

BY **UNHERD**

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Wikipedia co-founder: I no longer trust the website I created

Freddie Sayers spoke to Larry Sanger about why he left

LockdownTV

Freddie Sayers

Wikipedia co-founder: I no longer trust the website I created

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View terms

Chances are, if you've ever been on the internet, you've visited Wikipedia. It is the world's fifth largest website, pulling in an estimated 6.1 billion followers per month and serves as a cheat sheet for almost any topic in the world. So great is the online encyclopaedia's influence is so great that it is the biggest and "most read reference work in history," with as many as 56 million editions.

But the truth about this supposedly neutral purveyor of information is a little more complex. Historically, Wikipedia has been written and monitored by a community of volunteers who collaborated and contested competing claims with one another. In the words of Wikipedia's co-founder, Larry Sanger who spoke to Freddie Sayers on LockdownTV, these volunteers would "battle it out".

This battle of ideas on Wikipedia's platform formed a crucial part of the encyclopaedia's commitment to neutrality, which according to Sanger, was abandoned after 2009. In the years since, on issues ranging from Covid to Joe Biden, it has become increasingly partisan, primarily espousing an establishment viewpoint that increasingly represents "propaganda". This, says Sanger, is why he left the site in 2007, describing it as "broken beyond repair".

On Wikipedia's Left-wing bias:

You can't cite the Daily Mail at all. You can't cite Fox News on socio-political issues either. It's banned. So what does that mean? It means that if a controversy does not appear in the mainstream centre-Left media, then it's not going to appear on Wikipedia

Today on UnHerd:

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6 mins

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DOUGLAS MURRAY

5 mins

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JOHN LICHFIELD

6 mins

Will Trump bring down DeSantis?

OLIVER WISEMAN

6 mins

- LARRY SANGER, UNHERD

On Covid:

If you look at the articles that Wikipedia has, you can just see how they are simply mouthing the view of the World Economic Council or World Economic Forum, and the World Health Organisation, the CDC and various other establishment mouthpieces like Fauci — they take their cues from them... There's a global enforcement of a certain point of view, which is amazing to me amazing to a libertarian, or a liberty-loving conservative

- LARRY SANGER, UNHERD

In what ways other than politics does that establishment view come across?

Eastern medicine is basically called quackery in dismissive, quite judgmental, language and so forth. It's done, apparently without any compunctions at all. Then when it comes to Christianity, the viewpoint on Christianity given is the liberal one that would be found in mainline denominations and liberal Catholicism as opposed to the actual Bible-believing fundamentalist type viewpoint.

- LARRY SANGER, UNHERD

How Wikipedia entries are distorted:

There are companies like Wiki PR, where paid writers and editors will go in and change articles. Maybe there's some way to make such a system work, but not if the players who are involved and who are being paid are not identified by name — they actually are supposed to be identified by name and say 'we represent this firm' if they are officially registered with some sort of Wikipedia editing firm. But they don't have to do that

- LARRY SANGER, UNHERD

Why is it happening?

Because there is a lot of influence. Wikipedia is known now by everyone to have a lot of influence in the world. So there's a very big, nasty, complex game being played behind the scenes to make the article say what somebody wants them to say.

- LARRY SANGER, UNHERD

On the takeover of Big Tech

We trusted outlets like Facebook and Twitter and YouTube with our data, and allowed them essentially to take over the media world. What we trusted them with was our liberty and our privacy, that basically that they weren't going to shut us down. But they stabbed us in the back, essentially

- LARRY SANGER, UNHERD

Why is neutrality important?

You want the tools to think about an issue...When we are trying to get some basic information in understanding a topic, we do not want to be led by the nose, right? We are free individuals who want to make up our own minds

- LARRY SANGER, UNHERD



Join the discussion



JOE DONOVAN

This is fascinating, but I didn't come away with a real understanding of how this filtering works!
And I'm sure I was not alone in thinking that UnHerd itself, and Quillette, for example, quite obviously are part of the solution. But they will never have the cultural purchase of Fox or CNN or the Times or the Post or the Guardian. Most people are too lazy to go beyond these outlets.
It should be noted that even a person who immerses him/herself in platforms on *both* sides — say Fox and CNN — still ends up uninformed because of the tight filter underlying each!



J BRYANT

Ditto.



SANFORD ARTZEN

Well said Simon.
I watched a great many Bret Weinstein's videos (Freddy did him here too), and I think he is that University Lecturer Liberal/Lefty who had the system he help foster turn rabid, and on him, so had his awakening and talks well, and voluminously, against the harm of radical Wokism. He still holds onto the general tenets of his hard Liberalism, but as a bitten person, he has greatly altered his faith.

WIKI is so corrupted, yet usually subtly, I think Wiki shows how the internet has been taken by the dark side.

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