

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>.

Media/Culture

All movies, books, television shows, music related articles (musicians, albums, individual songs) have pretty much the same structure, with only a few variations or additional pieces of info depending on the topic.

Policy and Community Pages

[WikiProject Popular Culture](#)

[WP: “In popular culture” content](#)

WikiProject:Film

Major Issues

1. How major events in media/culture affect editing in wikipedia

Some articles can sit untouched for a long time until some event comes along that spurs new editors to work on that page. The *It* (novel) article is a prime example of that. This article wasn't worked on very much until the most recent *It* movie adaptation was released which drove a lot of editors to this page.

Example: *It* (novel) -- [Before](#) + [After](#) - examine the Article History. The movie came out in 2017, with pre-release news circulating a little before. You can see when the editing really started to pick up at the end of 2016.

2. How fancruft can influence an article (continually adding to the plot/ character descriptions)

Fancruft can lead to a lot of issues within an article due to an editor's (or several editor's) increased interest in a topic, usually media and culture topics. Fancruft can be seen when there is an over-explanation of sections like the plot or character descriptions. It's also easily seen when an editor comes in and removes some of this excessive content, only for another editor to come back later and add it back (and sometimes add even more). The examples below have several issues regarding fancruft.

Example: [Clueless \[\(movie\)\]](#) -- ([Before](#) + [After](#)) This article had an excessive plot and a very detailed cast and character section. During the project, the student cut down all of that excess content about the characters and linked the “List of *Clueless* characters” article which greatly improved the article.

Cast

See also: *List of Clueless characters*

The film's central characters are:

- [Alicia Silverstone](#) as Cher Horowitz, a sweet but privileged [Valley Girl](#) type, though she actually lives in [Beverly Hills](#). Living in a mansion, waited on by servants, and flaunting her wealth with fashion, she's the undisputed queen of Bronson Alcott High School. Cher is tough and clever, like her father Mel. Cher convinces two of her teachers that each is a secret admirer of the other, negotiating her way from a C+ average to an A- average. Cher doesn't have a regular boyfriend: she describes finding a boyfriend in high school as "being as pointless as looking for meaning in a [Pauly Shore](#) movie." She is based on Jane Austen's character [Emma Woodhouse](#).
- [Stacey Dash](#) as Dionne Davenport, Cher's best friend. Like Cher, she is rich and beautiful, though caring. Cher uses Dionne as her number one fashion critic. Dionne and boyfriend Murray have an extremely tumultuous relationship and often quarrel. They have spats about Murray shaving his head and Dionne finding "cheap polyester hair" in the backseat of his car, but they also bond over Dionne's first driving experience on the freeway, inspiring a wistful admiration in Cher. She is based on the *Emma* character Isabella Knightley (née Woodhouse), who was her sister in the book but here is her best friend.
- [Brittany Murphy](#) as Tai Frasier, the [ugly duckling](#) transformed into the beautiful swan. Cher and Dionne decide to give Tai a makeover. With a change of hair, makeup and clothing, Tai gains confidence and a sense of style. Originally Tai fell for skater Travis, but Cher tried to set Tai up with "it boy" Elton to boost her popularity. After a "near-death experience" at the

Note: Cast sections are brief on Wiki. See the student's change in the “After.”

Example: [Jake the Dog](#) ([Before](#) + [After](#) + [Talk Page](#) + [Article History](#)) Take a look at the Talk Page and Article History here. This is an example of editors in the community preventing positive changes by believing that over-explanation of a character belongs on Wiki. The student removed most of this info, only for editors to revert this edit as well as argue on the talk page.

Jake is generally laid-back and tends not to worry about things. He's funny, loyal, supportive, friendly, good-hearted, easygoing, selfless, and plays like a loving big brother type for Finn. He relies heavily on his powers (or Finn) to get him out of any dangerous predicament. While he often cracks jokes at serious times, Jake always has a lecture or a song to cheers Finn up if he feels disheartened. Acting as Finn's world-wise mentor, Jake is always willing to give input and advice about a situation. Still, his suggestions are usually inconsistent, ranging from encouraging and helpful tips to ridiculous nonsense. He can be somewhat irresponsible, frequently leaving Finn to fight most of a battle on his own, but he always pulls through when he is needed most.

3. When there isn't an obvious/easy fix for an article's organization.

(In this case, the article subject has several different variations of the plot -- how does one organize that?)

Some media and culture articles might have special circumstances that make their organization more complex and difficult. In the example below, the Sleeping Beauty article was especially difficult to organize in the typical format that media and culture articles usually take on. This was because the Sleeping Beauty story has several variations, and therefore a larger issue about how to organize those variations arose. This is a complex issue that an editor should approach the community about in the article talk page.

Example: Sleeping Beauty -- ([Before](#) + [After](#) + [Current](#)) You can see where the difficulty may lay in attempting to organize this article cohesively by examining the Before and After table of contents, respectively.

Contents [hide]
1 Perrault's narrative
1.1 Part one
1.2 Part two
2 Basile's narrative
3 Sources
4 Variants
5 Myth themes
6 Media
6.1 In film and television
6.2 In literature
6.3 In music
6.4 In video games
6.5 In other
6.6 In art
7 See also
8 References
9 External links

Contents [hide]
1 Plot
2 Origination
3 Variants
3.1 Basile's narrative
3.2 Perrault's narrative
3.3 Grimm Brothers' version
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4 Interpretations
5 Media
5.1 In film and television
5.2 In literature
5.3 In music
5.4 In video games
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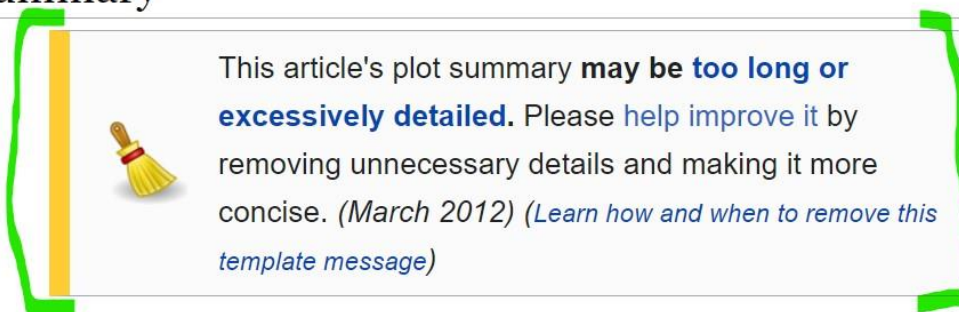
4. The problem with Plot summaries

A major issue that arises with media and culture articles is the excessively long plot summaries. This is usually identified with the WP:PLOTSUM or WP:MOVIEPLOTS tag at the top of an article/section. This is typically a product of fancruft and a big issue when it comes to edit warring. Some editors can come into an article and remove some content only for an active editor on the page to revert that edit (or add even more to it) which leads to a lot of back and forth on the revision history.

The best way to approach this would be to cite the Wikipedia Policies the excessive plot violates in the edit summary before deleting content -- and it wouldn't be a bad idea to address the subject in the talk page as well.

Example: [Inkspell](#) ([Before](#) + [After](#)) This article has an excessive plot summary section (not completely captured by screenshot) that went into far too much detail and needed to be trimmed. At the top of the section, you can see the WP:PLOTSUM tag.

Plot summary



A year has passed, and Meggie now lives with Elinor, Darius and her parents, Mo and Resa. Life is peaceful, but not a day goes by without Meggie thinking of *Inkheart* and the characters that came to life. For the fire-eater Dustfinger, the need to return to his homeworld has become urgent. When he finds a crooked storyteller named Orpheus who has the ability to read and write stories to life like Mo, he asks him to read him back. Orpheus obliges, but doesn't send Dustfinger's apprentice, Farid, back into the book as they arranged; he then steals the book from the boy and hands it over to Basta, who wants revenge for the death of his master Capricorn. Dustfinger, now in the Inkworld, regrets the fact that Farid didn't come back with him but doesn't suspect that Orpheus intended it that way. Distraught, Farid goes in search of Meggie, and before long, both are caught inside the book, too.