

# Wikipedia:Arbitration Committee Elections

## December 2013/Candidates/Bwilkins/Questions

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Candidates are advised to answer each of these questions completely but concisely. Candidates may refuse to answer any questions that they do not wish to, with the understanding, however, that not answering a question may be perceived negatively by the community.

Note that disclosure of your account history, pursuant to the ArbCom selection and appointment policy, must be made in your opening statement, and is not an optional question.

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### 1 General questions

1. What skills and experience, both on Wikipedia and off, will you bring to the Arbitration Committee if elected?

Contrary to popular belief on-Wiki, I'm one of the most amiable people you would ever meet in person. In real-life, I'm known to have a very sensitive BS-meter, and have formally and successfully arbitrated/mediated many disputes in-person because of that.

Even leaders who serve others from their knees have to call "BS" sometimes. Yes, I'm passionate. Yes, I have a fairly firm belief in how others should be treated, and on how processes should be followed. Those are *assets*, not detriments.

2. What experience have you had with the Wikipedia dispute resolution processes, both formal and informal? Please discuss any arbitration cases, mediations, or other dispute-resolution forums in which you have participated.

There are two on-wiki situations where I felt the specific situation had degraded enough -but yet there was enough goodwill- to try and mediate directly with the other party. One was WikiGreekBasketball, who had lost the faith the community as a whole, and another is more recent with an editor who simply wanted to add their own definition to policies, and then accuse dozens of people of breaking *their version*. In real life, I have extensive mediation experience - tribal elders, military representatives, civilians, it runs the gamut. However, there's a big difference to "pointy end of a weapon" mediation compared to Wikipedia... I think I prefer our model!

3. Every case is evaluated on its own merits ... but as a general matter, do you think you would you side more often with those who support harsher sanctions (bans, topic-bans, desysoppings, etc.) against users who have misbehaved, or would you tend to be on the more lenient side? What factors might generally influence your votes on sanctions?

There are too many variables to generalize, however, I have a longstanding philosophy that has been published on my userpage since forever, and I always evaluate everything by it: **Everyone has something to add to Wikipedia, only some people just don't know it yet.** I also firmly believe that any sanctions must be appropriate in terms of severity, length, and measurability. I typically go by "what is the simplest, shortest sanction that can be applied right now to stop AND help to amend the behaviour that is currently damaging the project in some manner". So, this typically means *first* "offenses" are likely more lenient, but recidivism rapidly leads to harsher

4. Please disclose any conflicting interests, on or off Wikipedia, that might affect your work as an arbitrator (such as by leading you to recuse in a given type of case).

I have none that I am aware of

5. Arbitrators are elected for two-year terms. Are there any circumstances you anticipate might prevent you from serving for the full two years?

I cannot foresee any reason why I could not serve 2 years

6. Identify a recent case or situation that you believe the ArbCom handled well, and one you believe it did not handle well. For the latter, explain what you might have done differently.

7. The ArbCom has accepted far fewer requests for arbitration (case requests) recently than it did in earlier years. Is this a good or bad trend? What criteria would you use in deciding whether to accept a case?

It's a good trend if and only if there are other areas that have the mandate, power and resources to deal with the specific case. As such, there are two key criteria that come to mind immediately: 1) the effect on a significant population of the project by *not acting* immediately, and 2) the "court of last resort" concept

8. What changes, if any, would you support in ArbCom's procedures? How would you try to bring them about?

Being an Arb won't give me or anyone a stronger voice in the community - and I really hope nobody believes that to be the case - in the end, we're all editors and members at an equal level, but some people have a couple of extra tools, or have to make a couple of extra wide-reaching decisions - no biggie. As such, my suggestions (such as methods of resolving issues at "lower" levels) are just suggestions. For example, individual admins can review most unblocks...the next level is WP:BASC...the final level is ArbCom as a whole - an example of how most things *should* work (the only difference I see is that ArbCom should only be involved in those if certain conditions are met/have not been met). I have dozens of times recommended "Admin Review Boards" as regular reviews of all admins, which would (hopefully) reduce the numerous admin abuse complaints to ArbCom, AND make for better/more consistent admins on the whole. However, these are the suggestions of an *editor* with equal voice to everyone else

9. What changes, if any, would you support in ArbCom's overall role within the project? Are responsibilities properly divided today among the ArbCom, the community, and the WMF office? Does the project need to establish other governance committees or mechanisms in addition to ArbCom?

Following my idea that ArbCom should function more like the Supreme Court of Canada as last court of appeal, and test-case hearing, there most certainly should be "lower bodies" that handle many of the "typical" cases that arise at ArbCom (and more likely than not get rejected). There needs to be a step between RFC/U (voluntary) and ArbCom that is formalized, and with appropriate teeth and expertise. ArbCom is intended to represent the community as it sits now - and it's more like a "jury of your peers", but it has more and more complaints that it has "lost touch" with that community.

10. It is often stated that "the Arbitration Committee does not create policy, and does not decide content disputes." Has this been true in practice? Should it be true? Are there exceptions?

It may not create policy or settle content, but it sets jurisprudence ... and in cases that have gone through every possible avenue of redress, setting jurisprudence is often just what we need

11. What role, if any, should ArbCom play in implementing or enforcing the biographies of living persons policy?

BLP *is* implemented. As such, as ArbCom are aligned with the community, there's little additional role in *implementing* it. Between the BLPN, ANI, DRN and RFC/U, the community *should* be able to properly enforce the BLP policy as well. ArbCom members at that point are merely members of the community. However, severe cases of recidivism would need to be dealt with *via* ArbCom (based on our current structure), as well as the occasional use of Oversight

12. Sitting arbitrators are generally granted automatic access to the checkuser and oversight userrights on request during their terms. If elected, will you request these permissions? How will you use them?

Arbs are usually granted these user-rights for use in the fulfillment of their duties: for example, gathering evidence using checkuser or viewing previously-oversighted material as part of a case. They are not specifically granted those permissions to perform day-to-day checkuser and oversight functions. However, oversight exists for what I would consider to be the emergency suppression of information beyond even RevDel. There is often a need to suppress an edit outside the view of even admins on an emergency basis. Now, I'm intentionally taking a circular route to answer the question on purpose: I did have a respected fellow-editor suggest that I apply for CU/OS rights this year. By applying for those, it would grant more "permanent" use, and that access would *intentionally* be in order to perform the full range of functions. I believe that it would be wise and prudent to do so in order to make full use in all situations, but would ensure to annotate in any logs whether I had used the tool in the process of Arb functions or as part of CU/OS functions

13. Unfortunately, many past and present arbitrators have been subject to "outing" and off-wiki harassment during their terms. If this were to happen to you, would you be able to deal with it without damage to your real-world circumstances or to your ability to serve as an arbitrator?

Basic rule: this is a website, so stop playing "this is your life" with each other. It's ok to disagree with me, but don't make it personal: my family and my job are off-limits. Otherwise, I have an entire horde of Flying Monkeys equipped with a TARDIS at my beck-and-call, and we all know how ugly that can get :-)

14. Should the Arbitration Committee retain records that include non-public information (such as checkuser data and users' real-life identities) after the matter the information originally related to

is addressed? Why or why not?

Well, we should have a "document retention" policy for any such information that is used in cases. It *may* be necessary to refer to that information a year or two later. For example: User:A is site-banned for a year for something that uncluded more socks than a Harvey Wood's factory. After a year, they make a formal appeal and are permitted to rejoin the community. A year later, they return to their socking ways, only they try to hide it. We would obviously need to revisit previous evidence. However: the caveat is that that information must be kept/stored in such a way that it can NEVER be released to the public. Once it's considered "confidential" it must remain "confidential" and not subject to any form of access to information request

15. Under what circumstances, if any, should the Arbitration Committee take action against a user based on evidence that has not been shared with that user? That has not been shared with the community as a whole?

Our privacy policies are quite clear that some information cannot and should not ever be shared with the community. The Community - and the Committee - must therefore sometimes take action using that kind of information. In terms of taking action with evidence not shared with the user, I have been searching my mind for possible requirements to do so. ArbCom is not a formal court of law - it is not bound by the concepts of *disclosure* that are required for criminal or civil courts when it comes to evidence. I'm only throwing this out there as an extreme example: if ArbCom was sent a confidential report by a Police Service as evidence of something untoward by an editor (for example, online predatory behaviours), then the *contents* might need to be used against the editor, and it's likely necessary to share the *existence* of the document, but not to share the document itself

## 2 Individual questions

Please ask your individual questions here. While there is no limit on the number of questions that may be asked, please try to keep questions relevant. Try to be as clear and concise as possible, and avoid duplicating questions that have already been asked.

Add your questions below the line using the following markup:

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#{{ACE Question
|Q=Your question
|A=}}
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### 2.1 Question from Mark Arsten

1. What do you think of the way that BLP is enforced on Wikipedia right now? Does the community

generally do a good job? Are there any recent situations that you think were handled poorly?

Great question, because there really *are* a couple of high-profile ones that are still stinging across the community. Overall, I believe that the community generally handles BLP's reasonably well - we have fairly clear policies, etc that can be "enforced" in a smart manner. Consistency, and a clear yardstick are vital. In terms of things being handled poorly, I won't pussyfoot around: the Manning situation has been well...(in the interest of calling a spade a spade)...an absolute fiasco, and an overall failure by the community on *both* sides of the discussion.

## 2.2 Questions by Sven Manguard

1. What is, in your view, the purpose of an ArbCom motion? Under what circumstances, or for what areas or processes, would the use of a motion be your first choice in handling the situation?

An ArbCom trial/hearing/behind-closed-doors-discussion takes ages. What, with the evidence-gathering, determining if the evidence is useful, and all that stuff, it's a long and opaque process. Motions are an awesome tool when nobody - even the "accused" has significant concerns about the evidence, and all the evidence is pretty apparent. It almost becomes a plea bargain, with "lesser" need for correction, and in the long run, fewer hard feelings amongst all parties

2. When is it not appropriate to start a motion? If the community has reached consensus on an issue, does ArbCom have the right to overrule that consensus with a motion? If the community is unable to resolve an issue for some time, and there is no active ArbCom case related to that issue, can ArbCom step in and settle the issue themselves by motion?

3. Please identify a few motions from 2013 that you believe were appropriate (if any), and a few you believe were inappropriate (if any). Discuss why you have reached the judgements that you did. Do not address the "Phil Sandifer desysopped and banned" motion in this question, it will be addressed in Q4 and Q5.

I think I basically drafted one motion this year - it was awesome, to say the least :- ) I also did the root wording of another. They both led to no sanctions, which is even better

4. The "Phil Sandifer desysopped and banned" motion has proven to be hugely controversial. What (if anything) did ArbCom do right in this matter. What (if anything) did ArbCom do wrong in this matter.

5. In the aftermath of the "Phil Sandifer desysopped and banned" motion, several Arbs laid out their reasoning in extensive detail and debated people that disagreed with their decision. While it is not uncommon for individual Arbs to explain their reasoning in greater detail, it is uncommon for so many of them to do so, to do in the midst of a hostile debate. Do you believe that the ArbCom members' explaining of their position was constructive, or did it only add fuel to an already large fire? Do you believe that ArbCom members should be explaining their reasoning in great detail

regularly?

Let me phrase it this way to start: people want transparency in how Arbs make decisions, and then argue and scream about how the person made their decision. When the Supreme Court judges (or justices, depending on your country) make a ruling, it's pages and pages long - it explains their thought processes, previous jurisprudence, and how the two overlap or don't. It sets the stage for the future. It's also NOT ARGUABLE; period. So ... those who call for transparency cannot have their cake and eat it too

6. Currently, much of ArbCom business is handled over email, and in other non-public forums. Do you believe that all ArbCom discussions that do not directly concern private information should take place publicly? If so, how? Why or why not?

Nope. Juries deliberate in private. Judges pore over jurisprudence in their offices. The written word is subject to interpretation, so someone misreading a discussion might take it to mean something completely different ... and it actually *could* end up becoming related to private information

7. The above question (Q6) was asked to every candidate last year, with several of the ultimately elected candidates pledging to make ArbCom procedures more public, or at least expressing support for such an idea. There has been, as far as I can tell, no progress on the issue.
- If you are a current ArbCom member: What, if anything, has happened on this issue in the past year? What role, if any, are you personally playing in it?
  - If you are not a current ArbCom member: If you made a commitment above (in Q6) to bring increased transparency to ArbCom, only to reach the body and find that the rest of the committee is unwilling to move forward on the issue, what would you do?
  - All candidates: Do you have any specific proposals that you can offer to address this issue?

### 2.3 Questions from Rschen7754

I use the answers to these questions to write my election guide. There is a large correlation between the answers to the questions and what the final result is in the guide, but I also consider other factors as well. Also, I may be asking about specific things outside the scope of ArbCom; your answers would be appreciated regardless.

The questions are similar to those I asked in 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012; if you've already answered them, feel free to borrow from those, but make sure the question has not been reworded.

1. What is your view on the length of time that it took for the case Wikipedia:Arbitration/Requests /Case/Tree shaping?

2. What is the purpose of a WikiProject? b) What is the relationship between stewardship of WikiProject articles and WP:OWN? c) What should be done when there is conflict between WikiProject or subject "experts" and the greater community?

I typically see Wikiprojects as *shepherds* and *coordinators*, as opposed to *owners*. The community at large are still the *owners* of everything on Wikipedia. One of the great things that projects often do is to clarify things such as notability in order to make it more relevant and understandable to those who edit articles in that stream of projects

3. Does the English Wikipedia have a problem with "vested contributors"? Why or why not? If there is a problem, what is to be done about it?

That depends on your definition of the word "problem". We have some challenges, that's for certain. The rules need to apply to everyone, equally ... be it admin, nOOB, or "vested contributor". This is a community that builds an encyclopedia - you cannot have one without the other. How to solve it? Enforce the rules consistently, no matter how unhappy it originally makes 1 or 2 dozen people

4. a) Do you believe that "it takes two to tango" in some circumstances? In every circumstance? b) Would you consider mitigating the sanctions on one user given the actions of another? Eliminating them entirely?

I often say "someone else's behaviour may *explain* your own, but it never *excuses* it"...indeed, in my old days on WQA it was one of my mantras. No - it does not always take two to tango (I saw a newscast discussion of the "knockout game" which certain proves that). However, baiting and antecedent behaviour does need to be taken into account

5. zOMG ADMIN ABUSE!!!!!! When do you believe that it is appropriate for ArbCom to accept a case, or act by motion, related to either a) abuse of the tools, or b) conduct unbecoming of an administrator?

6. What is the relationship of the English Wikipedia (enwp) ArbCom to other Wikimedia sites, "Wikimedia" IRC, and so-called "badsites" or sites dedicated to the criticism of Wikipedia? Specifically, what do you define as the "remit" of ArbCom in these areas?

7. What is your definition of "outing"?

My functional definition of outing is any attempt to discern or publish non-readily-available information about a Wikipedia editor that the editor has either no desire to have made public, or that *could* cause real-life issues for that editor.

8. What is your opinion as to how the CU/OS tools are currently used, both here on the English Wikipedia, and across Wikimedia (if you have crosswiki experience)?

9. Have you been in any *content* disputes in the past? (If not, have you mediated any *content* disputes in the past?) Why do you think that some content disputes not amicably resolved?

10. Nearly 10 years from the beginning of the Arbitration Committee, what is your vision for its



future?

ArbCom should be like the Supreme Court of Canada in many ways. First: it would be the appeal court of last resort (this would please Jimbo to no end). Of course, that means that second: there must be lower community-based "courts" taking care of certain types of issues. Thirdly: ArbCom would hear "test cases" as judicial review. Nobody hates the Supreme Court of Canada - many people hate ArbCom. WP:SOFIXIT.

11. Have you read the WMF proposal at m:Access to nonpublic information policy (which would affect enwiki ArbCom as well as all CU/OS/steward positions on all WMF sites)? Do you anticipate being able to meet the identification requirement (keeping in mind that the proposal is still in the feedback stage, and may be revised pending current feedback)?

Thank you. **Rschen7754** 02:12, 20 November 2012 (UTC)

Do I get to ask a question too? For example, I see you've already made a decision about me in your guide, mostly based on your (and a few other people's) incorrect reading of a situation, and some flat-out lies - but you're putting it forward as fact. As such, why should I complete your questionnaire when your inflammatory and contradictory decision is already front-and-centre? Just saying ... it's a rhetorical question, but also one of ethics. I used to think your voting guide had value ES&L 19:48, 19 November 2013 (UTC)

This is an example of the confrontational manner that I have seen in more than one incident, that led me to oppose. --**Rschen7754** 19:51, 19 November 2013 (UTC)

Ahhh....you attempted to generate confrontation - I didn't bite, but yet you claim otherwise and I still pay the price. Got it, thanks for the clarification. ES&L 20:00, 19 November 2013 (UTC)

To be fair, Rschen did not attempt to generate a situation. They clearly stated they were pending the answers to the question and simply noted an event that happened in the past. If you want Rschen to change their mind, simply answer the questions instead of arguing against them which will reflect badly on your candidacy. John F. Lewis (talk) 20:05, 19 November 2013 (UTC)

Not really John ... his voting guide right now states that I did something that I did not actually do, and that's his prime reason for opposing - that *is* generating a situation. I'm okay being opposed for *reality*, not someone's mistaken impression of a situation in the past. Anyway, this isn't intended to be the discussion page. My point is made, and I actually appreciate Rschen giving me the opportunity to tell the truth, and I retain the same level of respect for them that I have had for some time. Cheers. ES&L 20:11, 19 November 2013 (UTC)

As I've commented elsewhere, I do think that my judgment was premature, and because of that I do not think that the candidate's failure to answer the questions should not, in itself, be viewed as a negative against him. Though if others want to see the answers, the candidate is still free to choose whether to answer them or not. --**Rschen7754** 11:00, 20 November 2013 (UTC)

## 2.4 Questions from Collect

I also use these questions in my voter guide, and the latter four were actually general questions asked in 2012, which I asked be used again.

1. An arbitrator stated during a case "I will merely say that now arbitration of the dispute has become necessary, it is exceedingly unlikely that we would be able to close the case without any sanctions. Problematic articles inevitably contain disruptive contributors, and disruptive contributors inevitably require sanctions." Do you feel that once a case is opened that impartial arbitrators will "inevitably" have to impose sanctions?

Inevitably? No. Based on the full set of evidence, it might be possible that nobody needs anything - not even a slap on the wrist. Sanctions are to be used where needed - not as a "crap, we put so much work into this that we need to do something" solution

2. Do sanctions such as topic bans require some sort of finding about the editor being sanctioned based on at least a minimum amount of actual evidence about that person, or is the "cut the Gordian knot" approach of "Kill them all, the Lord will know his own" proper?

3. Do you feel that "ignoring evidence and workshop pages" can result in a proper decision by the committee" (I think that for the large part, the evidence and workshop phases were ignored in this case is a direct quote from a current member about a case) Will you commit to weighing the evidence and workshop pages in making any decisions?

Workshops are useful - you often get a feel of REALLY what the parties/community are concerned about, and even how they would like to see it resolved. Nothing wrong with having the community do the real hard work for you :-) Of course I would commit to actually *listening* to the community

4. Past Cases: The Arbitration Committee has historically held that prior decisions and findings were not binding in any future decisions or findings. While this may have been wise in the early years of Wikipedia, is any avoidance of stare decisis still a valid position? How should former cases/decisions be considered, if at all?

Although I feel I've touched on this one across many of my responses - and my simple point is that ArbCom cases *do* set precedence in practice, even if they claim otherwise. It's one of the reasons that in the long run I actually *like* long, windy explanations of why decisions were made, so that it becomes the *basis* for *stare decisis*, and actually helps to *limit* the application of that concept at the same time

5. The "Five Pillars" essay has been mentioned in recent discussions. Ought it be used in committee findings, or is it of explanatory rather than of current direct importance to Wikipedia?

In a simplified answer (for now), The Five Pillars is the Constitution of Wikipedia, upon which everything else should flow. If you look up to where I liken my vision of ArbCom

(in the future) to that of the Supreme Court of Canada, it all starts to make sense :-)

- Biographical articles (not limited to BLPs) form a substantial part of conduct issues placed before the committee. Without getting the committee involved in individual content issues, and without directly formulating policy, how should the committee weigh such issues in future principles, findings and decisions?

- "Factionalism" (specifically not "tagteam" as an issue) has been seen by some as a problem on Wikipedia (many different names for such factions have been given in the past). Do you believe that factionalism is a problem? Should committee decisions be affected by evidence of factionalism, in a case or around an article or articles? If the committee makes a finding that "factions" exist as part of a conduct issue, how should factionalism be treated in the remedies to the case?

Thank you. Collect (talk) 01:34, 19 November 2013 (UTC)

## 2.5 Questions by Gerda Arendt

Thank you, precious candidate seeking solutions, for volunteering.

- Please describe what happens in this diff ([//en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Peter\\_Planyavsky&diff=542355419&oldid=542307159](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Peter_Planyavsky&diff=542355419&oldid=542307159)). --Gerda Arendt (talk) 17:38, 19 November 2013 (UTC)

A few things. First, a small quasi-infobox at the bottom of the page labelled "metadata" is converted to what appears to be a standard infobox at the top right, as per most articles. Second, the image that was originally *outside the box* but at the top right gets accidentally fouled up. Of course, it seems to be restoring it basically to a state from the day before, when it was turned into a "metadata" box. It also appears to finally stop a somewhat ridiculous-looking period of edit-warring...or at least fighting over what should have been a braindead application of the WP:MOS regarding infoboxes. Not sure this is a trick question, a sobriety test, or if I'm understanding it the way you meant it! :-)

- I like that you observed, and what, and how you saw it in a context. I like facts, not judgment, so will not answer your question ;) - Next question: imagine you are an arb on a case, and your arb colleague presents the above diff as support for his reasoning to vote for banning the editor, - what do you do? --Gerda Arendt (talk) 20:00, 19 November 2013 (UTC)

The danger in answering is placing focus on the real situation, and the editors involved ... so I'm going to have to become more general in my train of thought. Bans are a serious, socially-defined concept, and on Wikipedia we have multiple types of bans (topic ban, site ban, etc). Full-bore site bans are are last resort, usually reserved for unrepentant recidivism against community norms. A sole diff does not meet the definition of a recidivist pattern of against-the-community editing. A sole edit-war does

not a site-ban (or topic-ban) make. Now, if viewed in the light of multiple other against-the-community activities, that might change - for example, a topic ban, if and only if needed - or did the editor arrive at the article due to wikistalking...or is it a continuation of another conflagration on- or off-wiki? There's too many unshown variables without getting into the actions of a specific set of editors

3. Thank you for thoughts, but how about approaching the colleague and simply ask them what they saw? For example certainly not what you saw: that the edit rather stopped a controversy. --Gerda Arendt (talk) 21:54, 19 November 2013 (UTC)

I guess I figured that kinda went without saying ... ArbCom - indeed this community as a whole - is about communication. For example, the accusations that some people have leveled at me in the past (and now have in their voting guides) are based on the *assumptions* of what happened, or of what was going on in my mind - they have zero basis in reality, but only in appearance and interpretation. However, what makes me different is that when someone actually *communicates* the reasons, the background, and their mindset, I'm much more willing to listen. So, to answer your question, I would indeed want to know why my colleague came to their conclusion based on background, mindset and reasons

4. Thank you. From my limited experience with Arbcom - watched a few, been in one - I can tell you: don't assume anything goes without saying. - Communication about "assumptions" might be the key change I would hope for. - Final question: imagine further that after said arb voted to ban the editor, and an equal number of arbs voted against it, it's your turn to cast the one and final vote that will ban or not. Assuming you lean towards it (or will you never?): will you? --Gerda Arendt (talk) 10:57, 20 November 2013 (UTC)

## 2.6 Questions by NuclearWarfare

1. So this question isn't directed at just you really; there are plenty of other candidates this year who I'm sure I should also ask it to. But you're lucky duck #1 who gets the stream of consciousness version of the question. Anyway, in your candidate statement, when you go into the rhetorical questions about why people might be "scared" of you, is it your implication that this is something that either the Committee or the Community is lacking right now. The answer can be yes. I'm not looking for an incredibly diplomatically phrased response; I just want to see what you think is lacking in ArbCom's culture *and* how you think you can change that. **NW** (*Talk*) 21:34, 19 November 2013 (UTC)

Actually, the rhetorical questions are really addressing all of the complaints that people seem to have about me - at least the ones that are actually grounded in some version of reality. The intent was to show that those *are* the exact things people want in an ArbCom member: someone who asks tough questions, can't stand bullshit, and wants community-based decisions that are fair to the community, the "complainant", and the "accused" (where applicable). Are those things that *some* people say ArbCom is

missing? Yep. Do I believe it? Not sure - there are many things that go on in the background of ArbCom that none of us are a party to. I have an astounding amount of respect for what the volunteer members of ArbCom have to a) do and b) put up with

## 2.7 Question from Tryptofish

1. What are your views about possible changes to procedures concerning the confidentiality of communications on the arbcom-l e-mail list, as proposed at the bottom of this draft page and in this discussion?

## 2.8 Question from SirFozzie

1. Thanks for running.. I'm curious to hear your thoughts on where the line is drawn on Civility and content contributors. We are encyclopedia based on the "wisdom of crowds", which is collaboration-based, but I'm curious to see how you balance the Encyclopedia part (with good content contributors) with those with a less than perfect record with regards to collaborating with others.

Good question. I for one know quite well the effects of perception *vs.* reality when it comes to civility! I want to answer this more fully, but my beliefs on civility have been written here for some time. The written word is a complex thing...as is this thing we call "community". All we can hope for is to read and understand, then apply some form of balance - but we're not always going to get it right in some people's eyes

## 2.9 Question from Sceptre

1. Between allowing a fringe POV pusher to roam free in *Sexology*, the massive embarrassment of the *Manning* dispute, and ArbCom instructing admins to undelete libel (see Jimbo's talk page), how would you seek to repair Wikipedia's reputation amongst LGBT—especially transgender—lay-readers?

Is it ArbCom's role to repair reputation, or is the responsibility of the community *as a whole* to ensure that all of our articles are fair, balanced, and free of BS so that no groups of lay-readers can claim there are deep-rooted issues anywhere?

## 2.10 Question from Piotrus

(Note borrowed from Rschen7754): The questions are similar to those I asked in 2012. If you've already answered them, feel

free to borrow from those, but make sure the question has not been reworded.

1. when would you see a full site ban (full block) as a better choice then a limited ban (interaction, topic, etc.)?

2. wnumerous ArbCom (also, admin and community) decisions result in full site bans (of varying length) for editors who have nonetheless promised they will behave better. In essence, those editors are saying "let me help" and we are saying "this project doesn't want your help". How would you justify such decisions (blocking editors who promised to behave), against an argument that by blocking someone who has promised to behave better we are denying ourselves his or her help in building an encyclopedia? What is the message we are trying to send? (You may find this of interest in framing your reply)

3. to an extent we can compare the virtual wiki world to the real world, what legal concept would you compare a full site ban to? (As in, an interaction ban is to a restraining order what a full site ban is to...?)

If I'm allowed to go all-out on the analogy: Wikipedia is a reeealllly cool dance club, with great big windows that people outside can look in and see how much fun people are having doing the Gangnam-macarena. It's a complex dance, but it's interesting, and people seem to enjoy doing it. Sure, the occasional fights break out on the dancefloor over spilled drinks, accidental elbows to the crotch, and hitting on someone else's girlfriend/boyfriend/both...and those fights are just as visible. So (in short) **a site ban is the equivalent of being escorted out of that cool dance club, and not being permitted to return** - and if you get caught sneaking in wearing a pair of glasses and a fake moustache, they'll be a little rougher as they escort you out - that's something the owner of the dance club is legally permitted to do (under trespass laws), and has formally empowered the people who hang out there to impose. You can still go about your day job, hang out with family and friends, you can even stand outside the club and practice your Gangnam-macarena...in fact, your real life doesn't change. You're simply not allowed to hang out with the cool people in the club

4. The United States justice model has the highest incarceration rate in the world (List\_of\_countries\_by\_incarceration\_rate). Is something to applaud or criticize?

Incarceration, or the societal necessity to incarcerate is never something to applaud.

5. a while ago I wrote a mini wiki essay on when to block people (see here). Would you agree or disagree with the views expressed there, and why?

I'll answer that with this

6. I respect editors privacy with regards to their name. I however think that people entrusted with significant power, such as Arbitrators, should disclose to the community at least their age, education and nationality. In my opinion such a disclosure would balance the requirements for

privacy (safeguarding Arbitrators from real life harassment), while giving the community a better understanding of background and maturity of those entrusted with such a significant power. Would you be therefore willing to disclose your age, education and nationality? If not, please elaborate why.

I have discussed my age, and even the age of my children many times. I have discussed my family ethnic mix (aka "nationality"). The country and city that I live in are in infoboxes on my userpage. My education and employment are as well. My caveat: none of these, however, are good guides for "maturity", and this position really is not about "power"

Thank you, -- Piotr Konieczny aka Prokonsul Piotrus | [reply here](#) 06:32, 20 November 2013 (UTC)

### 2.11 Question from User:MONGO

1. Please detail your most significant Featured or Good article contributions. GAN, FAC or even Peer Review contributions qualify as evidence of teamwork in bringing an article(s) to a higher level of excellence.

As is linked from my userpage, I have one DYK which I'm quite proud of - especially the ability to have brought a number of great skillsets (from history buffs to copyeditors) together. Considering that by day I write all alone, with an editor doing final touches, co-operative writing is not something I'm particularly used to

### 2.12 Question from User:Bielle

1. What is the reason for using both User:EatsShootsAndLeaves and User:Bwilkins almost interchangeably? On your talk page, for example, both account names appear in the same discussion. I find it very confusing.

The EatsShootsAndLeaves account is a legitimate alternate account that does not have administrator rights attached to it. Although I have done 1 or two urgent admin-related actions - and of course filed this nomination - from the Bwilkins account in the last few months, I'm actually intended to be on a break from admin duties until about January. Nevertheless, I monitor conversations on my talkpage, and respond accordingly, as would be expected of an administrator

I am sure you meant to answer my question, but . . . your ES&L account was opened in 2008. The user box linking it to your admin account wasn't added to ES&L's user page until July 2012. So it wasn't created to permit you this current rest period. If you used it only now and then when on unsecured terminals, it would have a purpose not meant to confuse, though most other admins use a clear version

of their admin user name to accommodate this need.I didn't ask if such uses were permitted, but why you do it as it is confusing. Bielle (talk) 21:20, 22 November 2013 (UTC)

No, as is well-known, it was originally created as a valid legitimate account, originally intended to edit in areas where there may be conflict with my *real life*. This is a valid use of an alternate account, and they were intentionally not linked together a per the policy, and is also the reason that the name of it is significantly different than Bwilkins. I even completely forgot about the account for awhile. So, after deciding that I was not going to use it for that purpose, I linked the two accounts together. I'm sorry if you had missed the multiple discussions about these 2 accounts in the past, but I hope that clears it up reasonably well for you and others who may have also missed them. ES&L 10:06, 23 November 2013 (UTC)

That answers why you originally created two unconnected accounts. Thank you. Now that they are connected, if anyone cares to check, it would appear that you no longer need the ES&L account. Are you planning on deleting it? — Preceding unsigned comment added by Bielle (talk • contribs)

Why would I not need ESL? I will quite possibly edit from unsecured locations where logging into an account with admin tools would be unwise, so the requirement to maintain it remains ES&L 01:04, 25 November 2013 (UTC)

For clarity's sake, you are planning to restrict it to such a use, then, are you?  
Bielle (talk) 04:06, 25 November 2013 (UTC)

### 2.13 Question from User:Worm That Turned

1. Firstly, please accept my apologies for adding to the list of questions! I'm one of the less controversial arbitrators but even I have had my writing twisted, my honesty questioned, my personality derided. I've been the target of unpleasant emails and real life actions. Other arbitrators have been subject to much worse. Have you thought about how being an arbitrator might affect you and what have you done to prepare?

WTT, in my profession I have suffered at the hands of others in countries that many people couldn't even find on a map. There's very little that I have not been prepared for through those unfortunate experiences

### 2.14 Question from User:Leaky caldron

1. I am also unclear about this dual identity stuff. I knew you as BWilkins for several years. To me, you just disappeared. I noticed ESL around the place but made no connection between BWilkins and your ESL Id. Now BWilkins has reappeared in this Arbcom effort but you are also answering questions here using ESL. So, which Id. do you intend to use for Arbcom work? Why do you think it is acceptable to apparently conflate the 2 as you have done already by submitting BWilkins for Arbcom and signing your edit summaries as ESL? Do you agree that it is important



to those who do not know you to be as straightforward and unambiguous as possible in your dealings with the community, both as Admin. and Arbitrator?

I'm not sure why there's any confusion or claims that something is not above board. I announced that I was taking 6 months off of administrator duties and that I would be only editing from my ESL account during that time, which means I was intending return to my Bwilkins account as my primary account in January. However, when choosing to run for ArbCom, I would quite obviously a) be doing so under my primary account, and b) require access to those tools. There is nothing either ambiguous or non-straightforward - Bwilkins is and always has been my primary account on this project

### 2.15 Questions from User:Thewolfchild

1. What, exactly, led to you "*taking 6 months off of administrator duties*"?

You already asked that question on the talkpage

1. Why do you feel that during the same time you *can't* be admin, you *can* be an Arbitrator?

Again, as above.

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