

This is supplementary material for the webtext “Wikipedia as Editorial Microcosm” by Joshua DiCaglio et al., published in *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy*, 29(1), available at <http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/29.1/topoi/dicaglio-et-al/index.html>.

The Five Pillars of WIKIPEDIA

The “five pillars” are the basis on which Wikipedia functions. To help understand what Wikipedia is about, please spend some time [reading about the pillars](#) and accompanying clarification on Wikipedia. In this handout, we want to focus on how these five pillars produce particular issues for Wikipedia that need to be conceptualized for new editors working on wikipedia, particularly students thinking about intervening on the editorial flow and culture rather than focusing primarily on contributing new articles.

WP:NPOV is **not discussed** on this page, though it is a pillar of Wikipedia, because it has its own separate handout. (See [WP:NPOV handout](#)).

Policy Pages

[Five Pillars of Wikipedia Policy Page](#)

Major Issues

These five pillars are a bit unusual and lead to some particular challenges for this project (and editing more generally).

1) Consensus

Consensus is a big part of the Wikipedia editing community. No one editor owns a post, and therefore a consensus should be reached by the editors of an article before big changes are implemented.

In the example below, an editor removed a section about the native inhabitants of Western Massachusetts. Two other editors came in and decided that the section was important and should be kept. With that, a consensus was reached and the content was restored to the article.

Example: Western Massachusetts -- [before](#) and [after](#) + [talk page](#)

I agree with you both @Donner60: and @Auberginandjuice:, that this information is of historical importance, but my concern is that this sub-section is overbearing and takes up more of the article than necessary. My goal in removing some of the information was to create more of an overview. There's so much information, almost written like an essay, that I almost think it could be its own article. Nellybelly19 (talk) 06:49, 23 March 2020 (UTC) [reply]

I understand your concerns but this is ultimately not helpful to readers who read the Western Massachusetts article and are interested in having a reasonably broad overview of the history of the region. I think that WP:IMPROVEDONTREMOVE applies here. I do see that you rephrased parts of the article which discussed politics and contemporary attitudes in Western Mass and that was definitely an improvement. However, it would probably be best to reinstate that info on native inhabitants, and probably also the info on the Colonial and early Federal period. This did not seem overly essay-like and if parts were they would be better rephrased than not present at all. If you and @Donner60: agree, we might go ahead and reinclude those sections. Auberginandjuice (talk) 22:42, 23 March 2020 (UTC) [reply]

@Auberginandjuice: I agree. Donner60 (talk) 03:14, 24 March 2020 (UTC) [reply]

Since we seem to have a consensus, I am going to restore the info deleted by NellyBelly19 to the sections on Native Inhabitants and Colonial and early Federal period, with maybe a few minor copyedits to help with tone/wikilinking/etc. Auberginandjuice (talk) 21:18, 24 March 2020 (UTC) [reply]

2) Editing live -- you could be edited

Since Wikipedia is a dynamic editing community, there is a chance that you might be editing an article at the same time as another editor. It's always good to keep the other editor informed about what you plan to do/what you've done with the article, whether that's through the talk page or through edit summaries.

Example: Bassoon -- [Before](#) + [After](#)

- (cur | prev) ○ 22:46, 18 March 2019 **UnfoldingWords** (talk | contribs) . . (71,485 bytes) **(-2,118)** . . (*Moved Notable Bassoonists list to List of bassoonists. Added a link to the list in the "See Also" section.*) (undo | thank)
- (cur | prev) ○ 18:31, 12 March 2019 Ost316 (talk | contribs) **m** . . (73,603 bytes) **(-5)** . . (*WP:AWB cleanup, replaced: </ref>{{Better source|reason=per WP:CIRCULAR|date=March 2019}} → {{Better source|reason=per WP:CIRCULAR|date=March 2019}}</ref>*) (undo | thank) (Tag: AWB)
- (cur | prev) ○ 00:25, 7 March 2019 FrescoBot (talk | contribs) **m** . . (73,608 bytes) **(+31)** . . (*Bot: link syntax and minor changes*) (undo)
- (cur | prev) ○ 11:42, 6 March 2019 **Millstream3** (talk | contribs) **m** . . (73,577 bytes) **(-151)** . . (*→Twentieth century: Remove repertoire when composer is not notable/has no WP article*) (undo | thank)
- (cur | prev) ○ 11:41, 6 March 2019 Millstream3 (talk | contribs) **m** . . (73,728 bytes) **(-26)** . . (*→Currently active: Remove Alexandre Silvério, who has no article, therefore fails notability test*) (undo | thank)
- (cur | prev) ○ 17:03, 4 March 2019 **Sobatipep** (talk | contribs) . . (73,754 bytes) **(+23)** . . (*→Currently active: Added Bram van Sambeek*) (undo | thank)
- (cur | prev) ○ 15:06, 1 March 2019 **CLCStudent** (talk | contribs) **m** . . (73,731 bytes) **(-17)** . . (*Reverted edits by 38.140.165.238 (talk) to last version by UnfoldingWords*) (undo | thank) (Tag: Rollback)

Example: Coconut Milk – [Before](#) + [After](#) (student was editing alongside a very active Wikipedia editor -- Zefr)

3) WP:NOT

Wikipedia is an encyclopedia. The examples below violate the policy that details what Wikipedia is not. Wikipedia is not an information dump, a pet care guide or a how-to of any kind, or an advertising space.

Example: Havanese Dog (not a pet care guide) -- [Before](#) + [After](#)

Care

The profuse coat needs to be thoroughly combed at least twice per week. A Havanese with a dense or curly coat will be more prone to tangling and matting, thus requiring more frequent combing, than one with a silky, slightly wavy coat. If not showing the dog, it can be trimmed shorter to require less brushing. Many pet owners clip their dogs into a 1–2 inch long "puppy cut" for ease of maintenance.

If they go out in the snow, ice clumps will stick between their paw pads; just rinse off in warm water or buy booties. When owners give them a bath, they must make sure to dry them. Some in shorter clips can blot and air dry, but most will need to be blown dry. Owners can also comb their hair out after bathing so as not to dry in mats. Use high air but low heat to protect their sensitive skin. Hot air can damage the skin.

Example: Centaur (super long table) -- [Before](#) + [After](#)

This contained a very long table that was not appropriate for Wikipedia and was ultimately deleted

Example: Yahoo! Mail -- [Before](#) + [After](#)

This contained excess information that was ultimately promotional and had to be deleted.

4) [Be Bold](#)

Articles often won't change unless an editor comes in and makes some really bold edits. This can seem intimidating at first, but being bold is something any seasoned Wikipedia editor will tell you to do. These examples below showcase some really bold edits made that have really improved an article.

- i) Art and World War II (got rid of essay style, improved organization and tone, added images that related to the art mentioned, added tags) -- [Before](#) + [After](#)
- ii) Basic Life Support -- [Before](#) and [after](#)
- iii) Calvin (Calvin and Hobbes) -- page was redirected to/merged with just a *Calvin and Hobbes* article but the student basically cut a TON of content here and it worked -- [Before](#) + [After](#)

