



## REMINDER DON'T TRUST WIKIPEDIA ON THE PARANORMAL

For some time we have been warning readers that Wikipedia has been taken over by a militant group of unqualified skeptics who attack any articles on parapsychology, alternative and complementary medicine, and on the biography pages of scientists involved in investigating these areas.



## WIKIPEDIA: CAPTURED BY SKEPTICS

Wikipedia currently is the area in which dogmatic skeptics are most successful and influential. One of these activist groups is called [Guerrilla Skepticism on Wikipedia](#), founded by Susan Gerbic. Another leader of the online skeptical movement is Tim Farley, who runs the website [Skeptical Software Tools](#).

The situation is particularly bad in any areas to do with parapsychology, alternative and complementary medicine, and on the biography pages of scientists involved in investigating these areas.

The Wikipedia skeptics work in teams (contrary to Wikipedia rules) and most are well trained. They generally operate under pseudonyms. It is not necessary to have any particular skill or expertise to become an editor. Anyone can edit. But it is necessary to understand the complex rules of Wikipedia. The skeptical activists are well versed in the rules, and are able to bully and outwit editors who are trying to ensure that articles are balanced and fair. When fair-minded editors oppose the skeptic teams, they are accused of defying the skeptical consensus, and warned that they will be banned from editing. If they persist they are indeed banned. Many such editors have been driven away, to the detriment of Wikipedia and its users. For a detailed case study, see [Wikipedia, We Have a Problem](#).

Although Wikipedia's official policy is that articles should represent a neutral point of view, skeptics have infiltrated the administration of Wikipedia and have managed to get parapsychology defined as a pseudoscience, along with many aspects of alternative and complementary medicine. The skeptic teams then

claim that any editor opposing them is contravening the neutral point of view policy, because these subjects are defined as pseudoscience. These teams are committed to a kind of scientific fundamentalism, and take an extremely narrow view of science, even narrower than that of more mainstream skeptical organizations. Even the Committee for Skeptical Inquiry does not dismiss all parapsychology as pseudoscience: indeed some leading skeptics, like Professor Chris French, have explicitly stated that they regard it as a real science (French, C. C., & Stone, A. *Anomalistic Psychology: Exploring Paranormal Belief and Experience*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

Unfortunately, the founder of Wikipedia, Jimmy Wales, is a supporter of the skeptical extremists. In response to the systematic distortion to Wikipedia entries on holistic medicine, the Association for Comprehensive Energy Psychology (ACEP) organized an [online petition](#) to Jimmy Wales through change.org asking for a balanced and scientific approach to these subjects. There were 7,000 signatures.

In response, [Wales called](#) practitioners of alternative medicine “lunatic charlatans.” He resisted calls for change by saying that Wikipedia’s policies are “exactly spot-on and correct.”

So beware! Until Wikipedia can be reformed or replaced, it is essential to treat its skeptic-infested pages with extreme skepticism.

## Articles

### [Wikipedia and Deepak Chopra: Open-Source Character Assassination](#)

Ryan Castle, Huffington Post, November 2, 2015

“When collaborative editing devolves into mob mentality it is not just the individual being abused who suffers, it is everyone who trusts in the integrity of Wikipedia.... The body of editors who are dominating Deepak Chopra’s biography page are a dozen or so skeptics who are so extreme in their views that they resort to online activism, many of whom consider the concept of spirituality or a mind-body connection to be a threat to human intelligence. ...These editors are no more empowered than any other volunteer editor, but their ideological zeal and willingness to viciously attack any opposing editor has driven off most impartial editors. ...Behind this radical contrast lies the online battle between those who want to publish a neutral perspective and those who want to publish their own perspective.”

### [Wikipedia Under Threat](#)

Rupert Sheldrake, 2014

“As the Guerrilla Skeptics have demonstrated, Wikipedia can easily be subverted by determined groups of activists, despite its well-intentioned policies and mediation procedures.”

## Who Killed Wikipedia?

Virginia Postrel, Pacific Standard Magazine, November 17, 2014

“In theory, anyone can contribute to Wikipedia articles and anyone can propose a new policy or rule. In reality, Wikipedia functions as a largely closed community, using procedural knowledge and a sort of passive-aggressive resistance to deter outsiders.”

## Encyclopedia Frown

David Auerbach, Slate, December 11, 2014

“Because Wikipedia is so unprecedented, I cut it a lot of slack, but precisely for that reason, it faces unanticipated dangers and no easy solution.”

## Harvard Doc To Wikipedia: You’re Not Playing Fair On Alternative Trauma Therapy

Eric Leskowitz, M.D., WBUR (NPR Boston) CommonHealth, November 28, 2014

## Skeptiko: “Wikipedia, We Have a Problem”, with guest Rome Viharo

Alex Tsakiris, Skeptiko, January 14, 2015 (podcast and transcript)

*Wikipedia, We Have a Problem activist Rome Viharo explains how pseudoskeptics are distorting Wikipedia.*

## Psi Wars: TED, Wikipedia and The Battle For The Internet (book)

Craig Weiler. CreateSpace, 2013

*An illuminating account of the Wikipedia problem.*

## 10 Facts about Jimmy Wales that will Shock the Hell out of You

AnonHQ

On This Website

## Wikipedians in Disrepute: “Vzaak / Manul”

"Vzaak" / "Manul" The Original Disreputarian According to the website Wikipedia, We Have a Problem, behavioral data suggests that "Vzaak", who in 2015 changed his Wikipedia account name to "Manul", may be skeptic-activist Tim Farley or working within a network directed by Tim Farley and Jerry Coyne. Evidence indicates that Manul's Wikipedia account began as...

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## Rampant Harassment on Wikipedia

For several years now Rome Viharo has been documenting his disturbing Wikipedia experiences on his website Wikipedia, We Have a Problem. His latest post is an excellent case study on the harassment, libel and slander routinely practiced by some editors of the king of encyclopedias. There is a disturbing pattern of behaviors evolving across Wikipedia...

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## Wikipedians in Disrepute: “Barney the Barney Barney”

"Barney the Barney Barney" Skepticism or Vendetta? by the Editors "Barney the Barney Barney" is a member of a Wikipedia "skeptic" community self-named the Fringe Noticeboard. Barney wrote the defamatory Wikipedia essay "Why it isn't cool to describe Rupert Sheldrake as a biologist"; a false assertion as Sheldrake's Cambridge Ph.D. is in...

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## Wikipedians in Disrepute: “Guy (JzG)”

"Guy (JzG)" A Bully by the Editors Although Jimmy Wales, Wikipedia's founder, supports the scientifically-uninformed party line, Wikipedia as an entity is promoted to the public as scientifically sound. Unfortunately, it is not. "Guy", a self-described "skeptical" blogger with a moderate following, has "Administrator" status on Wikipedia, a step above the usual...

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Skeptical About Skeptics is organized by The Association for Skeptical Investigation to promote genuine skepticism – the spirit of enquiry and doubt – within science.

This includes an open-minded investigation of unexplained phenomena, a questioning of dogmatic assumptions, and a skeptical examination of the claims of self-proclaimed skeptics.

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