

*This report on the Stargazer controversy appeared on poliscirumors.com on February 6, 2014.*

Between July 31, 2006 and November 11, 2007, a Wikipedia user named "Stargazer3" created a new article about Morris P. Fiorina and made edits to nine other articles, including "Culture war," Hoover Institution, Niall Ferguson, and Theda Skocpol. On or about August 16, 2006, Stargazer3 also created an article about Samuel J. Abrams, but this was deleted as noted below. Edit of August 16, 2006 to Niall Ferguson added a line about his collaboration with Samuel J. Abrams on an article in the New Republic. Edit of August 17, 2006 to Culture war created a hotlink to the new article about Samuel J. Abrams. Two minutes later, an edit to Morris P. Fiorina also created a hotlink to the Samuel J. Abrams article. On August 18, 2006, the line mentioning Abrams in the Niall Ferguson article was hotlinked to the Abrams article. On August 27, 2006, an edit to the article for Jack M. Barrack Hebrew Academy (Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania) added "political columnist Samuel J. Abrams" to the famous alumni of the school and created a hotlink to the Abrams article. An edit of September 11, 2006 created a hotlink from the Culture war article to the Abrams page. An edit of June 8, 2007 by Wikipedia user 66.171.11.206 deleted Abrams from the famous alumni list at Barrack. (This is the only edit ever made to Wikipedia by that IP user. The IP address resolves as of 2014 to Eastex.net, a telephone company and Internet provider in Henderson, Texas.) An edit by Stargazer3 of November 11, 2007 restored Abrams to the list.

On March 20, 2009, a thread was created on the web site "Political Science Job Rumors" titled "Graduate Students Invited for Talks?" There were 41 posts, all anonymous. It is unclear how many people were posting. The thread soon centered on Samuel J. Abrams, who was accused of self-promotion. A poster in the thread noted that posts promoting Abrams on Wikipedia were made with the username "Stargazer3" and that Abrams listed first as his hobby in his online profile "star-gazing."

On March 21, 2009 from 04:22 to 04:37 (unclear what time zone this refers to), a user using the name "Stargazer" posted ten pages of web browser printout in three separate PDF files, titled "Abrams1.pdf," "Abrams2.pdf," and "Abrams3.pdf" to the website bluwiki.com. These printouts contained anonymous postings from the web site Political Science Job Rumors (PSJR) of the thread "Graduate Students Invited for Talks?" In the footer of each of the ten pages was the footer "C:\Documents and Settings\Powell\My Documents\PSJR\abrams1.htm" (or abrams2.htm or abrams3.htm).

At 06:27 that same day, a user using the IP address 63.22.149.240 created a Wiki page titled "Abrams" on bluwiki.com with links to the three PDF files prefaced by, "The following contains the three pages of investigation into the Stargazer3 and Sam Abrams episode on Political Science Job Rumors that occurred on March 20. " At 06:43, the same IP user replaced that line with content from the ten PDF pages. That IP address resolves to a UUnet address in greater Boston.

On the same day, between 16:09 and 16:15, user Stargazer replaced the three PDF files with a two-page PDF file of the curriculum vitae of Samuel Abrams.

At 21:09 on the same day, a user using the IP address 67.159.45.51 blanked the "Abrams" page on bluwiki.com. (On May 18, 2008 and July 19, 2009, a user from that IP address created a user page on Wikipedia.) That IP address resolves to FDCservers.net in Chicago as of 2014.

Moderators at PSJR soon started deleting the discussion of Stargazer3 and Samuel J. Abrams.

On March 26, 2009, the web site profile.blogspot.com began mirroring the discussion of Stargazer on PSJR in the URL <http://profile.blogspot.com/2004/06/body-background-colorblack-body.html>. This resulted in all of the ensuing discussion (over 3000 posts) being preserved on blogspot even as PSJR moderators were deleting the content from the original site.

On March 31, 2009, at 9:52 a.m., a post said, "Someone outed the Abrams attacker on PSJR." At 10:54 a.m., a poster first mentioned Ellie Powell. On April 1, 2009, at 6:46 p.m., a poster gave the link to the Bluwiki pages. At 6:01 p.m. the same day, a poster gave instructions for finding the "Powell" username in the footer of the deleted PDF pages on Bluwiki.

On April 16, 2009, between 5:01 and 5:07 UT, Wikipedia user Chill687 posted a series of messages to the Administrators' Noticeboard for Biographies of Living Persons at Wikipedia alleging that improper sources had maliciously been placed on the Samuel Abrams article on Wikipedia. The only contributions made to Wikipedia by Chill687 were on this day pertaining to the Samuel Abrams article. At 6:33 UT on that same day, Wikipedia user Elliep posted on the same noticeboard, "I added a reputable source, that is the newsletter of the [[American Political Science Association]], which is regularly published in the [[American Political Science Review]]. As this whole scandal started at the polisci board (which is semi-anonymous) I feel that a link and a reference is justified. In any case, the APSR should be reputable enough and the newsletter succinctly wraps the whole scandal up." At 07:01 UT on the same day, Wikipedia user Chill687 replied that the references that user Elliep supplied were not satisfactory. At 07:25 UT, Wikipedia user Steve DuFour tagged the Abrams article as non-notable. At 12:54 UT, user Elliep nominated the Samuel Abrams article for deletion from Wikipedia, stating, "Self-promotion by someone without any notability whatsoever. This guy is just a PhD candidate at Harvard without any significant publications. Even the book mentioned is not really his book as the main author is Morris P. Fiorina, and he was just a glorified research assistant. This article has been created by Samuel Abrams himself, a fact that has been widely discussed in the political science profession, as has his academic fraud where he misrepresented his academic credentials, claiming for example to be a professor at NYU, whereas in reality he still is a PhD candidate." Besides Elliep and Chill687, five other Wikipedia users voted in the deletion debate. All voted that the Abrams article be deleted. At 06:04 UT on April 23, 2009, Wikipedia administrator Nakon deleted the Samuel Abrams article.

At 12:55 UT on April 16, 2009, one minute after nominating the Abrams article for deletion from Wikipedia, user Elliep edited the Wikipedia article Morris P. Fiorina from "Morris P. Fiorina is an American political scientist and co-author of the book Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America with Samuel J Abrams (Harvard University) and Jeremy C. Pope (Brigham Young University)." to "Morris P. Fiorina is an American political scientist and co-author of the book Culture War? The Myth of a

Polarized America with Jeremy C. Pope (Brigham Young University), and with the help of the research assistant Samuel J Abrams." As of 2014, this line is still in the Morris P. Fiorina article.

All of the Wikipedia edits of user Elliep took place on that one date.

On April 28, 2009, between 17:59 and 18:21 UT, Wikipedia user Stargazer3 made three edits to the articles "Stephanie Pratt," "The Adventures of Tintin," and "FAO Schwarz." None of these edits touched on anything Stargazer3 had written about before. Since that time, there have been no edits on Wikipedia from Stargazer3.