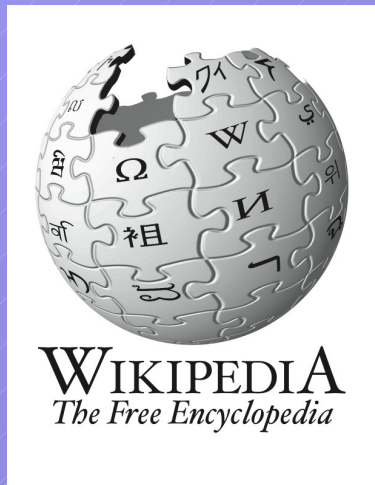


# Collaborative Peer Production In a Health Context



Jimmy Wales  
President, Wikimedia  
Foundation  
Wikipedia Founder

# What I will talk about

- What is Wikipedia?
- How the community works
- Core principles of the Wikimedia Foundation
- What will be free?



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*The Free Encyclopedia*

“The ideal encyclopedia should be radical. It should stop being safe.”

--1962, Charles van Doren,  
later a senior editor at  
Britannica



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# Wikipedia's Radical Idea:

Imagine a world in which every single person is given free access to the sum of all human knowledge.

That's what we're doing.



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# What is the Wikimedia Foundation?

- Non-profit foundation
- Aims to distribute a free encyclopedia to every single person on the planet in their own language
- Wikipedia and its sister projects
- Funded by public donations
- Partnering with select institutions

[wikimediafoundation.org](http://wikimediafoundation.org)



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# What is Wikipedia?

- Wikipedia is:
- a freely licensed encyclopedia written by thousands of volunteers in many languages

[wikipedia.org](http://wikipedia.org)



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# What do I mean by free?

- Free as in speech, not free as in beer
- 4 Freedoms
  - Freedom to copy
  - Freedom to modify
  - Freedom to redistribute
  - Freedom to redistribute modified versions



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# How big is Wikipedia?

- English Wikipedia is largest and has over 500 million words
- English Wikipedia larger than Britannica and Microsoft Encarta combined
- German Wikipedia equal in size to Brockhaus



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# How big is Wikipedia Globally?

- 740,000 - English
- 292,000 - German
- >100,000 - French, Japanese, Italian, Polish, Swedish
- >50,000 - Dutch, Portuguese, Spanish
  - 2.2 million across 200 languages
- 30 with >10,000. 75 with >1000



# Some Wikimedia Projects

- Wikipedia
- Wiktionary
- Wikibooks
- Wikiquote
- Wikimedia Commons
- Wikinews



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# How popular is Wikipedia?

- Top 40 website
  - According to Alexa.com, broader reach than...
  - New York Times
  - L.A. Times
  - Wall Street Journal
  - MSNBC.com
  - Chicago Tribune
- 
- ~ 2 billion pageviews monthly

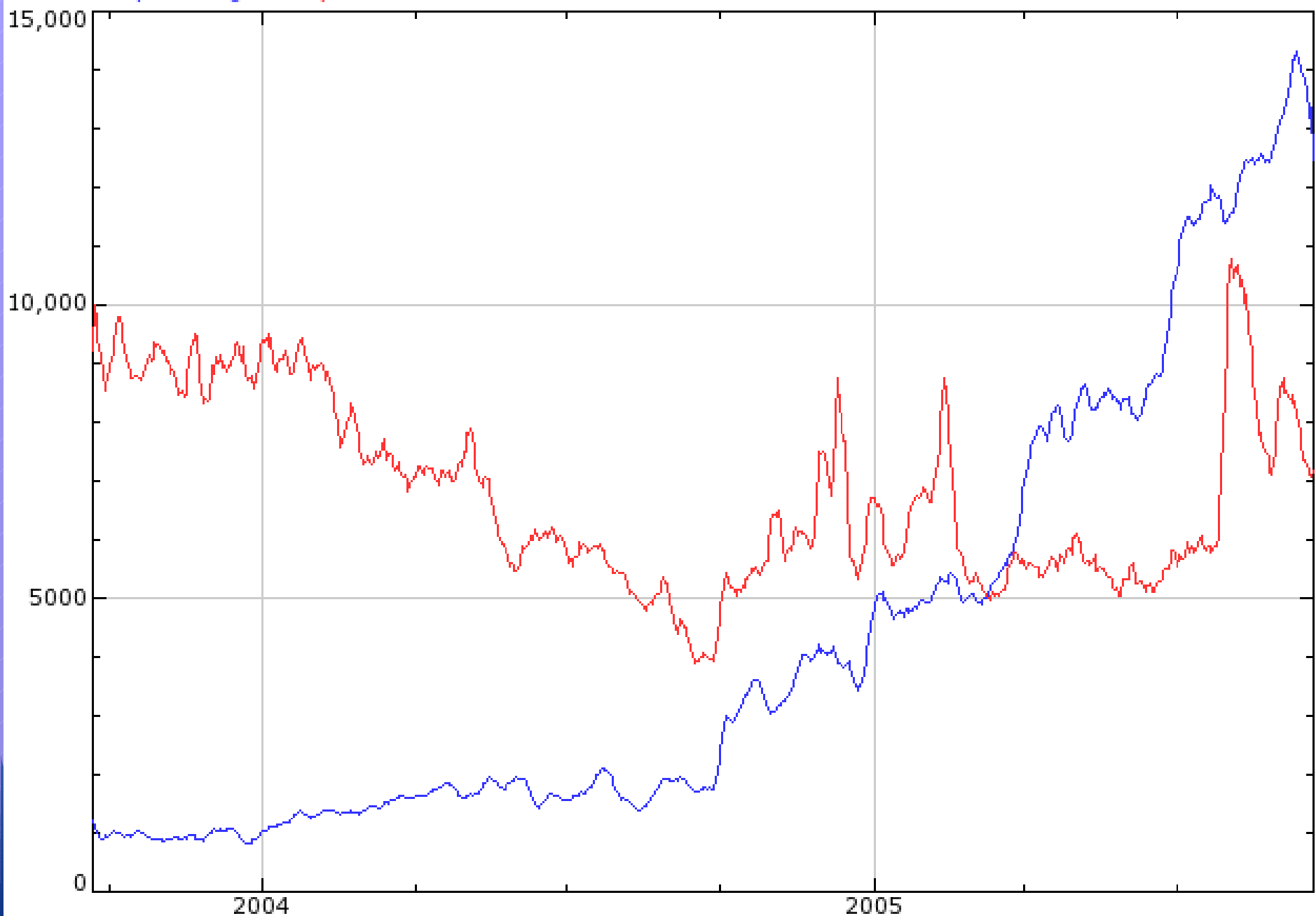


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# Daily Reach (per million)

wikipedia.org

nytimes.com



# Wikimedia's Hardware

- 107 servers
- Multiple data centers
- Daily management by volunteers



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# Community



London



Genoa

A dedicated group of a few hundred volunteers who know each other and work to guarantee the quality and integrity of the content.



Berlin

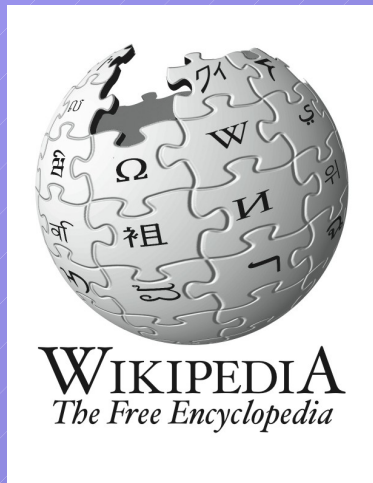


Frankfurt



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# Quality Control?



How does this  
community ensure  
quality?

How does the software  
empower good work?

# Realtime Peer Review

- How does quality control work?
- Every edit goes onto “Recent Changes” page which is watched by hundreds of people daily
- Users can set up personal “Watch Lists”
- “New pages” tool



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# Page History

## Flat Earth

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

(Difference between revisions)

Revision as of 22:40, 12 Feb 2003

[Ed Poor](#) ([Talk](#) | [contribs](#))

okay, I'm done. Comments?

Revision as of 22:42, 12 Feb 2003

[Eloquence](#) ([Talk](#) | [contribs](#))

second para

### Line 1:

The "'flat earth"' theory is the idea that the earth is flat, as opposed to the view of modern science that the earth is spherical.

People from antiquity generally believed the world was flat, as that is how it looks even from a high mountain. Some ancient Greek philosophers began to discuss the idea of a spherical earth, notably Eratosthenes and Ptolemy.

During the period between the fall of the Roman Empire and the [[renaissance]] of science several centuries later, some Christian writers questioned and even opposed the earth's sphericity, although it is not clearly known how influential their views were. Before the Renaissance began, the flat earth theory had pretty much died out, yielding by the 900s or 1100s to the idea that the earth is a globe.

Some Christians in England and America tried to revive Flat Earth thinking in the 19th century, and a few diehards hold out to this day (see [[Flat Earth Society]]).

== Flat Earth theories of Antiquity ==

### Line 1:

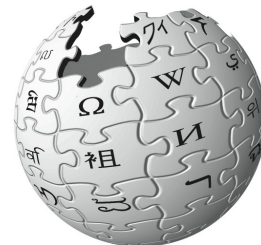
The "'flat earth"' theory is the idea that the earth is flat, as opposed to the view of modern science that the earth is spherical.

People from early antiquity generally believed the world was flat, as that is how it looks even from a high mountain; by the time of [[Pliny the Elder]], however, its spherical shape was generally acknowledged. [[Ptolemy]] derived his maps from a curved globe and developed the system of [[latitude]] and [[longitude]].

During the period between the fall of the Roman Empire and the [[renaissance]] of science several centuries later, some Christian writers questioned and even opposed the earth's sphericity, although it is not clearly known how influential their views were. Even before the Renaissance began, the flat earth theory had almost died out, yielding by the 900s or 1100s to the idea that the earth is a globe.

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== Flat Earth theories of Antiquity ==



# Organisation by the Community

- The free-form nature of the wiki software lets the community determine how it wants to interact
  - Example: *Votes For Deletion*

[edit]

## 2.27 Twisted Issues

This is supposed to be an underground punk film from 1988, but it miserably fails the Google test<sup>[22]</sup>, suggesting that its fame is doubtful. [JFW](#) | [T@lk](#) 15:53, 18 Nov 2004 (UTC)

- Delete please [JFW](#) | [T@lk](#) 15:53, 18 Nov 2004 (UTC)
- **Delete**. Non-notable. [力伟](#)| 18:29, 18 Nov 2004 (UTC)
- ~~Tentative weak~~ **Keep**. If it's [this](#) "1989 Charles Pinion film Twisted Issues -- a 'psycho-punk splatter-comedy' which [Film Threat](#) Video Guide named to its list of 'Twenty Underground Films You Must See!'" - its notability is at worst debatable. [Samaritan](#) 19:45, 18 Nov 2004 (UTC)
- Clean Up: It needs a lot of work, but it's possible. (N.b. we're going to be in rough shape if we try to replicate the Psychotronic book or Film Threat.) [Geogre](#) 20:43, 18 Nov 2004 (UTC)
- Keep, real movie -- <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0249209/combined> -- but cleanup. [RickK](#) 21:29, Nov 18, 2004 (UTC)
- **Keep** and cleanup. [DCEdwards1966](#) 03:49, Nov 20, 2004 (UTC)
- **Keep** it. [RaD Man](#) (*talk*) 19:31, 20 Nov 2004 (UTC)



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# Wikipedia Governance

- A confusing but workable mix of
- Consensus
- Democracy
- Aristocracy
- Monarchy
- Wikipedians are flexible about social methodology: results over process



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# Core Principle: Neutral Point of View policy

- NPOV - Neutral Point of View
- Diverse political, religious, cultural backgrounds
- Kept together by our “NPOV” policy
- NPOV is a social concept of co-operation, avoids some philosophical issues.



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# Core Principle: Free Software

- MediaWiki is GPL
- We use all free software on the website
- GNU/Linux
- Apache
- MySQL
- Php



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# Health

- Wikipedia has a huge quantity of health information
- Good quality
- Neutral
- Factual
- Freely licensed
- YOU can use it! Today!



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# wikimedical-l

- New working group to build professional-level health information
- As well as resources for consumers
- Search for 'wikimedical-l' in google to join the mailing list



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