

SUPSI

Review of Wikipedia Articles

The review is meant to facilitate further improvement of Wikipedia articles. Suggestions about the quality of a Wikipedia articles can be found at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Featured_article_criteria.

Please send your review in pdf and .doc format to Erica Litrenta: erica.litrenta@supsi.ch and Marta Pucciarelli: pucciarelli.marta@gmail.com

Name of the reviewer	Evan Friss
Affiliation	Assistant Professor of History, James Madison University
Title of the article	Bicycle

1. Quality of the Summary

Is the summary of the article a complete, thorough, and concise introduction to the topic? How do you think the summary could be improved? Which meaningful data are missing? Is there something that you find too much detailed for a general overview of the topic?

Overall, I think the summary is sound and provides a good introduction to the topic. That said, there are ways that it can be improved. In particular, I think a few themes are underdeveloped, namely the use of the bicycle by children, the use of the bicycle in Asia, and the decline and recent renaissance in cycling in the US and other parts of the Western world. All of these ideas are hinted at throughout the entry, but they all, I think, warrant much more attention. The section on bicycle theft contains no real information and thus should be deleted.

2. Structure and style of the article

Is the article properly presenting the topic for a general public? Does the article provide a complete and easy-to-navigate structure? Which paragraph would you add, unify or split into different parts? Please provide a list of suggestions. Is the article well written and understandable at a high school level?

For the most part, the structure of the article makes sense and is readable for a general audience. At times, the organization could use to be cleaned up. In particular, I found the section labeled "social and historical aspects" to be unwieldy and that many of the paragraphs did not transition well from one to another. I would suggest pulling out bicycle manufacturing and making that its own section. Likewise, there is a single reference to the Bicycle Film Festival, but what about the bicycle in popular culture (film, art, etc.)? Perhaps this should become a new and standalone section. Finally, the paragraph that begins: "J. K. Starley's company became the Rover Cycle Company Ltd. ..." seems out of place.

3. Content

Is the article comprehensive of major facts related to the topic? Is the article adequately placing the subject in context? What does it miss? Please provide a list of topics you think should be included in the article (suggestions must be related to bibliography). Do you find that some arguments are not meaningful or representative of the topic for a general public. What should be deleted? Please explain why.

I made some suggestions above about new sections to include and I might add that the bicycle-sharing systems could be further developed and put into its own separate section. Currently as part of the “daily life” section, it does not flow very well.

Some comments were either not meaningful as written or need further citation if they are to be kept. Here are some more specific comments:

The article spells the early bicycle “*Draisienne*” while I’ve usually seen it in English as “Draisine.”

In the parts section, women’s bicycle frames were, at one point, often referred to also as “drop frame” bicycles.

I think this comment should be footnoted or cited for further information: “For most of the history of bicycles' popularity women have worn long skirts, and the lower frame accommodated these better than the top-tube. Furthermore it was considered “unladylike” for women to open their legs to mount and dismount - in more conservative times women who rode bicycles at all were vilified as immoral or immodest.” As is it’s very general and lacks any chronological or geographical context.

Unless I missed it, there’s no reference to Fat Tire Bikes, which have become popular of late and are (maybe?) popular in snowy regions.

I’m not sure this statement is true: “Around the turn of the 20th century, bicycles reduced crowding in inner-city tenements by allowing workers to commute from more spacious dwellings in the suburbs” Where was that the case? This did happen to some degree, but I think a rather small one.

The following comment is not meaningful as written: “Cycling is so popular that the parking capacity may be exceeded, while in some places such as Delft the capacity is usually exceeded.” Without knowing the capacity this is not useful.

The suggestion that the “The safety bicycle gave women unprecedented mobility” is probably an overstatement.

4. International and local dimension

Is the article neutral (it presents general and acknowledged views fairly and without bias)? Is the article representative of the international dimension and consolidated research about the topic? If applicable, does the article feature examples from all over the world (no localisms)? Please draft a list of what is missing with related references.

Considering the preponderance of bicycles in Asia now and in the past, there did not seem to be enough coverage of that area. At times the article is talking about bicycles in a universal way, but often it’s really referring to Western European/American traditions and experiences. It might be useful to have a section (or links) on the history of the bicycle in various regions.

5. References (essential to allow the articles to be improved)

Is the list of publications comprehensive and updated? Does it list the fundamental monographs and papers? Please provide primary/generic and secondary/original resources which need to be included and suggest the list of publications which should be removed.

The list of publications in both the citations and for further reading did not seem to be very exhaustive. Here are some additional sources, most of which pertain to the bicycle’s place in the US (simply because that’s what I know best)

Regarding the American bicycling boom and early history:

Jesse J. Gant and Nicholas J. Hoffman, *Wheel Fever: How Wisconsin Became a Great Bicycling State* (Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2013)

Lorenz J. Finison, *Boston’s Cycling Craze, 1880–1900: A Story of Race, Sport, and Society* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2014)

Wikipedia Primary School: Providing on Wikipedia the information necessary to complete the cycle of primary education in the languages used by the different education systems. Document updated 29 January 2015.

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Evan Friss, *The Cycling City: Bicycles and Urban America in the 1890s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015)— perhaps this falls under the category of self promotion and the book isn't due out for a few months, but I thought I'd include it nonetheless.

Regarding bicycle design in history:

Tony Hadland and Hans-Erhard Lessing, *Bicycle Design: An Illustrated History* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2014).

Regarding bicycle manufacturing in the US:

David A. Hounshell, *From the American System to Mass Production, 1800–1932: The Development of Manufacturing Technology in the United States* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), 189–217

Bruce D. Epperson, *Peddling Bicycles to America: The Rise of an Industry* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2010).

Regarding bicycle law in the US:

Bob Mionske, *Bicycling and the Law: Your Rights as a Cyclist* (Boulder: Velo Press, 2007)