

# Becoming a Reliable Source:

## Writing for Off-Wiki Publication

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I wrote a book!

**You can too!**

...And it's  
published!

**Here's how (and why...)**



**Why become a  
reliable source?**



# Struggles creating WP content:

- ✦ Lack of reliable secondary source material
- ✦ Primary sources only
- ✦ Systemic bias/ imbalances
- ✦ Systematic misrepresentation
- ✦ Non-digitized source material
- ✦ Discredited source material
- ✦ No images
- ✦ Poor quality original research



# Find the forgotten



Jockeys in Butte, Montana, 1905. Fogarty photo. Courtesy Montana Historical Society



# Fix the record



Wikimedia Commons  
File:Doncaster Round Barn 2018.jpg



# More reasons

- Share knowledge
- Document and record
- Educate
- Grow the world's knowledge
- Help future researchers
- Have fun\*  
(\*because you probably won't get rich)



# What will you write about?

- ✦ What do you write about on Wikipedia?
- ✦ Interests become expertise
- ✦ Enthusiasm builds energy
- ✦ Energy + expertise = Work shared with others





Wikimedia Commons  
File:We Can Do It! NARA 535413 - Restoration 2.jpg

- Good Articles  $\approx$  magazine-length work.
- Featured Article  $\approx$  chapter length
- If you have shepherded an article through FAC,\* you can handle *any* editor!

*\*Without getting sanctioned for incivility...*



# Publishers value your skill set:

- ✦ Writing and research
- ✦ Assessing source material
- ✦ Proofreading and analysis
- ✦ Accepting edits from others
- ✦ Understanding copyright and plagiarism

[*citation needed*]

**But...**



**Not everyone can edit**

**AND**

**There IS a deadline!**



# Wikipedia on a resume

- Pitch what you're proud of. ("In addition to [other amazing stuff], I was particularly delighted to do [cool thing] because [reason that will impress publisher].")
- Emphasize writing, not wikidrama.
- Emphasize cooperation, collaboration, quality. ("I worked with a team of [#] primary editors who brought [article] to Featured Article status. This designates the best work on Wikipedia.")

### American Pharoah



American Pharoah after winning the 2015 Preakness Stakes

<b>Sire</b>	<a href="#">Pioneerof the Nile</a>
<b>Grandsire</b>	<a href="#">Empire Maker</a>
<b>Dam</b>	<a href="#">Littleprincessemma</a>
<b>Damsire</b>	Yankee Gentleman

### William Robinson Brown



W. R. Brown

<b>Born</b>	January 17, 1875 <a href="#">Portland, Maine, U.S.</a>
<b>Died</b>	August 4, 1955 (aged 80) <a href="#">Dublin, New Hampshire</a>
<b>Occupation</b>	<a href="#">Brown Company</a> , Woods Division Manager
<b>Known for</b>	Forestry management <a href="#">Arabian horse breeder</a>



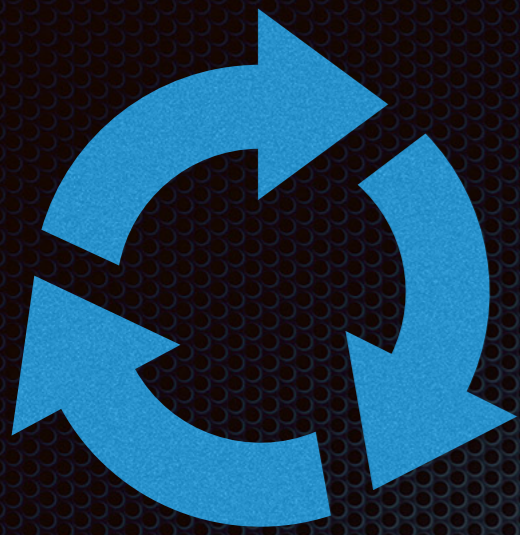
# Get started

- ✦ Locate (legitimate) publishers
- ✦ Read their guidelines!
- ✦ Query
- ✦ Get accepted
- ✦ Complete the paperwork

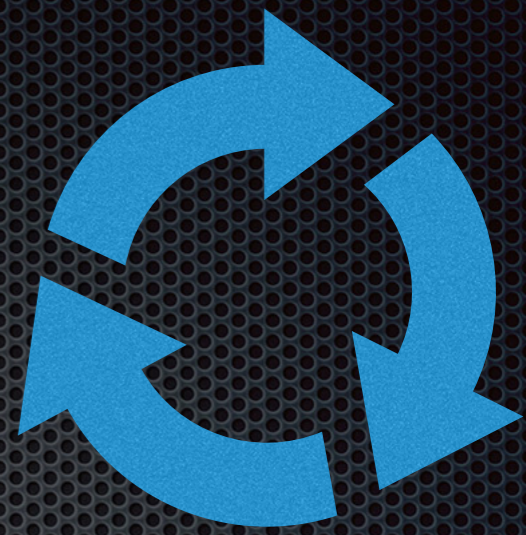
## Magazine/Journal Publications:

- ✦ “A Race Day in Great Falls.” *Best of Great Falls*, Summer 2015
- ✦ “Galloping in the Gallatin” *Gallatin History Quarterly*, Summer/Fall 2019





# The process



- Do preliminary research
- Write something
- Do more research
- Write something
- Fact check, rewrite, revise
- Write something
- Do more research
- Write something
- Fact check, rewrite, revise
- Repeat until finished

*(Hint)* **Your friends on Wikipedia are the BEST proofreaders!**



**The fun part!**



- Visit cool places



Selfie with “Spokane,”  
courtesy Montana Historical Society

- Meet great people



Great Falls State Fair, 2018. Joe Bird Rattler honored by lifetime Chief of the Blackfeet nation, Earl Old Person





- Discover amazing things

Tammany Mosaic, Marcus Daly Mansion,  
Hamilton MT



# Enjoy the ride!



North  
American  
Indian Days,  
Browning,  
Montana,  
2018

*Photo by Brenda Wahler, cc-sa 4.0*

Arcadia publishing/The History Press

<https://www.arcadiapublishing.com>