

Editing Journalists Biographies on Wikipedia

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Journalists Biographies

There are several basic concepts that should be understood when editing biographies about journalists on Wikipedia. If you understand these concepts, you will be able to successfully contribute to articles that meet Wikipedia's policies*. They are:

- Notability
- Verifiability
- Reliable Sources
- Sources
- Neutral Point of View
- Privacy

Other important areas to know about when editing biographies about journalists include:

- Editing articles about yourself and those you know
- Pictures
- Alt Text
- Info boxes

*Other editors will be less likely to delete your articles, undo your contributions, or block you from editing.

Notability

For an article to stay on Wikipedia, the subject of the article must be notable. That is, there must be significant coverage about the subject, and there need to be reliable secondary and tertiary sources that were not created by the subject of the article. For biographies about journalists, the general rule is a person is notable if they are covered under the general notability guidelines found at <http://enwp.org/WP:GNG>

Wikipedia has additional guidelines for notability based on a person's achievements and can be found on <http://enwp.org/WP:BIO> . These guidelines help articles where notability is in question or on the border. Journalist notability can be proven using them if the journalist has won a major award like a Pulitzer, are an important figure who has been widely cited by their peers, have been the subject of a book or movie, or have a large fanbase. Google hits or traffic to a journalist's website do not confer notability.

When trying to prove notability for a journalist, do not rely on sources like Reporters Without Borders. They can be used as sources within an article, but will not count towards establishing a journalist's notability.

Verifiability

One of the challenges of writing about journalists as contributors, we often know facts about journalists because we have read their reporting or seen them on television. We attended events that they spoke at. We may have met the person. It would be very easy to put this information into Wikipedia to improve an article, because we know these things to be true. The problem is Wikipedia does not allow this. All facts on Wikipedia about living people must be **verifiable**. If you are including information on a biography, you need to find a reliable source that says it. As <http://enwp.org/WP:V> says, Wikipedia is not so much concerned with the truth as it is with the idea that readers be able to verify that information on Wikipedia is true.

If you repeatedly put unsourced information on biographies, you will probably be blocked from Wikipedia.

Reliable Sources

How do you prove that something is verifiable? First, you find a reliable source that contains the fact. Reliable sources are generally considered to include newspapers, magazines, annual reports, sporting organisation websites, books, peer reviewed journals, blogs run by news organisations, and other sources that have a reputation for being accurate.

Social media and other sites like Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Wikia, Tumblr and Foursquare, personal athlete websites are generally not considered to be reliable sources.

To discuss the reliability of a specific source for a particular statement, consult the reliable sources noticeboard, which seeks to apply this policy to particular cases. For a guideline discussing the reliability of particular types of sources, see <http://enwp.org/WP:IRS>

Sources

For journalist related articles, there are several good places to find sources. They include the:

- Reporters Without Borders - <http://en.rsf.org/>
- Pew Research Center - <http://www.journalism.org/>


Once you have found source, the next step is to include the source/citation in the article immediately following the text the source supports. To do this, you need to format the citation. If you do not have experience doing formal citations, the easiest way to do this is to use the form at <http://toolserver.org/~magnus/makeref.php> .


Sources

Chose the type of material, and fill in as many fields as you can: You are not expected to fill in everything. The most important ones are author or publisher, title, and url. If you can include the date the material was published, that is also helpful but not required as many websites do not include this information. The important thing is to include as enough information so another person can find the material with out you.

After you have completed the form, click on the "Get reference wiki text" button in the left hand column. Follow the directions on the new page that appears. A screencap of the form and the completed text is on the following page.

Sources

← →  http://toolserver.org/~magnus/makeref.php

 SUPPORT WIKIPEDIA

This is one of [Magnus' toys](#). Get the source of this script (SVN: [bro](#))
[Bug reports and feature requests](#)

Reference generator

NOTE: You can change or expand the options of this tool by editing [this wiki page](#)

<input type="radio"/> News	Field	Value	Example
<input type="radio"/> A journal paper / periodical article	Reference ID		Reuters 2006-07-21
<input type="radio"/> A conference report or paper	URL	http://paralympic.org.au	http://www.dotcom.com
<input checked="" type="radio"/> An arbitrary website	Page title	Bill wants to go to Rio	The Last Page of the Internet
<input type="radio"/> A book	Date you reviewed the source	15 September 2011	2006-12-30
<input type="radio"/> An entry in an encyclopedia	Author's first name		John
<input type="radio"/> Cite court	Author's last name		Smith
<input type="button" value="Get reference wiki text"/>	Coauthors (if any)		Mary Black, Joel Stein
	Work (newspaper name, etc.)	Triathlon Australia	The London Times
	Publisher	Paralympic Committee	[[Wikimedia Foundation]]
	Date	14 September 2011	1967-12-30
	Format (if not HTML)		PDF
	Language (if not English)		German
	Translated title (if not English)		The Last Page of the Internet
	URL of archived copy of page (i.e. at the Internet Archive)		http://web.archive.org/web/20080612153148/www.dotcom/
	Data page was archived		2008-06-12

Reference wiki code for : An arbitrary website

Paste the following code where the reference marker (e.g., ¹) should be:

```
<ref>{{cite web | url = http://paralympic.org.au/news/bill-wants-go-rio-after-paratriathlon-gold | title = Bill wants to go to Rio after Paratriathlon Gold | accessdate = 15 September 2011 | date = 14 September 2011 | work = Triathlon Australia | publisher = Australian Paralympic Committee | quote = Gold Coaster Bill Chaffey has won Australia's first gold medal at the ITU Triathlon World Championships in Beijing, reclaiming his Paratriathlon title in inspiring fashion.}}</ref>
```

References are an important part of Wikipedia. They make your information verifiable, and give the article credibility. Continually supporting your article contributions by adding sources will make you a valued contributor.

Neutral Point of View

Neutrality is an important concept when writing articles on Wikipedia. Articles should be factual, free of bias, and intended to educate. This can be hard to do when writing biographies because you may know the person or you may be a fan of the journalist. Conversely, you may not like them or you may know less than flattering information about them. How do you write a neutral, unbiased article? Follow the tips in the list below:

- Avoid stating opinions as facts. Example: Do not state that a journalist is the best at their job amongst all journalists.
- Use reputable sources when adding sources to an article. Example: Do not cite blogs and message boards when discussing the quality of an journalist's reporting.
- Consider your word selection. Avoid adjectives that intend to make some one look really bad or really good. Avoid euphemisms and clichés because they can be inaccurate, or convey an opinion.
- If you are need to include an opinion, attribute the source of the opinion. Example: According to the Washington Post, Ted Koppel was responsible for ABC's low ratings for Nightline

If you include information that is biased, your edits may be reverted or deleted. Try to use a neutral point of view.

Privacy

Privacy is a big concern for many individuals. Wikipedia's Biography of Living Person policy found at <http://enwp.org/WP:BLP> explains some of the policies around privacy. Some general rules of thumb regarding what private information that should not be included in Wikipedia articles include:

- Do not include information you have been told or have witnessed unless it has been widely reported. If a journalist has not the information with a verifiable source, do not share.
- Do not include information about people who are not notable. For example, if a journalist has several children, you can mention them by name but do not include other details like birth dates and where they go to school.
- Do not include phone numbers, addresses, tax filing numbers and other personal information in the article.

The best way to avoid privacy violations are to avoid adding information unless you have a source, avoid using primary sources, and if in doubt, leave it out.

Yourself and Those You Know

Writing about yourself on Wikipedia can be tricky. Many Wikipedians consider it a Conflict of Interest (COI) and something that should not be done, even though there is no formal policy against it. If you still want to edit an article about yourself, there are several things to remember:

- You need to write in the third person;
- You need to write from a neutral point of view; and
- You still need to cite verifiable sources!

If you are considering writing about yourself, first include your real name on your user page before you start editing, so you have properly disclosed any potential conflict of interest.

When editing an article about yourself or those you know, you are allowed to remove any unsourced or improperly sourced material, and any material that clearly violates your privacy. When removing this information, include a description of what you are doing in the edit summary box. For example : Removing content that violates Biography of Living People guidelines.

Yourself and Those You Know

If you remove this material and it gets put back in an article, do not edit the article again. This may get you in trouble. Rather, use the talk page of the article to resolve the problem. You may chose instead to put **`{{adminhelp}}`** on your own user talk page, along with a link to the article, and an explanation of the problem you have with the article. An administrator should visit your talk page and try to help you resolve the problem.

Pictures

Pictures can really help improve an article. They can show athletes competing, getting medals and generally give a better sense as to who a person is. Where possible, Wikipedia encourages people to add pictures to articles. There are two places to find images to put on Wikipedia: On Wikipedia itself and Wikimedia Commons. Images can be found on these sites by searching for a person's name or news organisation. They can also be found by navigating categories.

On Wikipedia, photos of journalists often be found by looking on articles about other journalists. Most photos of journalists on Wikipedia are not categorised.

On Commons, sport images can be found by starting at <http://c.enwp.org/Category:Journalists>

Commons has a much larger collection and it is worth starting there.

Pictures

Once you find an image you want to include, it can be put in the article using the following format:

[[File:FILE NAME|thumb|alt=TEXT DESCRIPTION FOR THOSE WITH SCREEN READERS|DESCRIPTION|right]]

An example: [[File:Vladimir Putin with Matt Lauer.jpg|thumb|right|Lauer with [[President of Russia|President]] [[Vladimir Putin]] prior to the [[32nd G8 summit]] in [[Saint Petersburg]].|alt=Two men shaking hands]]

Thumb means the image will appear smaller. Right means the image will align to the right. This can be changed to left or center, depending on your preference. The above example code would appear on Wikipedia like image to the right.



You can also upload your own pictures to Commons. More information about that can be found at http://c.enwp.org/Commons:First_steps/Upload_form

Alt Text

Pictures have an option to allow you to include text for the visually impaired. It can be included by putting “alt” in the image. For example: `[[File:77 ACPS Atlanta 1996 Basketball Nick Morris.jpg|thumb|alt=A wheelchair basketball player pumps his fist in the air]]`

The image would appear like the one to the right. While it may not have a description below it, a screen reader would tell a person that the image is of a wheelchair basketball player pumping his fist in the air.


The alt text should consist of plain text and be all on one line. It should complement rather than duplicate the caption, describing the picture. Alt text should help people understand why the image was included in the article.



More information is at <http://enwp.org/WP:ALT>
Additional information on making your article more accessible to people with disabilities can be found at <http://enwp.org/MOS:ACCESS>

Info Boxes

Info boxes are tables that are placed in the upper right hand corner of articles. They are a way to easily convey information. When writing an article about a journalist, you should consider including one like the example below. The code is on the left and how that is rendered on the right.

```
B I  Advanced Special characters Help Cite  
{{Infobox journalist  
| name           = Ted Koppel  
| image= Tedkoppelpic.jpg  
| caption       = Ted Koppel in 2008  
| birthname    = Edward James Koppel  
| birth_date   = {{birthdate and age|1940|02|08|m=y}}  
| birth_place  = [[Nelson, Lancashire]], England, United Kingdom| age  
| occupation   = [[Journalist]]<br />[[News anchor]]  
| years_active = 1963–present  
| spouse      = [[Grace Anne Dorney Koppel|Grace Anne Dorney]]<br />(1963–present)  
| children    = [[Andrea Koppel|Andrea]], Deirdre, Andrew, Tara  
| credits     = ''[[Nightline (US news program)|Nightline]]'' (1980–2005)  
| agent      =  
| URL        =  
}}}
```

Ted Koppel	
	
Ted Koppel in 2008	
Born	Edward James Koppel February 8, 1940 (age 71) Nelson, Lancashire, England, United Kingdom
Occupation	Journalist News anchor
Spouse(s)	Grace Anne Dorney (1963–present)
Children	Andrea, Deirdre, Andrew, Tara
Years active	1963–present
Notable credit(s)	<i>Nightline</i> (1980–2005)

Information about including this template in an article can be found at http://enwp.org/Template:Infobox_journalist/doc