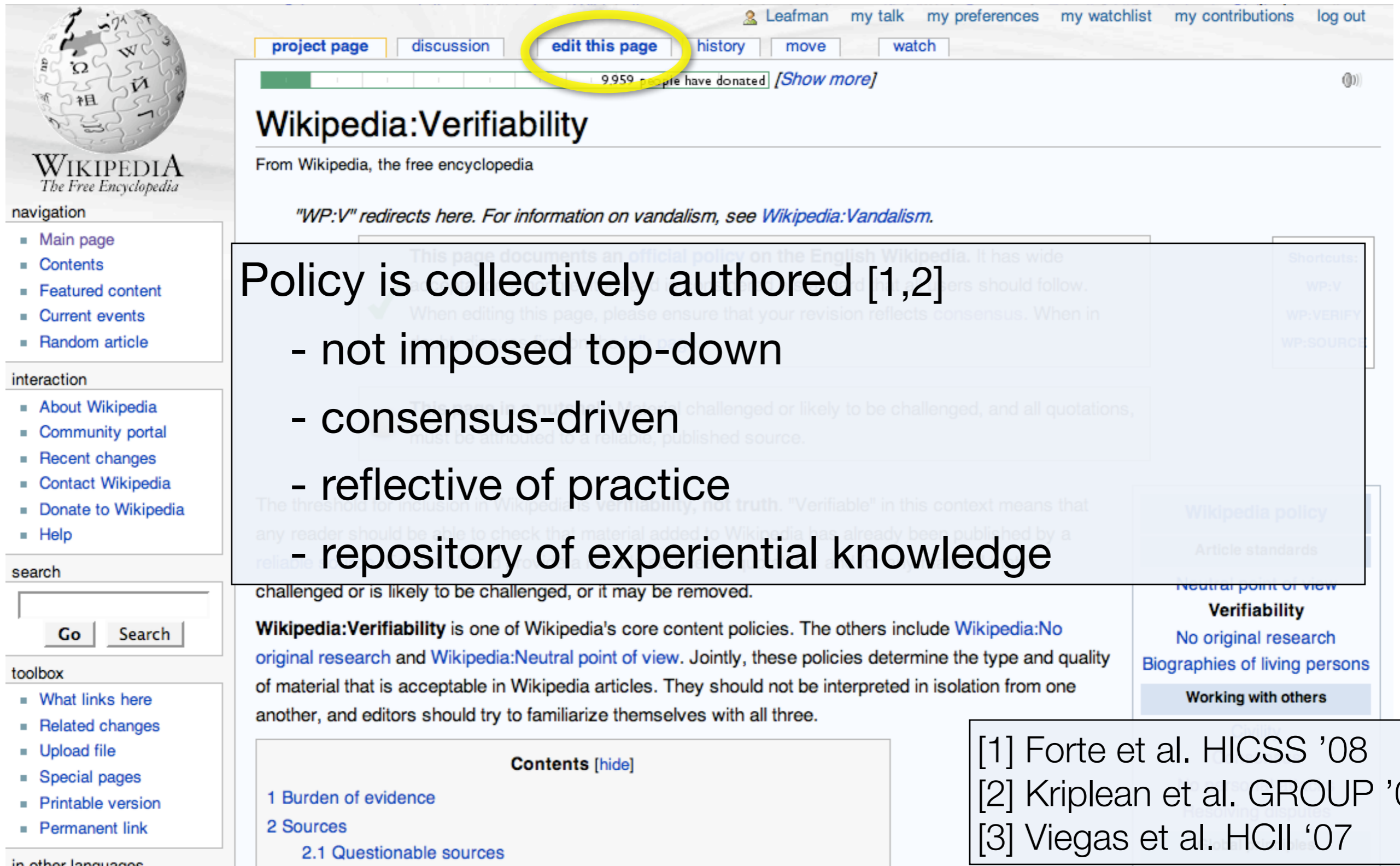
Shortcuts:
WP:V
WP:VERIFY
WP:SOURCE

Wikipedia policy

- Article standards
- Neutral point of view
- Verifiability**
- No original research
- Biographies of living persons
- Working with others
- Civility
- Consensus
- No personal attacks
- Resolving disputes
- Global principles

in other languages

Anatomy: policy environment



The image shows a screenshot of the Wikipedia:Verifiability page. The 'edit this page' button is highlighted with a yellow circle. The page content includes a navigation sidebar on the left, a main article area with a title 'Wikipedia:Verifiability', and a list of references at the bottom right.

Policy is collectively authored [1,2]

- not imposed top-down
- consensus-driven
- reflective of practice
- repository of experiential knowledge

[1] Forte et al. HICSS '08
[2] Kriplean et al. GROUP '07
[3] Viegas et al. HCII '07

Anatomy: policy environment

The image shows a screenshot of the Wikipedia:Verifiability page. The page title is "Wikipedia:Verifiability" and it is described as "From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia". The page content includes a navigation menu on the left, a main text area, and a table of contents at the bottom. A yellow circle highlights the "edit this page" button in the top navigation bar. The page content includes a section titled "Policy environment bounds legitimate activity" with a list of items: content, behavioral, enforcement, deletion, legal; ~40 official policies; hundreds of less strict guidelines; and informal essays. The page also includes a section titled "Wikipedia:Verifiability is one of Wikipedia's core content policies..." and a table of contents with items like "1 Burden of evidence", "2 Sources", and "2.1 Questionable sources".

Leafman my talk my preferences my watchlist my contributions log out

project page discussion **edit this page** history move watch

9,959 people have donated [\[Show more\]](#)

Wikipedia:Verifiability

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

"WP:V" redirects here. For information on vandalism, see [Wikipedia:Vandalism](#).

This page documents an official policy on the English Wikipedia. It has wide...
When editing this page, please ensure that your revision reflects consensus. When in...
doubt, discuss first on the talk page.

This page in a nutshell: Material challenged or likely to be challenged, and all quotations...
...challenged source.

The... next means that...
any reader should be able to check the material added to Wikipedia has already been published by a...
reliable source. Editors should provide a reliable source for quotations and for any material that is...
challenged source may be removed.

Policy environment bounds legitimate activity

- content, behavioral, enforcement, deletion, legal
- ~40 **official policies**
- hundreds of less strict **guidelines**
- informal **essays**

Wikipedia:Verifiability is one of Wikipedia's core content policies. The others include [Wikipedia:No original research](#) and [Wikipedia:Neutral point of view](#). Jointly, these policies determine the type and quality of material that is acceptable in Wikipedia articles. They should not be interpreted in isolation from one another, and editors should try to familiarize themselves with all three.

Wikipedia policy
Article standards
Neutral point of view
Verifiability
No original research
Biographies of living persons
Working with others

Contents [\[hide\]](#)

- 1 [Burden of evidence](#)
- 2 [Sources](#)
 - 2.1 [Questionable sources](#)

in other languages

[1] Forte et al. HICSS '08
[2] Kriplean et al. GROUP '07
[3] Viegas et al. HCII '07

Anatomy: policy environment

The image shows a screenshot of the Wikipedia:Verifiability page. The page title is "Wikipedia:Verifiability" and it is described as "From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia". The page content includes a note that "WP:V" redirects here and information on vandalism. The page also discusses the threshold for inclusion in Wikipedia, which is verifiability, not truth, and lists core content policies like Wikipedia:No original research and Wikipedia:Neutral point of view. A sidebar on the left contains navigation and interaction links. A search box is visible at the bottom left. A yellow circle highlights the "edit this page" link in the top navigation bar. A large text box is overlaid on the page content, and a smaller text box is overlaid on the bottom right.

Leafman my talk my preferences my watchlist my contributions log out

project page discussion **edit this page** history move watch

9 959 people have donated [Show more]

Wikipedia:Verifiability

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This page is a nutshell: Material challenged or likely to be challenged, and all quotations...

Shortcuts:
WP:V
WP:VERIFY
WP-SOURCE

Embedded in a governance structure [1, 3]

- formal processes, judicial bodies, etc.
- violators of policy may be subject to sanction

The threshold for inclusion in Wikipedia is **verifiability, not truth**. "Verifiable" in this context means that any reader should be able to check that material added to Wikipedia has already been published by a **reliable source**. Editors should provide a reliable source for quotations and for any material that is challenged or is likely to be challenged, or it may be removed.

Wikipedia:Verifiability is one of Wikipedia's core content policies. The others include [Wikipedia:No original research](#) and [Wikipedia:Neutral point of view](#). Jointly, these policies determine the type and quality of material that is acceptable in Wikipedia articles. They should not be interpreted in isolation from one another, and editors should try to familiarize themselves with all three.

Wikipedia policy

- Article standards
- Neutral point of view
- Verifiability**
- No original research
- Biographies of living persons
- Working with others

Contents [hide]

- 1 Burden of evidence
- 2 Sources
 - 2.1 Questionable sources

What links here
Related changes
Upload file
Special pages
Printable version
Permanent link

in other languages

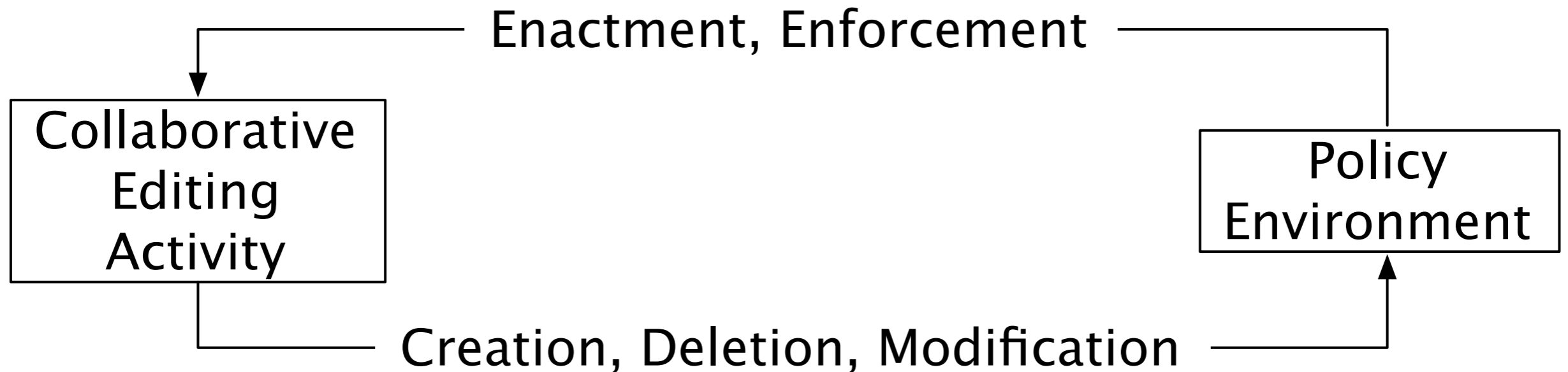
[1] Forte et al. HICSS '08
[2] Kriplean et al. GROUP '07
[3] Viegas et al. HCII '07

Self-governance in action



Self-governance in action

Policy citations are a micro-macro link between everyday actions and the governance structure



Outline

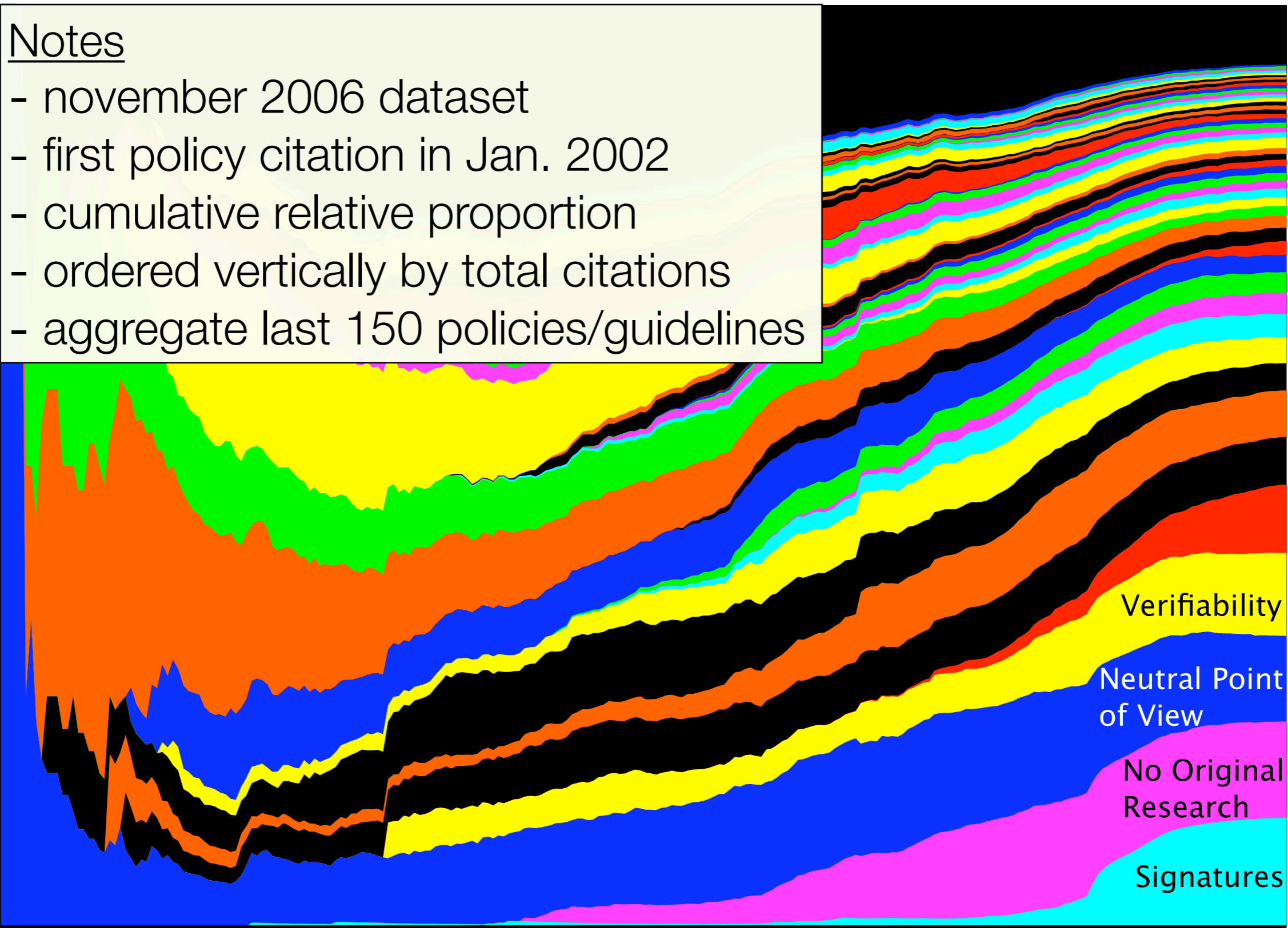
- ✓ Study motivation
- ✓ Wikipedia anatomy
- Policy citation investigations
 - tracking community concerns
 - changes in community attention
- Discussion

Notes

- november 2006 dataset
- first policy citation in Jan. 2002
- cumulative relative proportion
- ordered vertically by total citations
- aggregate last 150 policies/guidelines

Fraction of cumulative policy citations

1
0.8
0.6
0.4
0.2
0

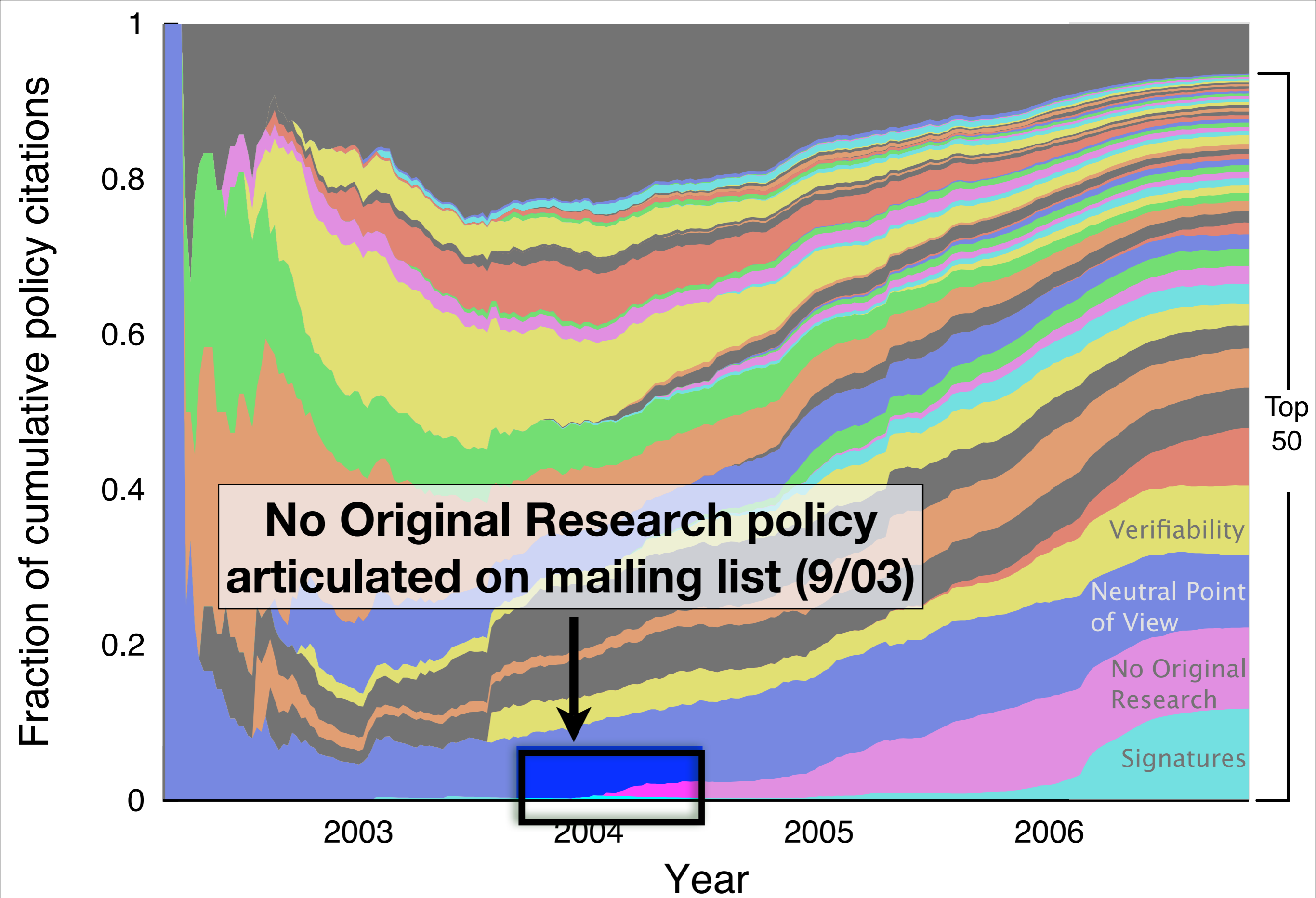


2003 2004 2005 2006

Year

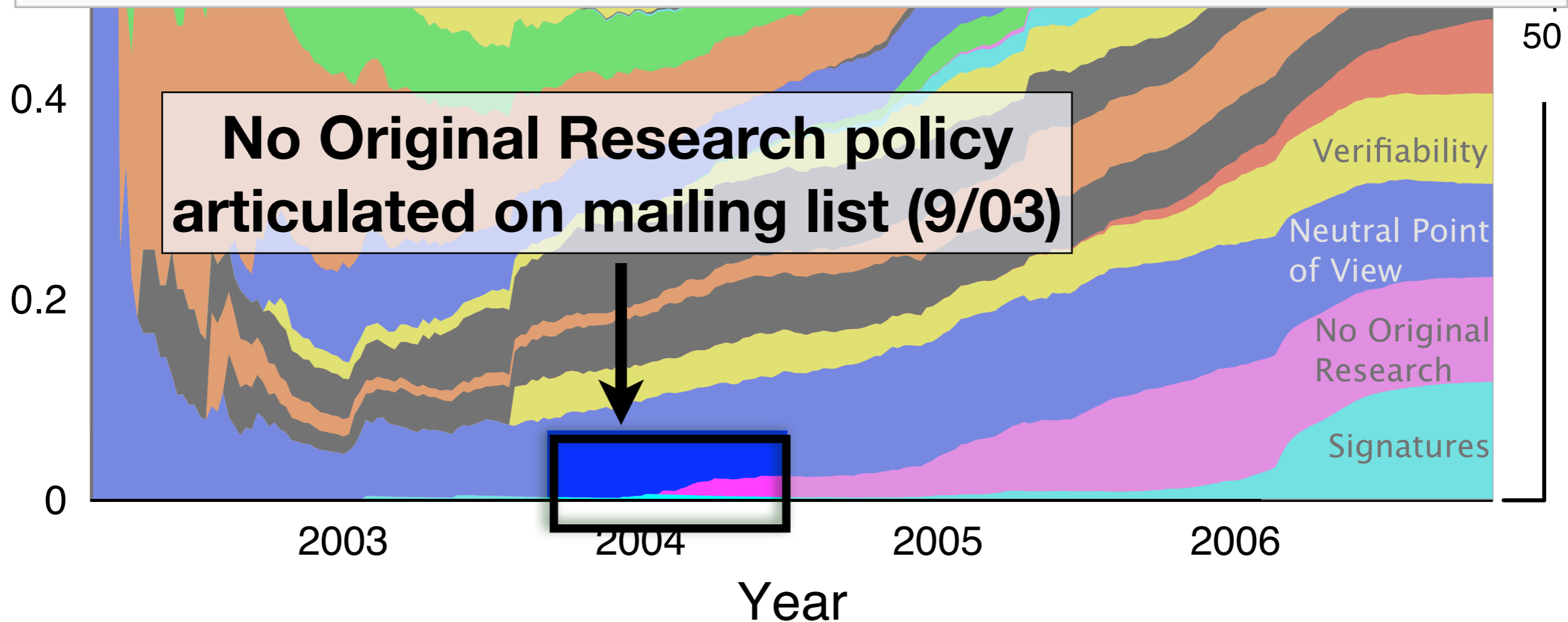
Verifiability
Neutral Point
of View
No Original
Research
Signatures

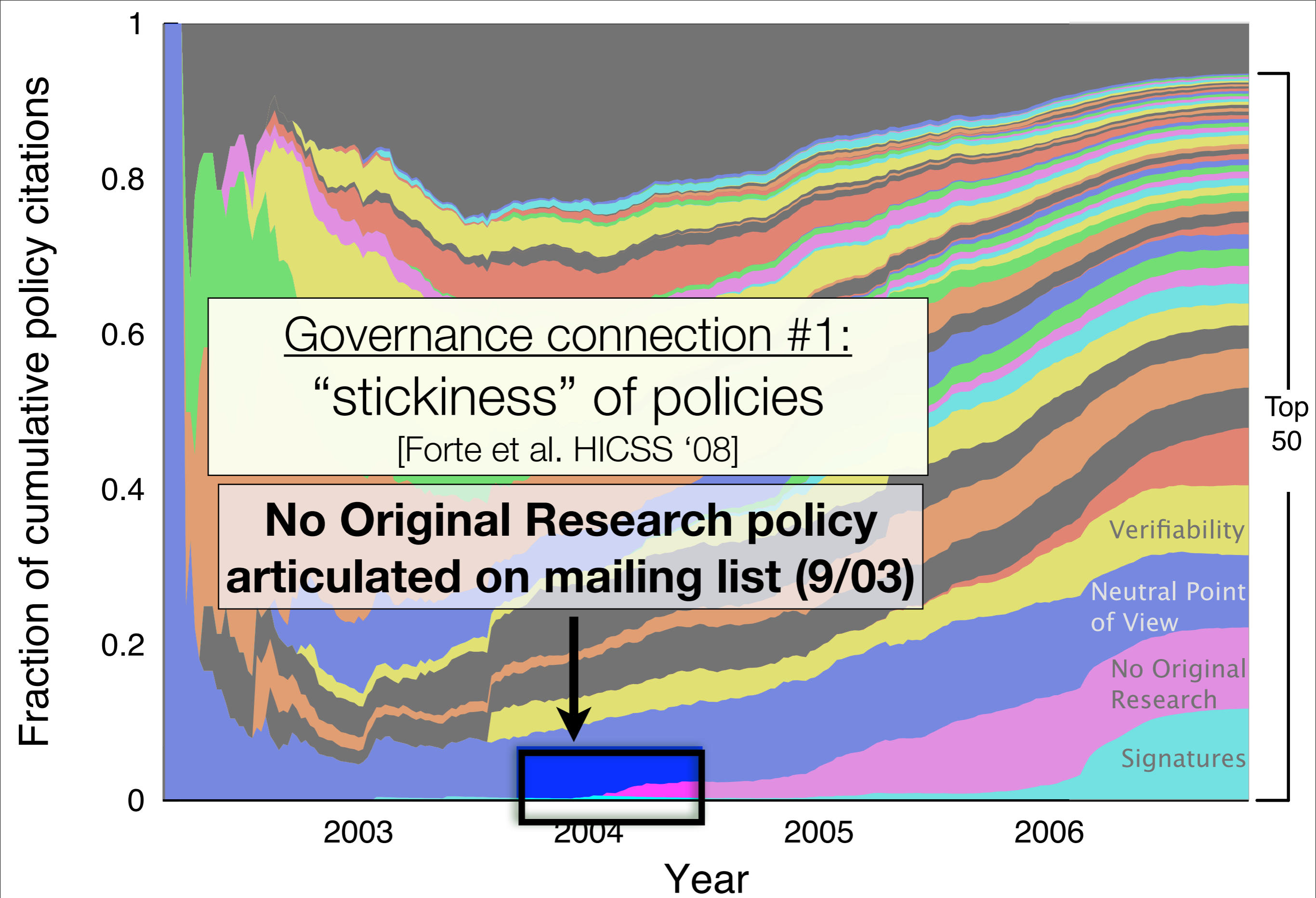
Top
50



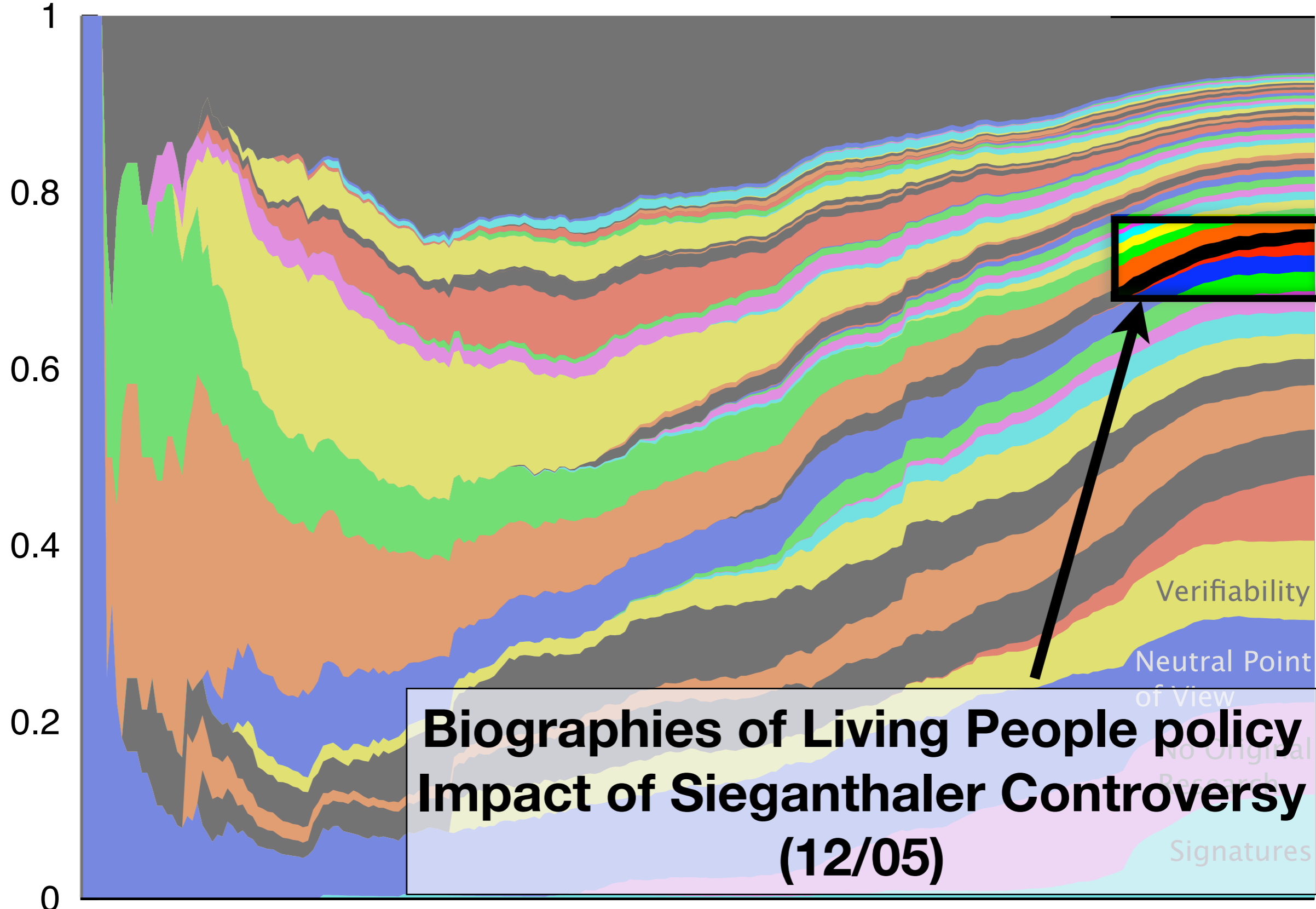
This page in a nutshell:

- Wikipedia does **not** publish original thought: all material in Wikipedia must be attributable to a **reliable, published source**.
- Articles may not contain any new analysis or synthesis of published material that serves to advance a position not clearly advanced by the sources.





Fraction of cumulative policy citations



2003 2004 2005 2006

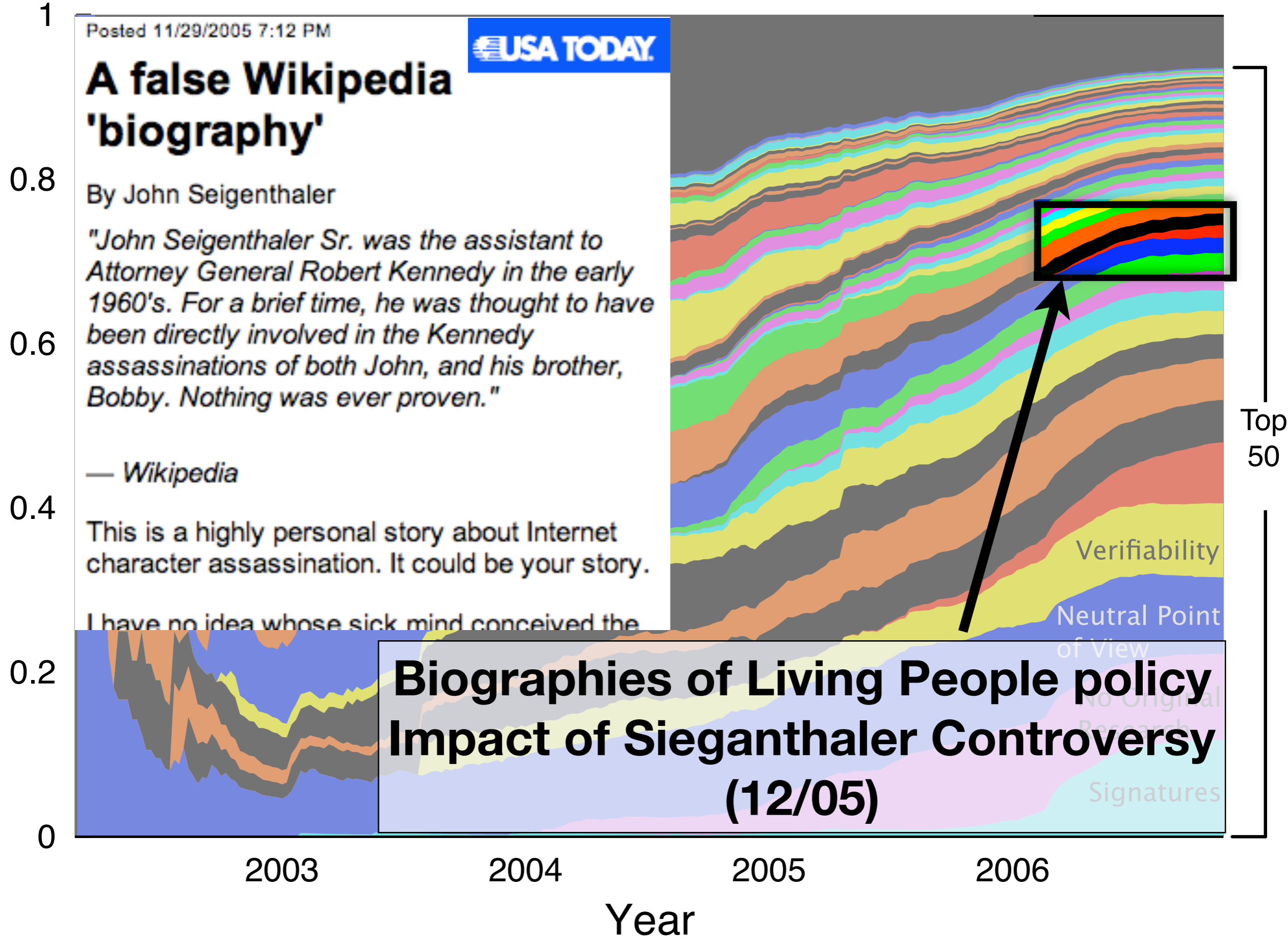
Year

**Biographies of Living People policy
Impact of Sieganthaler Controversy
(12/05)**

Top
50

Verifiability
Neutral Point
of View
No Original
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Signatures

Fraction of cumulative policy citations



Fraction of cumulative policy citations

1
0.8
0.6
0.4
0.2
0

Posted 11/29/2005 7:12 PM

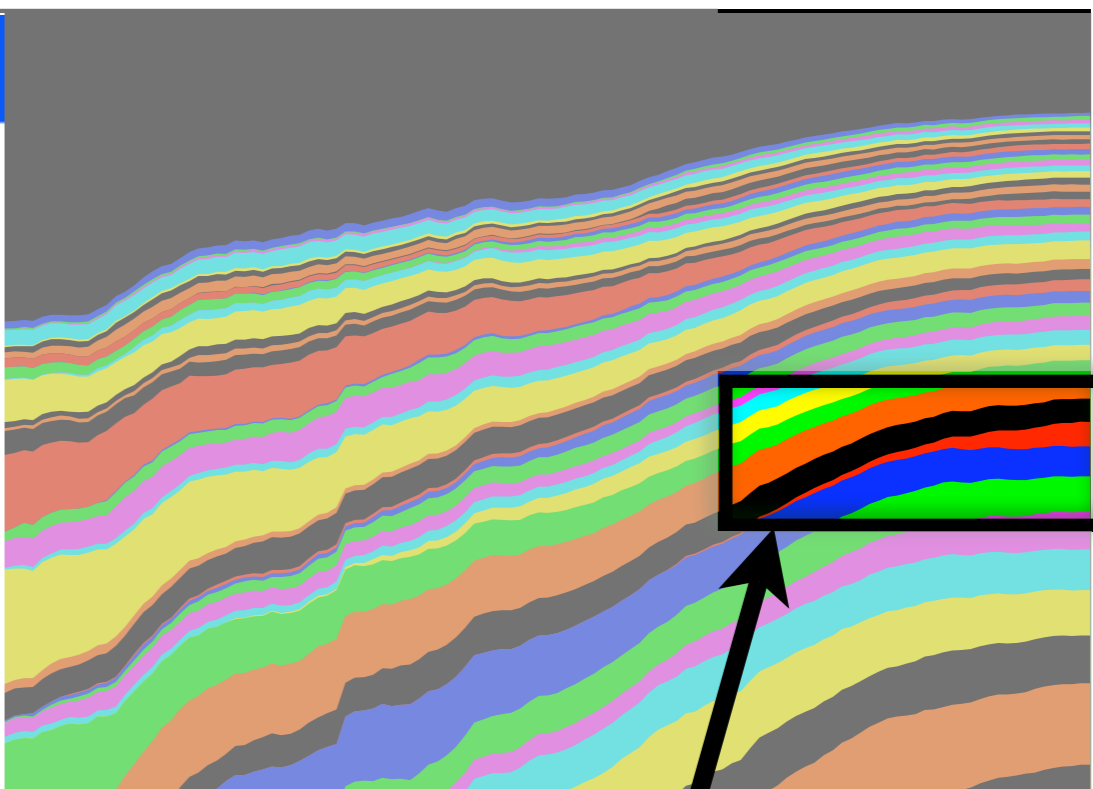
A false Wikipedia 'biography'

By John Seigenthaler

"John Seigenthaler Sr. was the assistant to Attorney General Robert Kennedy in the early 1960's. For a brief time, he was thought to have been directly involved in the Kennedy assassinations of both John, and his brother, Bobby. Nothing was ever proven."

— Wikipedia

This is a highly personal story and a character assassination. It could have been written by anyone. I have no idea whose sick mind conceived the



Top 50

Governance connection #2:
 Shift toward quality control
 [Forte et al. HICSS '08; Viegas et al. HCII '07]

**Biographies of Living People policy
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2003 2004 2005 2006

Year

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Fraction of cumulative policy citations

1
0.8
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0.4
0.2
0

2003

2004

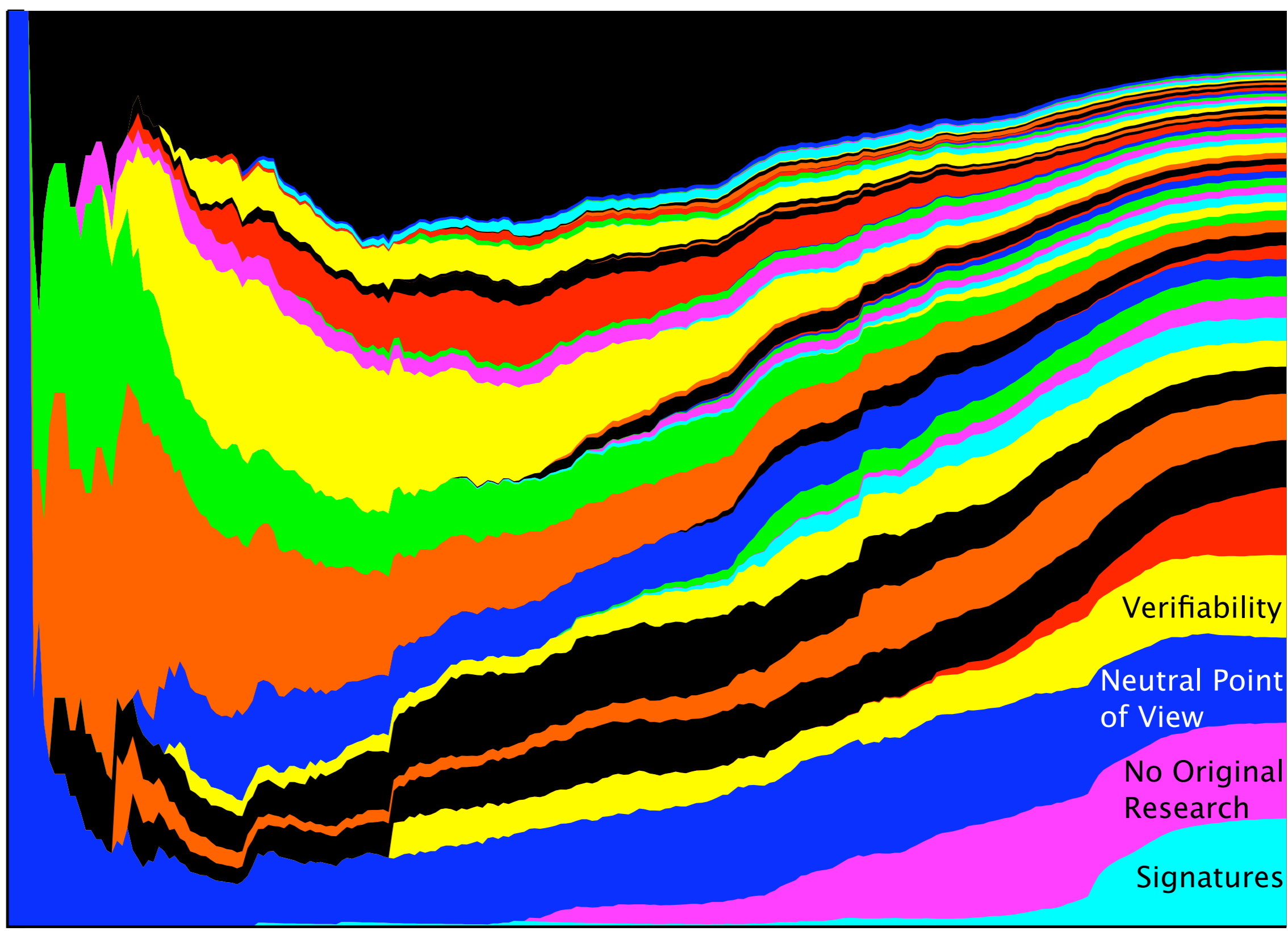
2005

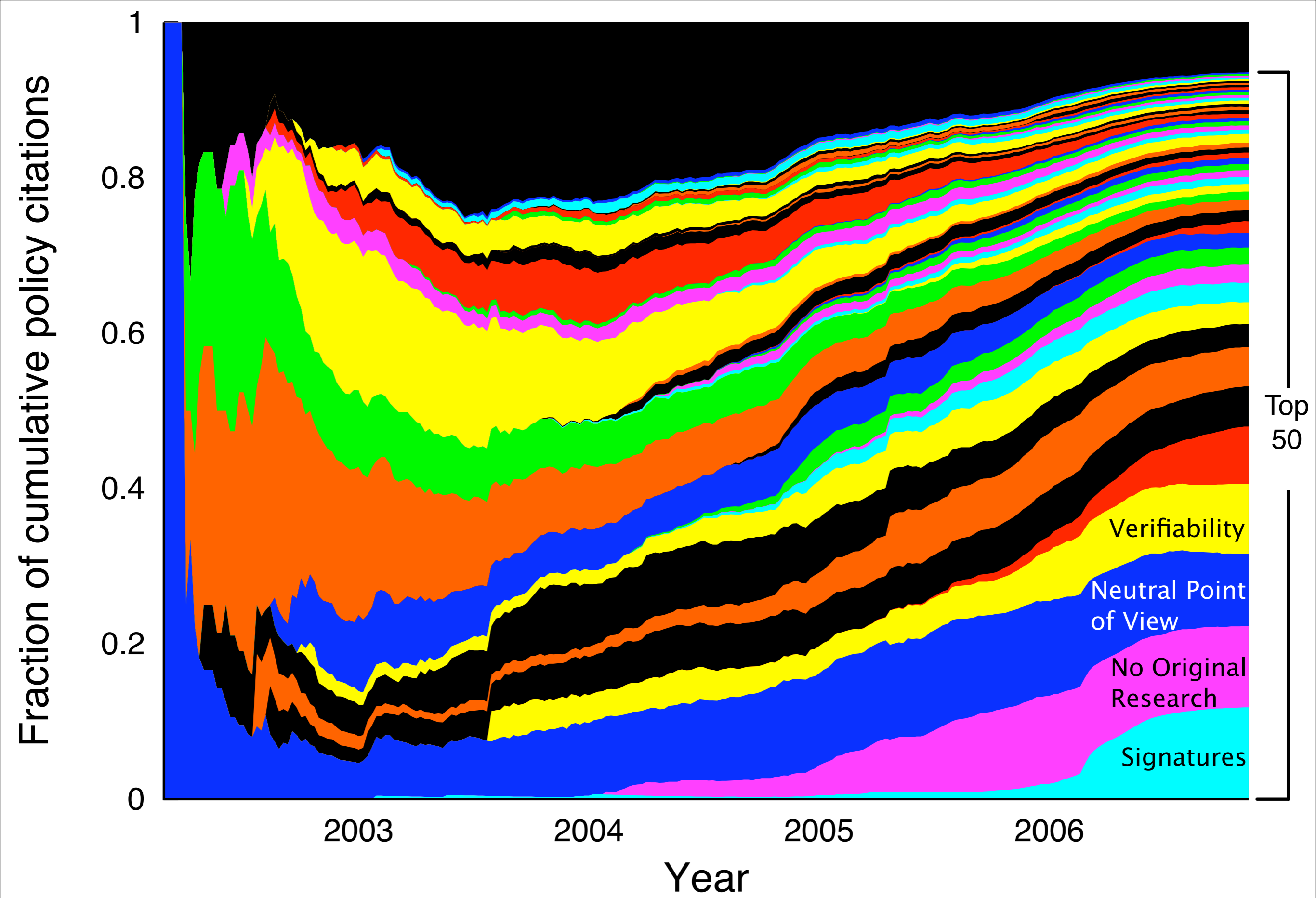
2006

Year

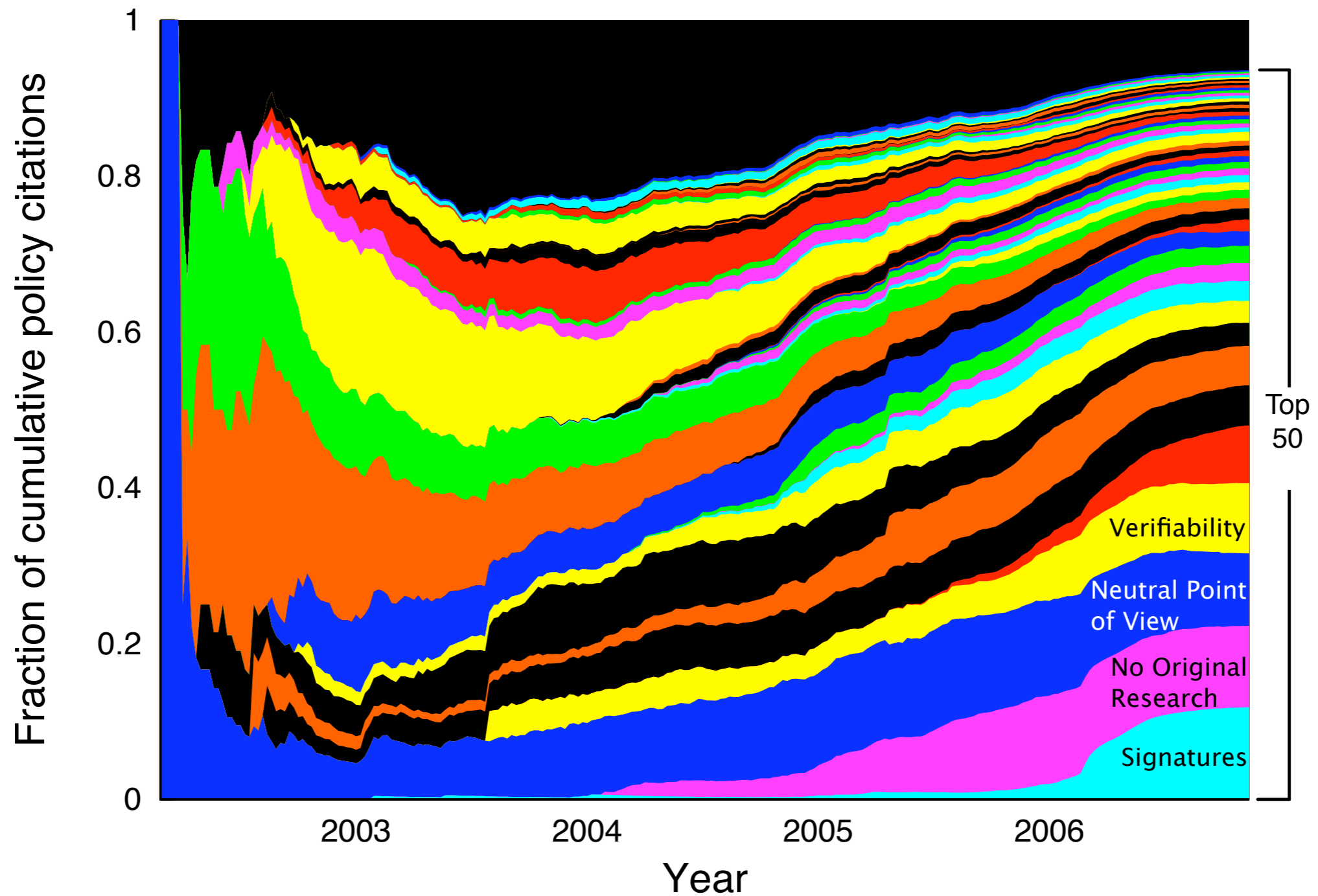
Verifiability
Neutral Point
of View
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Top
50





Investigation: identifying changes in practice



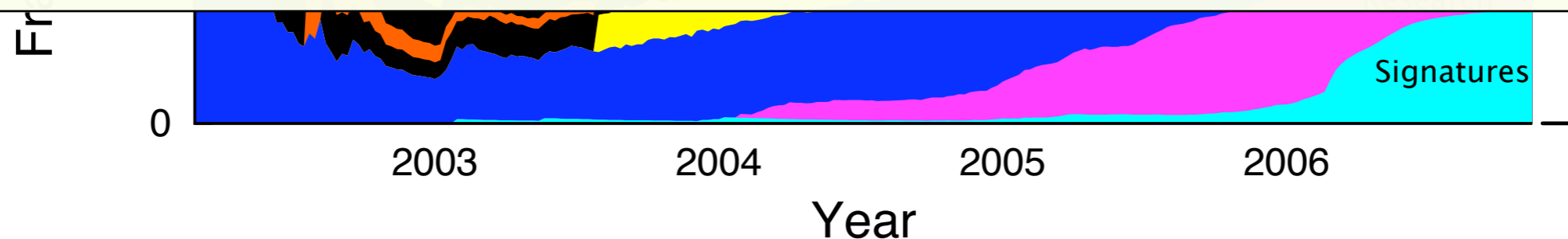
Investigation: identifying changes in practice

Apply **Grounded analysis**

- interpret policies from the perspective of the community
- classify policies by probable activity surrounding a citation

Method:

1. read all policies
2. generate a codebook capturing range of social activity
3. code all policies with the codebook



Investigation: identifying changes in practice

Code	Social signal
attribution	citing references
genre	defining Wikipedia
inclusion	deciding what content should be included
consensus	legitimacy of negotiation process
disposition	regarding user actions and intent
bias	neutrality of content presentation
legal	legality of content or user actions
writing style	grammar, language, organization

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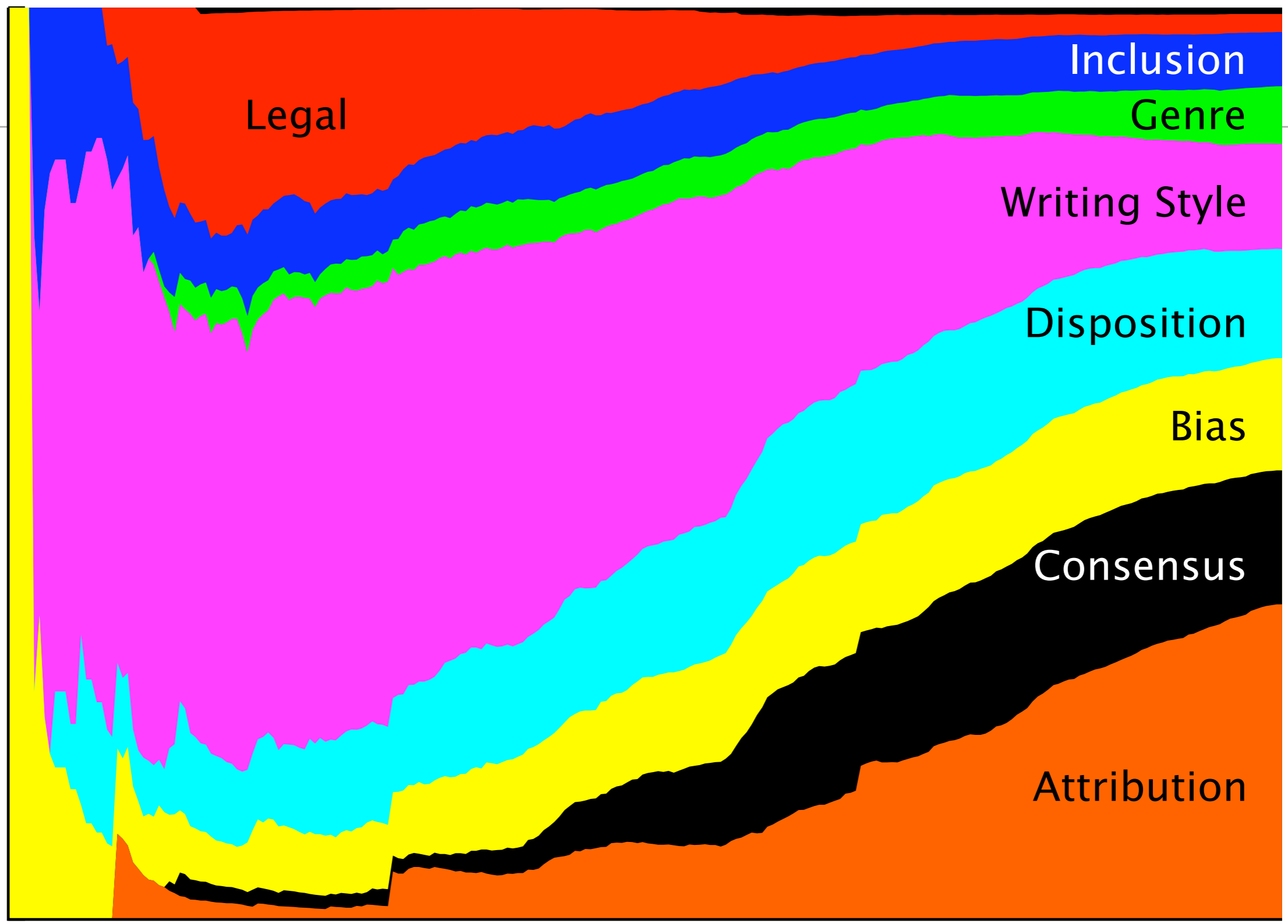
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Fraction of cumulative policy citations per code

1
0.8
0.6
0.4
0.2
0



2003

2004

2005

2006

Year

Legal

Inclusion

Genre

Writing Style

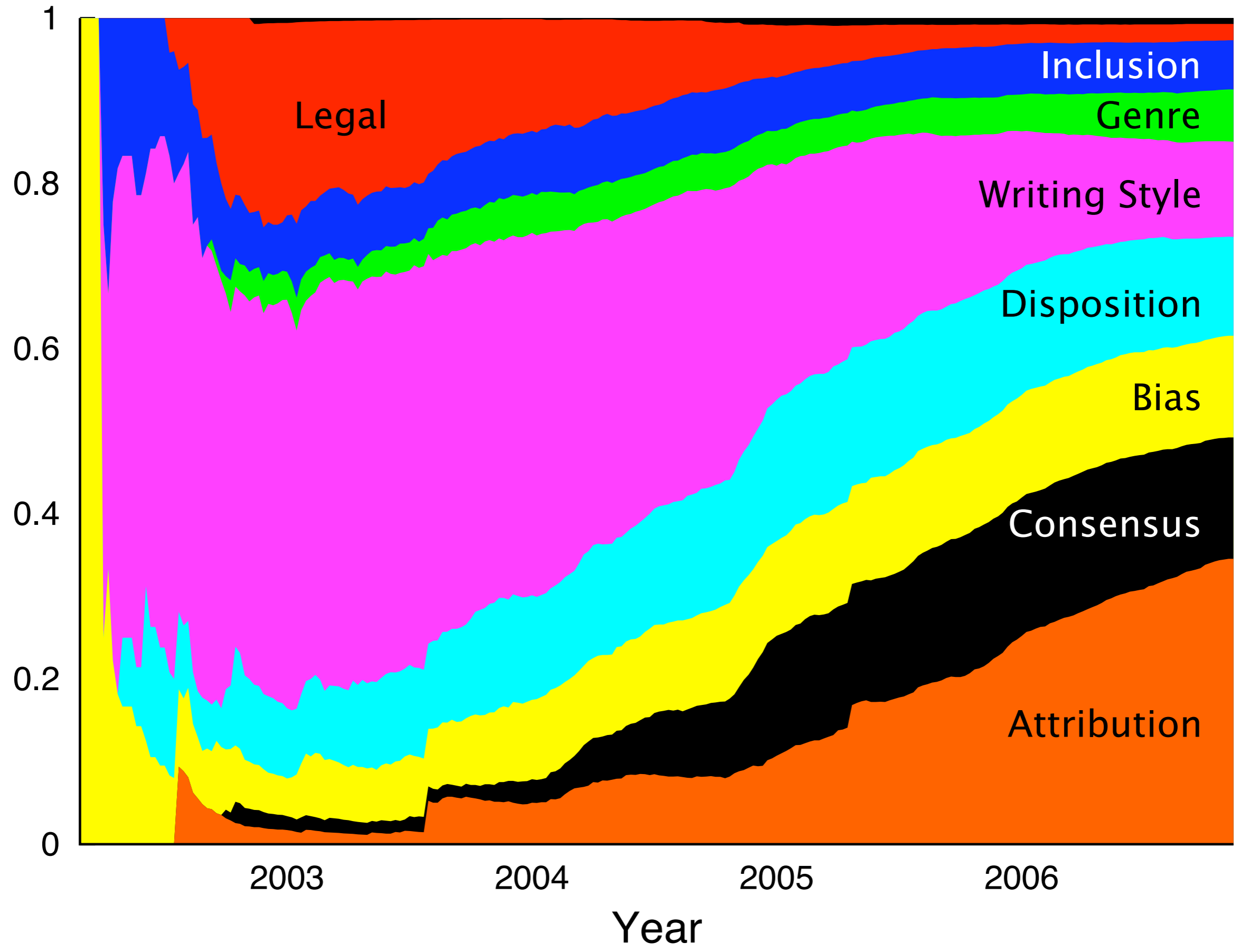
Disposition

Bias

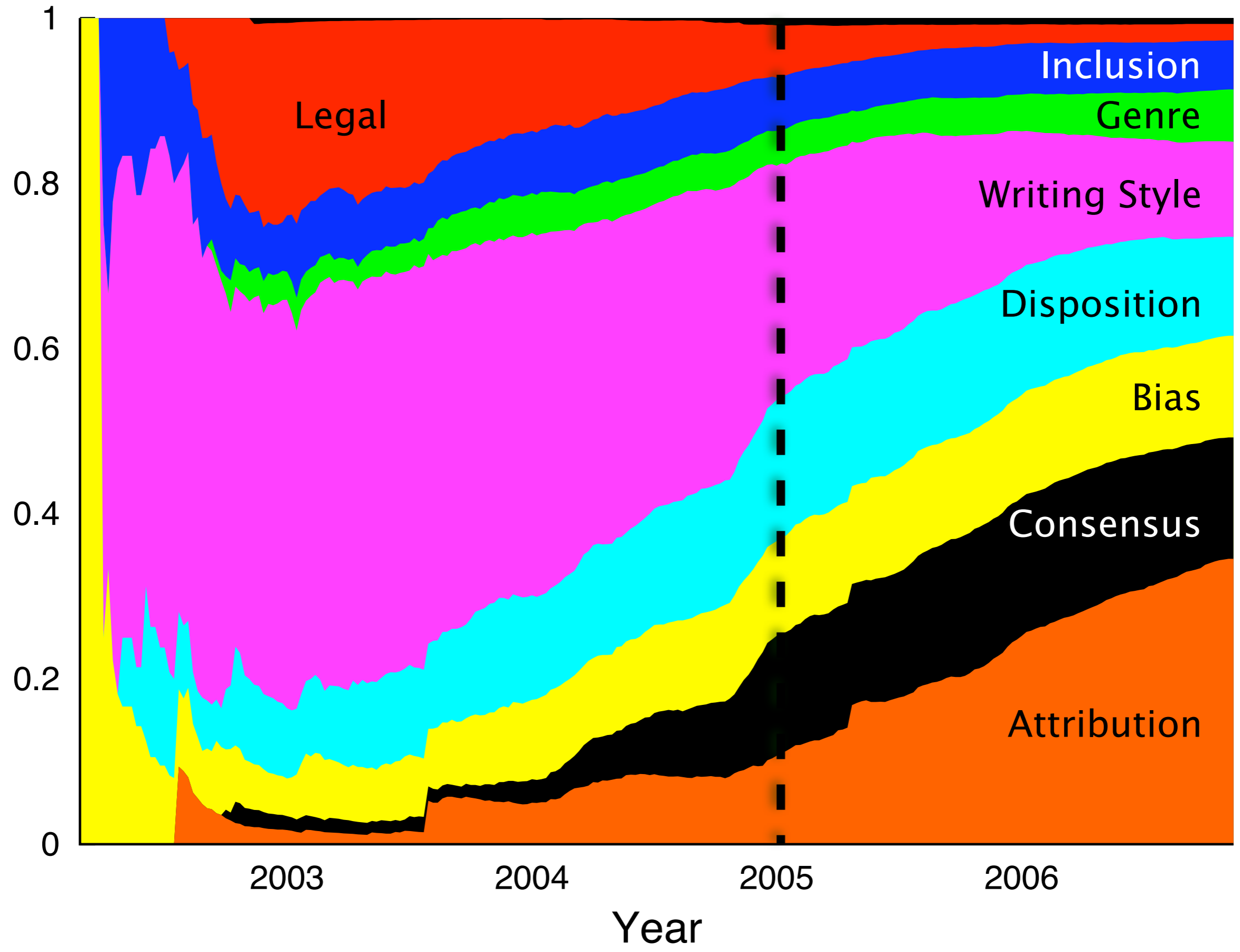
Consensus

Attribution

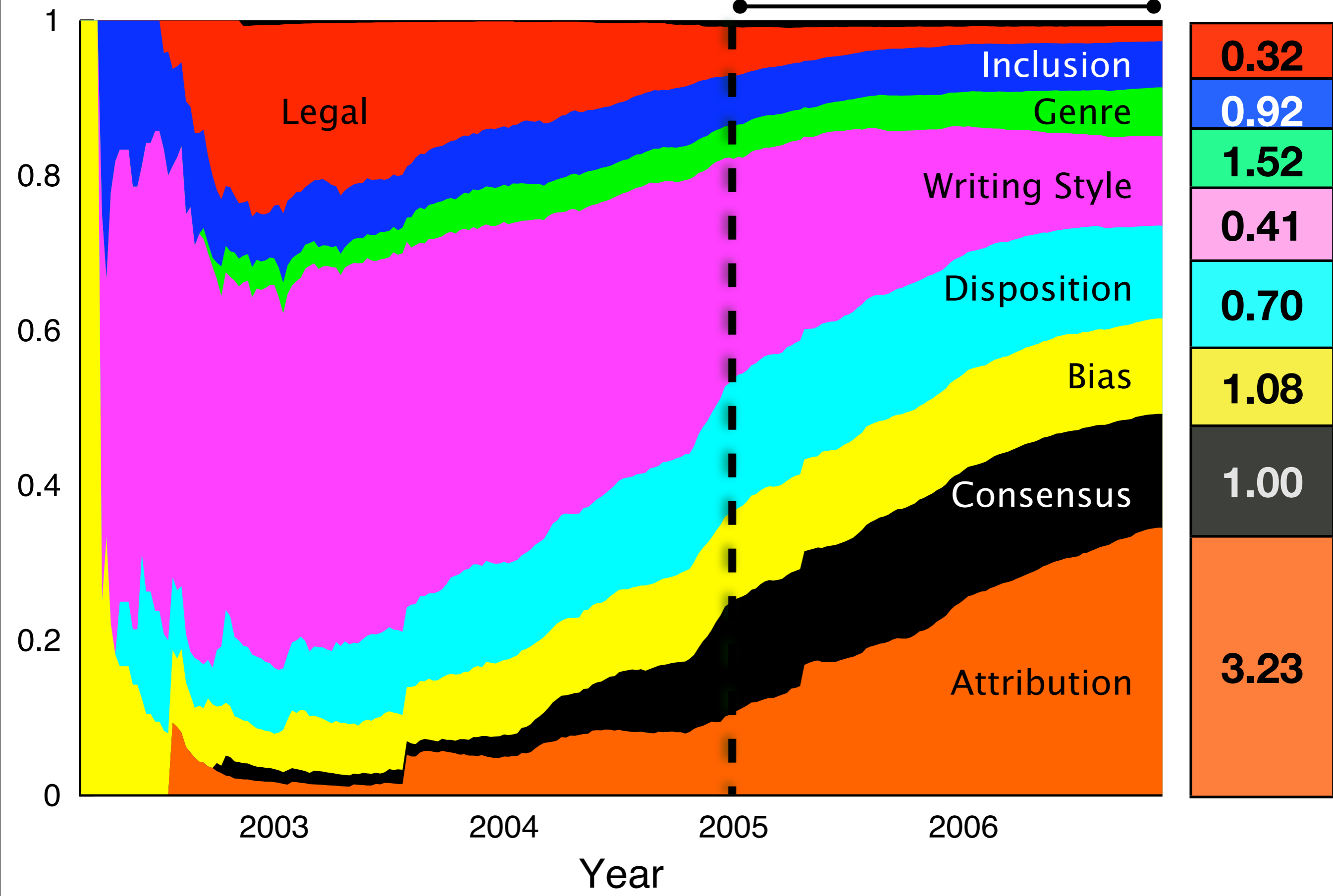
Fraction of cumulative policy citations per code



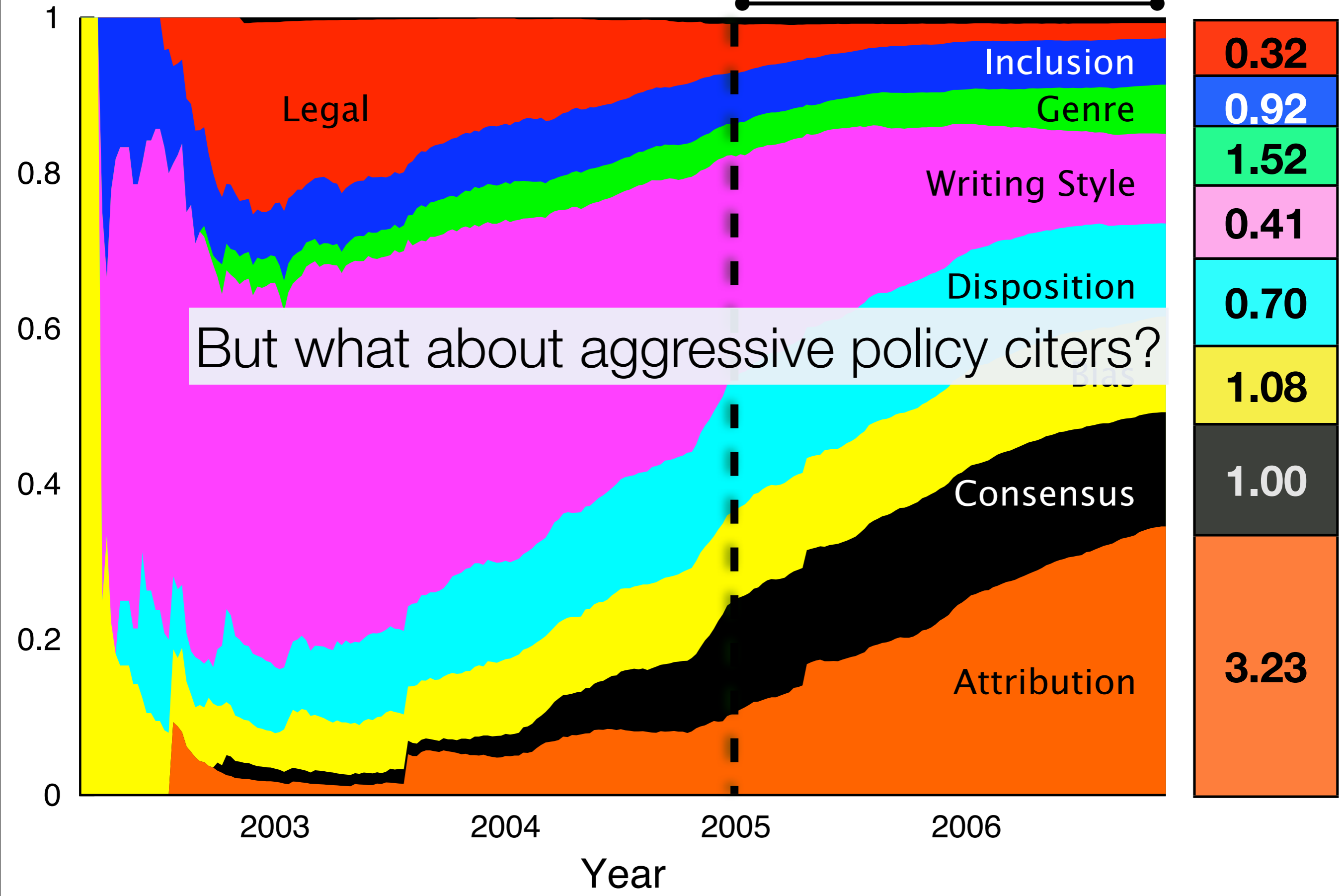
Fraction of cumulative policy citations per code



Factor increase of raw policy citations between 1/05 and 11/06

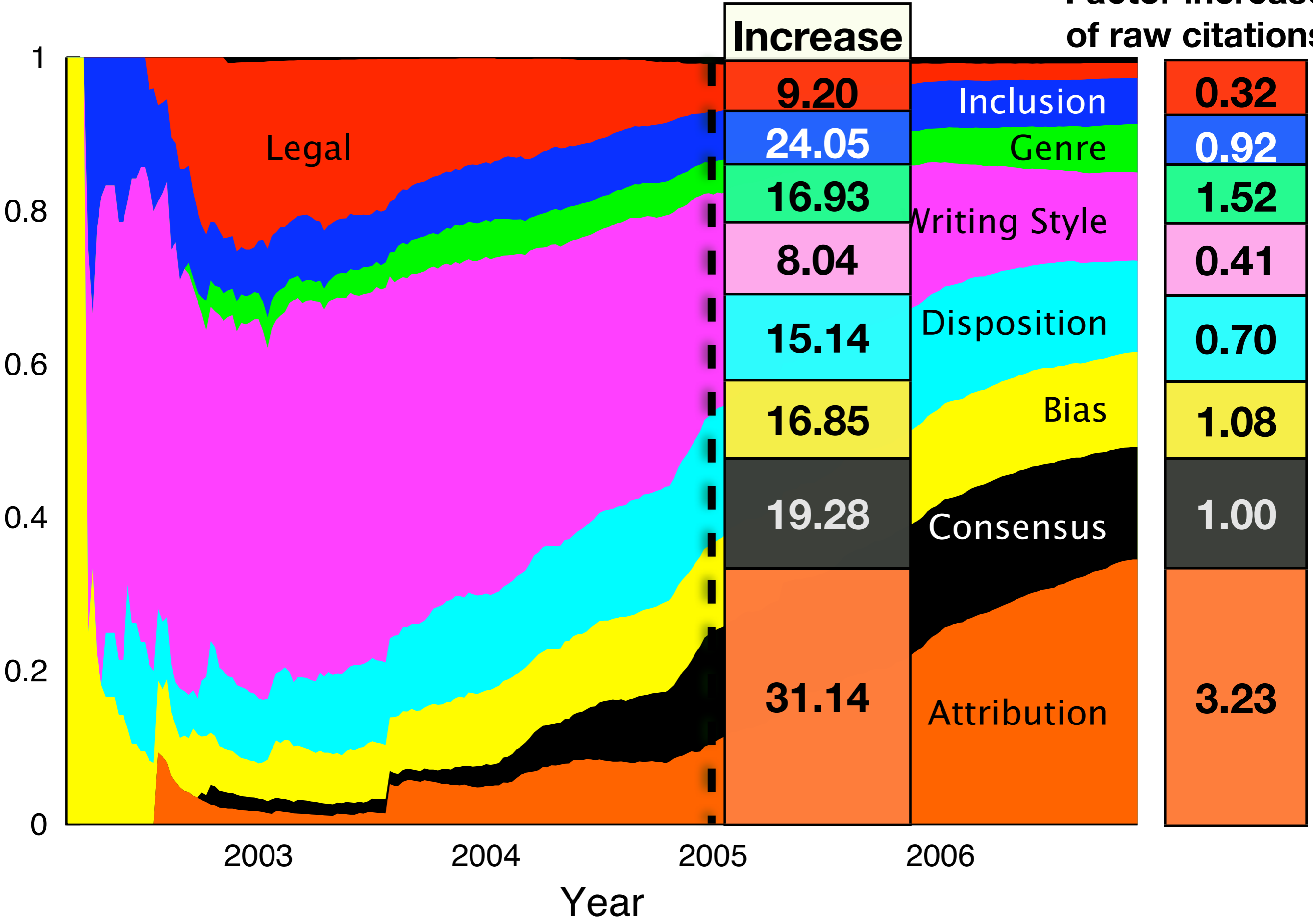


Factor increase of raw policy citations between 1/05 and 11/06



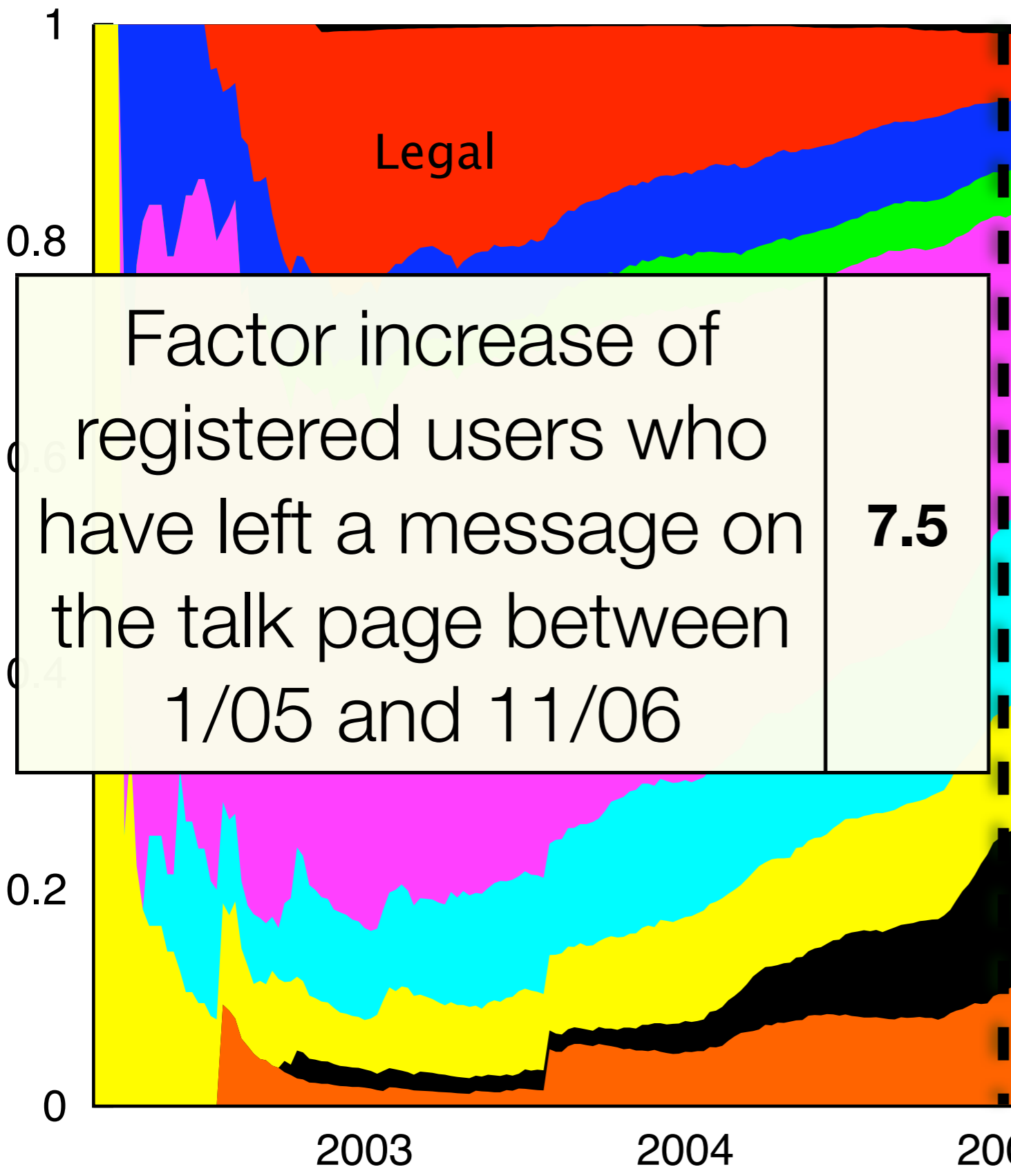
Unique citers to date

Factor increase
of raw citations



Unique citers to date

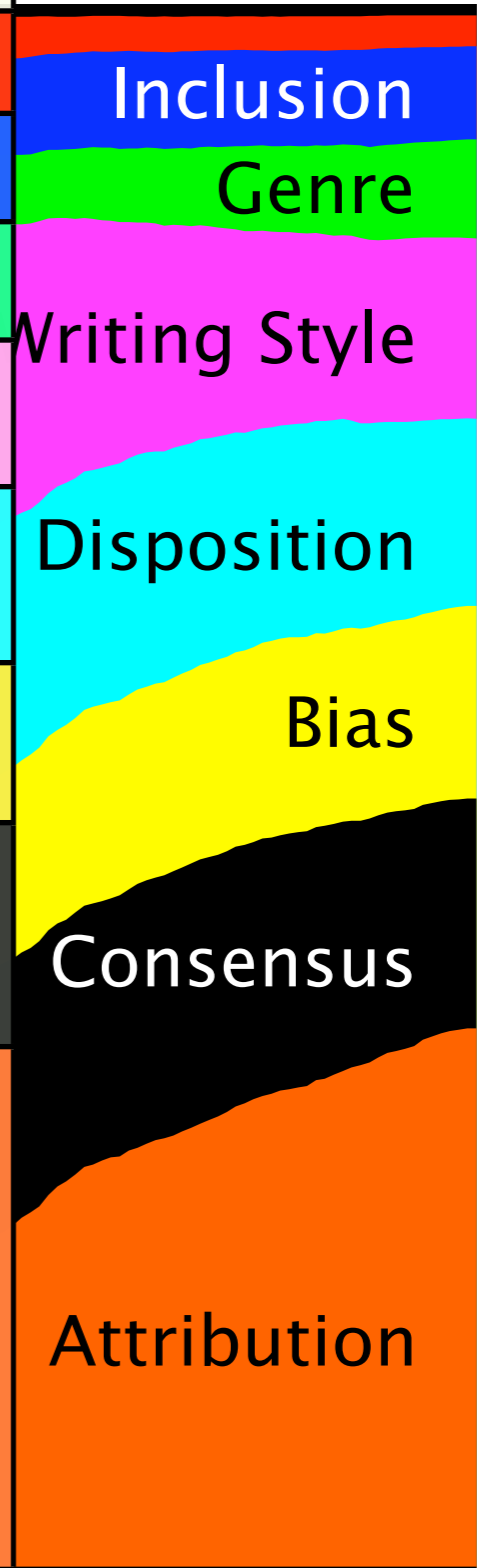
Factor increase of raw citations



Factor increase of registered users who have left a message on the talk page between 1/05 and 11/06

7.5

Increase
9.20
24.05
16.93
8.04
15.14
16.85
19.28
31.14



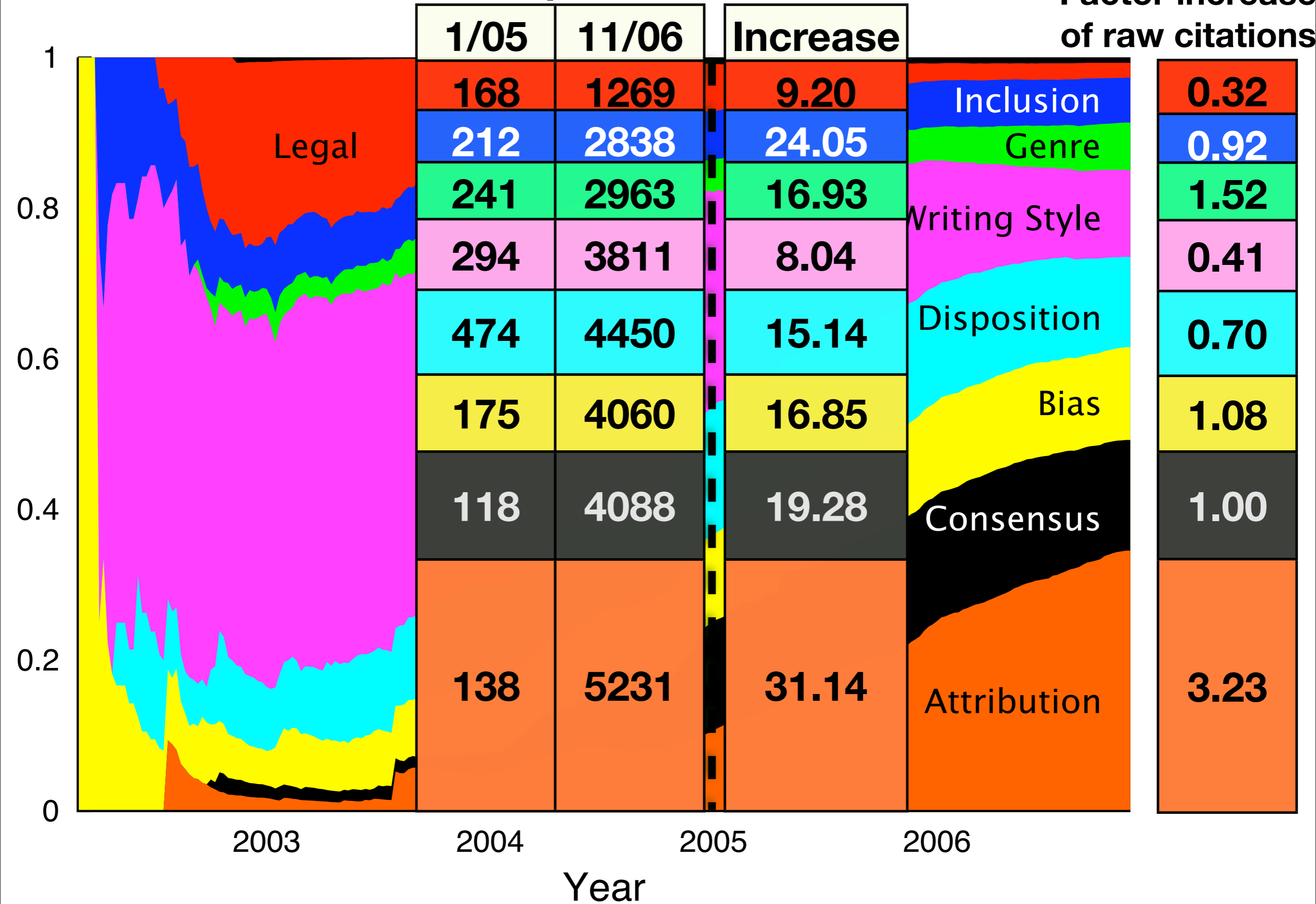
0.32
0.92
1.52
0.41
0.70
1.08
1.00
3.23

2003 2004 2005 2006

Year

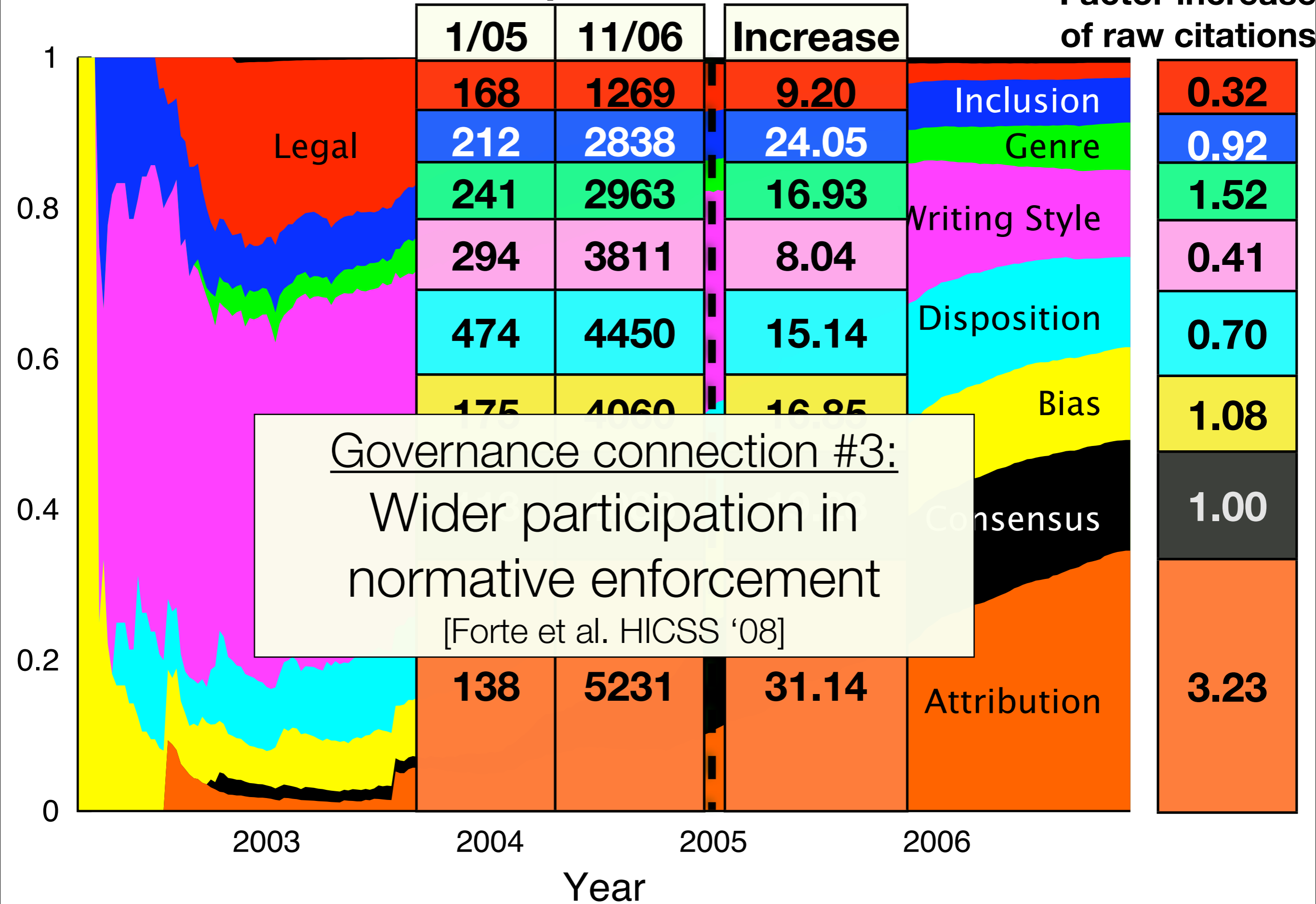
Unique citers to date

Factor increase
of raw citations



Unique citers to date

Factor increase of raw citations



Conclusions

- The arrangement of institutions structures of a community
 - protection against from malicious activity (*e.g. arbitration committee*)
 - content evaluation (*e.g. featured article process*)
 - dispute resolution (*e.g. requests for comment*)
- Quantitative research can bridge social structure & dynamics
 - how do institutions form, evolve, and dissolve?
 - however, need to examine socially meaningful activity...
- We profiled the use of Wikipedian *policy* by contributors
 - only scratches the surface
 - no predictive models, etc.

Research opportunities

- Interpreting data about an evolving practice
- Transplantability of policy environment to other communities
- Tracing activities across different social spaces
 - articles + talk pages
 - talk pages + user talk pages
 - policy usage + policy authoring



Ivan Beschastnikh



David W. McDonald

Travis Kriplean



Questions?

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