

the **BEST** *of*
WIKIPEDIA'S
WORST WRITING

A globe composed of puzzle pieces, with a red banner across the middle. The banner contains the text "[CITATION NEEDED]".

[CITATION NEEDED]

by **CONOR LASTOWKA** &
JOSH FRUHLINGER

[Citation Needed]

The Best of Wikipedia's Worst Writing

Conor Lastowka and Josh Fruhlinger

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Copy-edited by Lauren Lastowka

Cover design by Jaime Robinson

ISBN # 978-1466346987

This book is dedicated to every person who wrote an entry that appears in it.

May your citations always be needed.

Introduction

Wikipedia. Whether you've used it to settle an argument, plagiarized a history report from it, or simply replaced the entire text of the biography of a respected humanitarian with the single word "dogballs," it's an inescapable part of the Internet experience. Since its launch in 2001, it has rapidly risen to become the seventh most popular website, with over 365 million readers (Source: Wikipedia). If you're like us, when you want to know the name of the kangaroo on Shirt Tales or just want to confirm that Mother Teresa was a dogballs who helped the farts (Source: Wikipedia), The Encyclopedia That Anyone Can Edit will probably be the first place you check.

But here's the thing about letting anybody edit your encyclopedia: it means that anybody can edit your encyclopedia. And while in theory this means that one day Stephen Hawking might decide to weigh in on the entry for string theory, in reality it means that somebody who deeply cares about pro wrestling is going to call someone else a Nazi when they revert his edits about Wrestlemania XI on Razor Ramon's page.

And so we arrive at a cosmic intersection, where an obscure topic of dubious relevance is written about by the type of weirdo who logs on to Wikipedia to write about obscure topics of dubious relevance. Were these authors re-watching their video of Wrestlemania XI instead of completing basic 8th grade English assignments? It's very likely. Does this

stop them from attempting to emulate the academic tone of the great encyclopedias of the past as they describe a large mammalian species from the Star Wars universe that shares a common ancestor with the Wookies? It does not. The result? Some really terrible Wikipedia writing.

For the past two years, we have collected this writing on our blog, [Citation Needed]. Fascinated and delighted by the brilliantly bad writing we encountered in our Wikipedia browsing, we set out to curate The Best of Wikipedia's Worst Writing. Starting the blog was a no-brainer; our only concern was whether, after a few months of our daily mining, the well of awful Wikipedia writing would eventually run dry.

By the time you read this, we will have published our thousandth entry. We started a podcast. Instead of drying up, the ocean of ineptitude has proven far more vast than we ever could have imagined. Through our own browsing, and with the help of a dedicated group of readers who are exploring the topics they submit for God knows what reason, we've continually lowered and re-lowered the bar for bad Wikipedia writing.

Now, let's get one thing straight: we love each and every entry written in this book. If you are one of the authors who have chosen to use your valuable time on this planet to write straight-faced exegeses on the subject of forgotten action

figures from the seventies, we hope you don't take offense. And if you do, we have an acceptable retort prepared for you: "You guys ran a blog about Wikipedia for two years, who the hell are you to talk?" Feel free to use it!

Others may criticize us for not doing our part to help Wikipedia become "better" by revising these passages. Nothing that does not involve electrodes near our genitals would make us more miserable. In our opinion, many of the passages in this book stand alone as works of art. Think of us as photographers preserving the memory of the great street art of the world before the joyless police come and whitewash over it. (Is that an official police responsibility? It seems beneath them. If it's not, but they're still forced to do it, that might explain the joylessness.) The point is, if you're moved to correct these entries, we're powerless to stop you. They've already given us joy, and we're just happy to have encountered them.

Enough introduction. Here are over two hundred of our favorite bad Wikipedia articles of all time. Comments in italics are ours. Everything else is a faithful reproduction of the way the entry stood at the moment we or our informants encountered it. We hope you will laugh, cry, maybe even learn something, and always remember to dogballs.

—Conor Lastowka & Josh Fruhlinger
citationneeded.tumblr.com

In barely one decade, Jimmy Wales has succeeded in establishing a worldwide network of knowledge. Wikipedia, his online encyclopaedia, accessible on the Internet for free, has become a symbol of a radical change in the media economy. Moreover, it revolutionized the access to knowledge as man's most important resource and thus contributed to democratizing knowledge.

**The Gottlieb Duttweiler Institute, awarding the 2011
Gottlieb Duttweiler Prize to Wikipedia founder
Jimmy Wales**

I saw the Beavis and Butt-Head episode that had Hogan's "Real American" music on there. I don't quite remembering it being critiqued by Beavis and Butt-Head. They sounded more like they liked the music and I don't really remember any criticism of it (except for when it was going, when Butt-Head said "homework sucks", but I'm not quite sure if he was referring to music or not).

Wikipedia discussion page for Hulk Hogan

Polybius (video game)

The Roach story contained a number of inconsistencies: some of it seems to be directly sourced from Wikipedia- all in all, an entirely untrustworthy source.

Want a Citation for this one? Please see the following 206 pages.

General Mills monster-themed breakfast cereals

Franken Berry was very popular when first introduced possibly because the initial batches of the cereal used a dye that didn't break down in the body, causing many children's feces to be bright pink, a symptom sometimes referred to as "Frankenberry Stool."

You can imagine the marketing team having their first meeting after the cereal's release. "We have good news and bad news. The good news is, your latest cereal is very, very popular. The bad news is, it's not in any way due to the character you came up with, the box design you slaved over, the costly ad campaign, or the hours you put in coming up with free toy ideas. Gentlemen, you should probably sit down...."

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/General_Mills_monster-themed_breakfast_cereals

Skiffle

Skiffle is often said to have developed from New Orleans jazz, but this has been disputed.

Because if your encyclopedia can't provide you with an unsourced claim that it admits is only one of several theories put forth about the subject, and then go on to inform you in the very same sentence that other unidentified parties disagree with that claim, then what the hell good is it?

House Party (film)

In 2001, Immature (now going by IMx) starred in a direct-to-video sequel, House Party 4: Down to the Last Minute, which does not feature Kid or Play. The film is not considered a part of the House Party canon amongst fans.^[citation needed]

“HP4: Coda or Mistake?” was by far the most contentious panel at HoPaCon 2009, with impassioned arguments echoing through the halls of the Kansas City International Airport Days Inn.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/House_Party_%28film%29

Inglewood, California

D.A.R.E. America has its headquarters in Inglewood. Despite this, in the 1996 rap hit “California Love”, Dr. Dre remarks that Inglewood is “always up to no good”.

So it would appear that, due to the presence of the anti- drug organization D.A.R.E. in Inglewood, there are in fact parts of Inglewood that are attempting to do good. Thus the claim that Inglewood is “always” up to no good can be assumed to be false, or at the very least a gross exaggeration. Also, many have speculated that the so-called “Doctor” Dre never actually received a PhD.

Tyler Perry

Another comical aspect is provided by Perry's 6'-5" stature, which is in no way diminished by his wearing a wig.

People who feel that Tyler Perry's 6'5" stature is severely diminished by his wearing a wig? The line in the sand has been drawn.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tyler_Perry

Bondage bed

It is possible to buy inflatable bondage beds; however, a question mark must remain over how effective they are.

*Do **not** attempt to affix your bondage partner to this question mark using chains and shackles! It is purely metaphorical!*

Count von Count

The Count bears a noticeable resemblance to Bela Lugosi as Count Dracula, including a similar accent and oversized, pointed canine teeth (better known as fangs, although Lugosi himself did not bear fangs in the 1931 film), but it would appear that he is different from other vampires, besides sporting a goatee and monocle. For example, most vampires wither in direct sunlight; the Count does not and in fact enjoys being outside. Additionally, the Count does not suck blood, or sleep in a coffin. He also sleeps at night. In many ways, he is more like a regular human than a vampire.

In fact, why did I even write this paragraph? Why am I editing this article in the first place? Where am I?

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Count_von_Count

Powers and abilities of Godzilla

Mechagodzilla's body was constructed of a nearly indestructible alloy known as "Space Titanium", was equipped with a staggering amount of firepower and had rockets for flight. Godzilla defeated it by pulling its head off.

"Blast, this space titanium is expensive! Is there anywhere we can substitute in regular titanium?"

"Hmm, how about the neck, that doesn't seem too important..."

The Terminator

The studio had suggested O. J. Simpson for the role of the Terminator, but Cameron did not feel that Simpson would be believable as a killer.

The true victim in the sad, sordid O.J. Simpson saga? James Cameron's credibility.

Love Is Like an Itching in My Heart

The lyrics tell of how the narrator has been “bitten by the love bug” and no matter what she does, she can’t “scratch it” (the itch created by the bite of the love bug).

Which she is attempting to unsuccessfully scratch, because it itches, because the love bug bit her.

Penn State DuBois

Some say and may agree that the education here resembles that of a High School. Specifically, a professor mentioned this school was not a challenging one. Most go to main campus for degrees and better job opportunities.

Penn State DuBois offers several degree programs, has a very high admittance rate, and in general, is very easy to get into if you have taken college preparatory courses, and tried the SAT. They accept people in the lower portions of their class more easily, which makes it a good school to go to if you weren't in the top 20 or 30 percent of your class, and need a shot at college.

The first paragraph says, "I'm bitter that I'm going to Penn State DuBois." The second says, "You know, maybe it's the right place for me." We hope that they were both written by the same person, someone who has finally found peace with, if not enthusiasm for, their alma mater.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Penn_State_DuBois

Number the Stars

King Christian X, He was the always strong until he surrendered to Germany and Hitler's troops moved in over night.

Needless to say, he always tried to steer conversation towards the "always strong" part of his legacy.

Keebler Company

The Keebler Elves are an important part of the Keebler business. The first elf was created obese, but that didn't go well with the press, so they made him an anorexic old man instead.

Other elves were Fryer Tuck (who promoted "Munch-ems"), Zoot and J.J. (known for Pizzarias), Ernie's mother Ma Keebler, young Elmer Keebler, Buckets (who threw fudge on the cookies), Fast Eddie (who wrapped the products), Sam (the peanut butter baker), Roger (the jeweler), Doc (the doctor and cookie maker), Zack (the fudge shoppe supervisor), Flo (the accountant), Leonardo (the artist), Elwood (who ran through the dough), Professor, Edison, Larry and Art.

Pundits who claim that the role of the fourth branch of government has been diminished and neutered conveniently overlook how viciously the press buried that first obese elf.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keebler_Company

Fuzzy Wuzzy

Fuzzy-Wuzzy can refer to:

Fuzzy Wuzzy (poem), a popular children's poem/tongue-twister in which a bear is thought to be fuzzy, but it turns out he's not

Directed by M. Night Shyamalan.

Dog Latin

Dog Latin is rarely put to a serious purpose.
[citation needed]

One can only imagine the scholar who, upon completing his two-decade-long labor of translating Proust's Remembrance of Things Past into Dog Latin, decides to relax by browsing Wikipedia. He stumbles across this entry. Reading and re-reading this sentence, his lip begins to quiver. Out of the corner of his eye, he notes the stack of papers that comprise his manuscript as he nervously fumbles with a lighter. Then his mom yells at him to go to bed; she doesn't care if he's fifty-three, in her house he will abide by her rules, dammit!

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dog_Latin

Friday (Rebecca Black song)

“Friday” co-writer Patrice Wilson explained that “I wrote the lyrics on a Thursday night going into a Friday. I was writing different songs all night and was like, ‘Wow, I’ve been up a long time and it’s Friday.’ And I was like, wow, it is Friday!”

This explains a lot.

The Wizard of Id

Rodney's nose used to be markedly larger—about twice the size of most other characters' noses—but in current strips his nose is about the same size as everyone else's, which dampens jokes about his nose.

We're all tired of our grandfather's stories of how it was in his day. Candy bars cost a nickel. The whole town had one phone that everyone had to share. Jokes about Sir Rodney's nose weren't dampened because it was markedly larger. We get it, Grandpa!!

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Wizard_of_Id

Wacky Races

Mickey acquires an ostrich and has to use it to win a race to pay off bills it has run up. In the race is Goofy with a cart which has panels in with an extendable boxing glove to hit people trying to pass and other surprises. Donald Duck is driving a horse drawn bath of water with sprayers. There is an Alaskan sledge with dogs, a vulture with a basket beneath it with a bear pilot, a cart pulled by a seal, a goat in a wheelchair, a goat pulling another cart, a kangaroo, and Mickey on an ostrich. The race is full of “dirty tricks” as contestants try to win the \$300 prize.

Lost in the oppressive wackiness is the depressing fact glossed over in the first sentence: an ostrich, crushed by debt, prostitutes itself into slavery to Mickey Mouse for the meager potential reward of just three hundred dollars.

Male lactation

Though boys and men have nipples, many are unaware that they also have mammary glands^[citation needed]

This claim was tested in an informal poll conducted on a New York City street corner. It proved that you will be beaten severely if you ask a bunch of random men whether they are aware that they have mammary glands.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Male_lactation

Terminology of homosexuality

Jizz Junkie^[citation needed]

Most find this term pejorative and prefer “semen enthusiast.”

Joanna of Castile

The early stages of Joanna and Philip's relationship were quite passionate, and the feeling was mutual. However, as time passed, the two began to realize how different their personalities were.^[citation needed] Philip was threatened by his wife's loyalty to all things Spanish - especially her parents' politics. Juana did not like the way Philip bossed her around, and his dishonesty bothered her above all.^[citation needed] Philip began looking to bed other women, which infuriated Joanna. She would throw temper tantrums over his fondness for other women.^[citation needed] One lady-in-waiting had her long hair shorn by Joanna herself after she discovered she had been bedded by her husband; Joanna deposited the beautiful tresses on Philip's pillow as a kind of warning. She also indulged in love potions and spells to keep her husband faithful.^[citation needed]

Eventually, Joanna replaced all of her ladies-in-waiting, because they were too pretty, with less attractive ones.^[citation needed] It was at this point that Joanna truly began to exhibit insanity.

She argued that Maladroit was Weezer's best album.

Moose milk

One Russian moose researcher had also previously tried to make moose cheese, but he stated that, due to the milk's high protein content, the cheese became hard far too quickly. He was not aware of any attempts to make moose ice cream.

The type of person who would attempt to make moose ice cream is not the type of person you want to offend by suggesting that nobody has ever attempted to make moose ice cream.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moose_milk

Wing Bowl

The event is known for an excessive number of intoxicated fans in attendance, an increasing number of women exposing themselves (above the waist and below), and an excessive amount of profanity from fans.

Many of the contestants in recent years were sponsored by local strip clubs and those clubs also add to the debauchery in the stands.

Local veterinarian, St. George Hunt, and brother of journalist Al Hunt, served as the “official veterinarian” of the event until his death in December 2008. Wing Bowl 2009 will be dedicated to his memory.

His widow wept at the touching dedication ceremony, before exposing herself (above the waist and below).

List of Star Wars species (K–O)

Barada M'Beg signed a treaty so that Klatooinians will be slaves of the Hutts forever. After defeating Xim, Klatooinians still serve the Hutts. Most of their children are named Barada to honor Barada M'Beg.^[citation needed]

A lot of people would say that the Klatooinians are idiots for honoring the man who signed the treaty making them slaves forever. However, consider this: there is truly no way to finish this sentence.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Star_Wars_species_\(K%E2%80%93O\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Star_Wars_species_(K%E2%80%93O))

List of common misconceptions

The claim that a duck's quack does not echo is false, although the echo may be difficult to hear for humans under some circumstances.

If you're drunk enough to be testing the claim that a duck's quack does not echo, the echo may be difficult to hear, due to drunkenness.

Suspense

Suspense could however be some small event in a person's life, such as a child anticipating an answer to a request they've made, e.g., "May I get the kitty?". Therefore, suspense comes in many different sizes, big and small.

Discussion question: How would it change the size of the suspense in this scenario if you knew that this child only wanted to get the kitty so that he could eat it?

Dingo

On 19 August 1980 a nine-week-old girl named Azaria Chamberlain was captured by a dingo near the Uluru and killed. Her mother was suspected and convicted of murder. Four years later she was released from prison when the jacket of the baby was found in a dingo den and the mother was therefore found innocent. This incident caused much outcry for and against the dingoes.

“We like the baby-eating, that’s awesome. But framing someone else for the crime? Not cool.”

List of Care Bear Cousins

Lotsa Heart Elephant

Some people argued that he is a female because of his pinkness and his voice. In Care Bears The Movie, Cozy Heart Penguin refers to Lotsa Heart Elephant as a female. Others argue that Lotsa Heart's gender could have been changed to a male in the later movies and television series.

However, nobody argues that these arguments are not a colossal waste of time.

Hushpuppy

They are a hearty, heavy food that can be eaten while active or mobile.

Yes, deep-fried balls of cornmeal: a noted “on-the-go” food. The sad thing is, the image of a runner crossing the finish line of the Boston Marathon, arms extended victoriously with a hushpuppy in each hand, used to be one of the most inspiring images in sports. But after Hollywood and Madison Avenue shoved it down our throats for the better part of two decades, it’s slowly become just another hackneyed cliché.

The Harlem Globetrotters on Gilligan's Island

The original script was going to be known as The Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders on Gilligan's Island, but was changed to have the Harlem Globetrotters star instead.^[citation needed]

The pillow fight scenes suffered immensely from the change.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Harlem_Globetrotters_on_Gilligan's_Island

Da Vinci's Notebook

Enormous Penis is often wrongly assumed to be a Frank Zappa song.

When it is, in fact, one of John Philip Sousa's most underrated works.

Punxsutawney Phil

During the rest of the year, Phil lives in the town library with his “wife” Phyllis.

The quotes indicate the sinful, never legally sanctioned (but oft-consummated) nature of Phil and Phyllis’s sham marriage.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Punxsutawney_Phil

Lew Zealand

His thrown fish are unique in that they return to him once thrown.

Something Katherine Hepburn's thrown fish could never quite get the hang of.

Animal Fancy

One theory for the term “fan”, for one who supports a sports team or any public figure, is that it is likewise derived from this use of “fancy”. Other theories exist, however, including the idea that fan is short for fanatic.

Consider too, the expression, “Well, fancy that.”

Are you still considering it? We didn't tell you that you could stop.

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III: The Manhattan Project

Despite the fact that the cover art features the Turtles fighting a Triceraton, no Triceratons appear in the game.

Directly contradicting the famous Chekov saying: "If on the game box you show the Turtles fighting a Triceraton, then in the game they should also be fighting a Triceraton. Also, what is a Triceraton?"

Codpiece

Codpieces figure prominently in the six Star Wars movies.

It's kind of sad really. Six movies made, millions of dollars spent, and all anyone remembers from them is "Weren't those the movies with the prominent codpieces?"

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Codpiece>

Chaps

Chaps are also popular in fetish fashion and the leather subculture, where they often are tightly fitted and worn without jeans or other garments layered beneath them other than a codpiece. They can be made of leather, patent leather, or vinyl and are worn for decoration serving no protective purpose. Worn in this manner, they are colloquially referred to as “assless” chaps.

Sadly, “assless” chaps do not figure prominently in the six Star Wars movies.

Catherine I of Russia

She died just two years after Peter, at age 43, in St. Petersburg, where she was buried at St. Peter and St. Paul Fortress. It is not known what caused her early demise. Though many postulate twenty years of relentless child bearing, hard drinking, venereal disease, and consumption took their toll on Russia's first sovereign empress.

Relentless child bearing, hard drinking, venereal disease, and consumption are four of the five events in the so-called "czarist pentathlon." (The fifth is of course anti-Semitism.)



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