

**Liam Wyatt Wikimedia Lecture**

May 24, 2011 2:30 pm

David Ferriero: Good afternoon. Thank you. I'm David Ferriero, I'm the Archivist of the United States and it is a great pleasure to welcome you to my house this afternoon.

According to Alexa.com, the internet traffic ranking company, there are only six websites that internet users worldwide visit more often than Wikipedia: Google, Facebook, YouTube, Yahoo!, Blogger.com, and Baidu.com (the leading Chinese language search engine). In the States, it ranks sixth behind Amazon.com. Over the past few years, the National Archives has worked with many of these groups to make our holdings increasingly findable and accessible, our goal being to meet the people where they are.

This past fall, we took the first step toward building a relationship with the "online encyclopedia that anyone can edit."

When we first began exploring the idea of a National Archives-Wikipedia relationship, Liam Wyatt was one of, was the one who pointed us in the right direction and put us in touch with the local DC-area Wikipedian community.

Early in our correspondence, we were encouraged and inspired when Liam wrote that he could quote "quite confidently say that the potential for collaboration between NARA and the Wikimedia projects are both myriad and hugely valuable - in both directions."

I couldn't agree more.

Though many of us have been enthusiastic users of the Free Encyclopedia for years, this was our first foray into turning that enthusiasm into an ongoing relationship. As Kristen Albrittain and Jill James of the National Archives Social Media staff met with the DC Wikipedians, they explained the Archives' commitment to the Open Government principles of transparency, participation, and collaboration and the ways in which projects like the Wikipedian in Residence could exemplify those values.

The Wikipedians in turn described the ongoing effort to build collaborative relationships among cultural institutions such as galleries, libraries, archives and museums - collectively known as GLAMs - and Wikimedia communities. These initial contacts led to the National Archives hosting WikiXDC, a meet-up and birthday party for Wikipedia, attended by 90 local Wikipedians. Long a fan of Wikipedia, I was pleased to welcome the group to the Archives and even more pleased to read the tweets and blogs during and after the event. My all time favorite: "If it's good enough for the Archivist of the United States..."

Though Liam was unable to make it, due to being asleep in Sydney, Australia, at the

time, he was nonetheless very supportive.

As newbies to the GLAM-Wiki collaboration, we are grateful for the encouragement and support of one of the movement's greatest champions. A graduate of the University of New South Wales where he received the university medal in history for his thesis "The Academic Lineage of Wikipedia," Liam regularly promotes the importance of open access to information at museum events around the world.

He convened the world's first GLAM-WIKI conference in Canberra, Australia in 2009, followed by an international conference in London in 2010. This weekend he organized GLAMcamp NYC, in which National Archives Digitization and Description Team member Suzanne Isaacs and our first ever Wikipedian in Residence, Dominic McDevitt-Parks, [applause,] participated.

Liam is a long-time information access advocate. He is perhaps best-known as the former Wikipedian in Residence at the British Museum. He described the position on his blog, wittylama.com, as "extremely significant as it represents a new way for cultural organizations to harness the educative and collaborative potential of the internet in a way that directly speaks to their mission as public collections to teach and share. Equally, it is a great opportunity for the Wikimedia community to get access to best-practice and expertise to help improve its projects and ways of doing things."

In January, the Wikimedia Foundation announced that Liam had been selected as a Cultural Partnerships Fellow, a year-long position during which he will continue his work building foundations for GLAM-Wikipedia cooperation. We look forward to being a part of the great things to come.

Liam. [Applause]

Liam Wyatt:

Alright. Is this microphone on, or is it these microphones on? Well, we'll see.

That's, that's quite an honor to have received such an introduction. The screen you are seeing at the moment is the anonymized data of recent edits to Wikipedia on the English language across both content and place. And as you... it's not all of it, not nearly anywhere near all of it, but it can... gives you an impression of the variety of subjects that are happening right now. I like to use it as an example of how we can, you know, whilst we can talk about social media, we can talk about access, we can talk about the theory of engagement with groups around the world, we must also remember that it doesn't happen once you just... once you leave the meeting room and then go and start work. It's happening live, and it's been happening live for 10 years now in Wikipedia. And you can either be part of the conversation or you can't. And I am really pleased now to say that NARA is part of the conversation in a direct sense.

So I would like to talk specifically about, for the first moment – you still hear me? – for... about the Wikipedian in Residence program I did at the British Museum. And

then we can talk a bit more theoretically about the concepts of working with Wikipedia.

Well it would appear that's not going to work.

Okay, the Wikipedian in Residence project started at the British Museum because they were the first ones to say yes, fortunately. They are a fantastic institution that you're all familiar with. And it was by complete chance that they happened to be the first ones to say yes, and I'm very, very pleased of that fact. The information about that particular project can all be found online at this URL or by simply going to English Wikipedia and typing in the search box WP: GLAM and then looking for the British Museum Project page. I can show you that a bit later.

So all of this data, as with anything in the Wikiverse, is online, is available; it's transparent, including all of the statistics that we have. I sometimes get questions from cultural institutions or corporations asking to do a partnership with Wikipedia in exchange for our data. Just have it, have the data; we have – the only data we have, we share anyway. So it's not like you need to give us something in order to be able to partake of the information that Wikipedia has created, both statistical as well as the information on the actual site.

The purpose of the British Museum project was to bring Wikipedia in-house to find ways of building a proactive relationship of mutual benefit without undermining the principles of either. Certainly every institution can do something with Wikipedia, can do something with free culture. That it doesn't require that there be a 100 percent overlap in policies and principles between these organizations. Obviously – well, I think obviously – if there is a 100 percent overlap between the principles of the Wikipedia community and the institution, then we'll already be working with them because they're both freely licensed, in terms of copyright; they're both engaged in crowdsourcing online, wikis; and so forth. So if Wikipedians are going to be ideologically pure, and only work with institutions that completely agree with us, then it's a bit... it's a bit limiting. And equally institutions have to recognize that whilst some elements of Wikipedia is scary and not necessarily what they want to be doing, it doesn't mean they don't have to do... they can't do something. So the Wikipedian in Residence project and GLAM-Wiki work in general has been controversial and scary for both communities. Both communities recognize and are quite aware of instinctively why it's scary for *them*. But they don't necessarily know why it's scary for the other. And it's, it's been a task over the last few years of drawing in both communities to come a bit closer together, and the outliers from each cross over, which is, which is very nice. And bringing those people in touch with each other is quite important.

To summarize my project at the British Museum – and every project is different – I spent five weeks full time at the British Museum. Some would spend six months, for example. I had... it was one resident; I had no budget or pay. I ran six projects, specific projects. We had by the end of the five weeks – maybe a week after as well – 50 main page appearances of English Wikipedia, which receives about six million

page views per day. Obviously there are 270 or so Wikipedia language editions, in every language you know and have never heard of, but the English Wikipedia, unsurprisingly, is the most prominent.

We had so much content, so much interest in working with the British Museum. It's merely because they invited us, by the mere fact of the British Museum saying, "We'd like to work with Wikipedia," and for the fact that they were the first to do so. The community at large became very excited and wanted to talk and share and engage with the British Museum. That's a really good, in terms of risk / reward; for very low investment, from the British Museum's point of view, they got fantastic output. It was risky from their perspective, but the rewards greatly outweighed those risks. In fact, the greatest risk in their perspective was negative publicity or brand dilution from people saying, "Well, if you're the British Museum, you're supposed to be venerable, and you're working with these people online." But in fact it was quite the opposite, everyone said. And we had a fantastic *New York Times* article, "Venerable British Museum joins Wikipedia Revolution," which really brought it home that this is not a bad thing.

Everyone likes to think that Wikipedia, they understand that it's, that it's not always accurate, but they personally are intelligent enough to be able to sort the wheat from the chaff. But we as a collective shouldn't be using it. And this kind of legitimization allowed people to come out of the closet as Wikipedia users, which was nice.

We had increased quality, quantity, page views, and click-throughs, so both qualitatively and quantitatively we could measure an improved relationship. And there are Wikipedians in Residence at the Smithsonian; the Children's Museum, Indianapolis; the National Archives of American Art – Sarah, resident; and obviously now also Dominic here. There are more institutions on the way: Versailles, Palace of Versailles, has their Wikipedian in Residence now; Derby Museum, a regional art gallery/museum in Derbyshire in England, has a Wikipedian in Residence. And it was important to show... I think that that's important because it shows every institution large and small – gallery, archive, library – can be involved in some way, shape, or form.

The concept arrived from the GLAM-Wiki conference, which was mentioned in the introduction, which happened in Canberra last year – sorry, in 2009. This was the plenary session in Canberra, where one of the outcomes from that conference was the suggestion that we bring Wikipedia in-house to cultural institutions as a way of breaking down the barriers. We then subsequently ran GLAM-Wiki in London and GLAM-Wiki in Paris.

At the British Museum, I ran five projects, as mentioned before. The...most of them derived from the first project. The very important point for me was that I was not the Wikipedian in Residence in order to write Wikipedia articles. The point of my being there was not merely to be an onsite editor. I may have written maybe two individual edits in the course of my time there to actual articles. The entire rest of

my time was as an enabler of the experts and the Wikipedians local and far to interact with each other, as a bridge, as a matchmaker. Different places might do different things, and that's fine. This is the way I ran it at the British Museum.

The very first thing we did was the backstage pass tour. I believe you've done this here as well. The concept of bringing people in-house, have a meeting, have... in the first photograph, that's An Van Camp, with – the lady with the glasses on the right-hand side, she's the curator of Dutch prints and drawings at the British Museum, showing a collection of Wikipedians, this is Dürer's original woodblock. And the Wikipedians were saying "Fantastic, that's really exciting. This is the kind of thing that's not normally on display." And then the second half of the day we did the reverse; the Wikipedians talking to the curators saying "This is behind the scenes of our institution." The really important part of the backstage pass days – and we've run them at a variety of institutions – is not the first, nor the second half of the day. They're just the bait, to get both sides of the communities to come along. The value in these events is lunch because that's when the two different groups can actually sit together in a casual atmosphere and bounce ideas off each other and break down barriers of "You're an expert, you're in the Ivory tower" – break down that barrier – and the reverse, "Oh, you're just a volunteer online and you live in your basement and you don't have a job" – break down that one as well. And from these days all sorts of other good ideas, that both communities thought were their own, kind of come to the surface.

The two that were the ongoing, the most far-going and self-managing, were the one-on-one collaborations and the photo requests page. One-on-one collaborations was effectively the personals matchmaking service, whereby individual Wikipedians wrote to me and said "I want to have some assistance in this subject or object that I'm interested in, and I'd like some expertise." And so we can see Sweet Track is an object. Sweet Track is the original, the earliest known wooden plank construction of a road; it was over a bog that ended up being preserved in peat that was the earliest we have anywhere in the world of a constructed bridge or pathway, which is quite fantastic. That now has a Wikipedia article because we put that Wikipedian in contact with the curator, and they could geek out about it. Equally, we had subject areas. Cycladic art. Cycladic art is not an individual object; it's not inherent to the British Museum – like the Rosetta Stone or Cyrus Cylinder, objects *in* the British Museum – but equally they have expertise in-house about Cycladic art. And the British Museum, thinking terms of enlightened self-interest, wants to make sure that its references, its academics, its footnotes, are the ones that are used. If an institution has a collection of Roman coins, they are never going to be the only resource out there for Roman coins. But if they get their footnotes and their experts used in Wikipedia, they'll damn well be the most visible collection of Roman coins around. So there is a...there is an egotistical angle to it as well that's quite compatible with Wikipedia. We are what you might call intellectually promiscuous; we'll take whatever comes along. And if someone is the most active at sharing their knowledge with us, we'll go with them.

And at the bottom you can also see a section called curators seeking Wikipedians.

Some individual curators didn't want to edit themselves. They're busy; they've got stuff to do. But they have this object that they wrote about 20 years ago for their thesis and they think it's really cool. And they know all the books, they know all the research, and it's not visible online, it's not on display, no one knows about this thing except them. They're the expert on this thing. Wikipedians, being intellectually promiscuous, if we found the subject, we found a person who wants to share, we can find a Wikipedian who'll work with them. And in fact the article, where is it, Admonitions Scroll, is a Chinese story on a scroll that was very poorly represented online and had a lot of contesting ethno-nationalistic debates about it. A lot of British Museum objects have some fairly heated debates about who should own this stuff, where should it live. And the British Museum curator said "Yes, I understand there are some politics about, that's why I don't want to write it myself. But I want to provide all the resources about this because it's an important thing, and can someone else write about it. I'm not going to own the article; I'm not going to take control of it. But I want it to be shared." And so that is now a feature-quality article, which is our top peer review assessment, which is extremely thorough. That article didn't exist before.

And Isabella Brant – is this portrait here – is the second, first wife of Reubens, I think it's Reubens. He made this drawing – it's just a quick drawing – and it's in the collection of the British Museum, and they discovered, in conserving it, that actually on the back side of the drawing, is another drawing of his second wife, standing there with his first wife's children, which is a really interesting story about this object and the history of the painter and the family around it, which no one knew about. And that's now a feature article as well. And you can get some fantastic, detailed, really obscure information that knowledge professionals love to collect. Everyone has the thing that they studied and they're just really excited about. And no one else knows about it, and that's fine, but they can share it on this platform in a way you cannot do merely by having physical exhibition space in a building, or a web site with 50 million archival record collections all equally varied. Wikipedia's great advantage is in contextualization.

The second one was the photos requested page. British Museum allows photography in its building; many institutions don't, but the British Museum does. They were not willing to share their own images of their collection with us, which we would have loved. That's okay, they didn't want to, and it doesn't... we weren't going to not work with the British Museum because they didn't want to share their image of the Rosetta Stone. I lobbied for it, but it's not a make or break issue. So people were asking the questions and crowdsourcing photography requests. International people were saying "You're on-site" or "You're a local London-based Wikipedian. Can you go in and take a picture of this particular jade *bi*, object number 90, which is in room 33. And they were crowdsourcing the photography of the collection because they were really interested in these obscure things. Not the kind of stuff that you might actually have in postcards in the gift shop; these are not the cool objects. But this is, for example, an Easter Island *moai*. It's the big Easter Island statues that you might be familiar with. All of the pictures that you can find online, and even less of them are online and with a freely available copyright

license, were of the front. Everyone knows the front of these things with the big nose and the empty eyes. The back is really important, which you might be able to see in this slide. There are circles and lines etched into the back of this *moai* statue, which are the only remaining remnants of the original Easter Island tattooing culture. And there are some original anthropological documents of the few Easter Islanders who were still around when Europeans visited the island who talked about these... these markings. But there was no pictures; there's nothing. This is it. And that's not expressed anywhere in the British Museum's online photography catalog. So now, that photograph of the British Museum object is used in the Wikipedia article Tattooing, which is the kind of contextualization you would not normally get if you're only thinking in terms of object record to article.

Secondly – that was just happening in its own right; that was just taking over and I was just assisting in the connection of these people. The second thing we did was the feature article prize. We said “Alright, some people edit because they really like subject X, but some people edit because they've been encouraged to be involved; it doesn't matter what it was, but they will... if you can provide a little bit more incentive, they'll go over here instead.” So I said, okay, British Museum will give five people, or groups, 100 pound gift vouchers to the British Museum shop, for the first five articles in any language that reach that language's feature article standard. Now there are some flaws in that argument in that it does, to a certain degree, encourage Wikipedia editing for commercial gain, which was a criticism. But equally, you're getting a gift voucher, so it's not like... it's not going to support you through college, you know. And the British Museum is basically giving money to its own shop, so it's not losing money in that sense. And it was in any language. We wanted to encourage the fact that British Museum content and Wikipedia content is available in multiple contexts. It's not merely English; it's a global project. The smaller the project, the less rigorous the feature article standard – English being the largest has the most rigorous feature article standard – but I figured that would even out. There's more people editing in English, so more people could potentially win, but they've got to work harder to win it.

In the end we had Royal Gold Cup, which didn't exist at all, which is the, pretty much the, as an article, which is on display permanently, but it is pretty much the only piece of remaining medieval European crown jewels. And it's French. And that was in the English Wikipedia article. We had the Latin Wikipedia won for Rosetta Stone, Tabula Rosettana, which some criticism was what's the return on investment for that? It's Latin Wikipedia; who is going to read this? Not many people. I think it's kind of cute that it's in the Latin Wikipedia for, of all subjects, Rosetta Stone is kind of appropriate for that. But the guy who wrote that is English; he's British. He went on to translate his work from the Latin Wikipedia, and all the footnotes he found, into English Wikipedia. He translated from Latin into English the work that he'd already done, and now Rosetta Stone is a feature article in the English Wikipedia. And as a result, not surprisingly, it's their most famous object, is the most individually visible thing in all of the English Wikipedia to do with the British Museum. And it cost the British Museum a 100 pound gift voucher at their own shop. Millions and millions of people have seen this; this comes up higher, when

you type in Rosetta Stone in Google, we come up before they do. So it's in their best interest to make sure that that information is good.

And that can do that in a variety of ways; this way is one of them. Great Wave of Kanagawa in Spanish. Epifania de Miquel Àngel in Catalán. And Benin Bronzes – it's a collection of bronze plaques that were nicked from Benin – in Catalán as well. The Catalán community in Wikipedia is really active 1) because they're a coherent group and meet each other a lot, they're engaged and they're excited, but b) because they want to make sure that the Catalán Wikipedia is better than the Spanish Wikipedia. Cool, if that's your motivation for sharing knowledge, go for your life.

We then said the other way around. The feature article prize – by the way, these five projects are the projects I came up with and could run in the five weeks that I was there. There are many other kinds of projects that someone who is staying at the institution for longer could come up with and run over a longer period of time. There's no right or wrong answer; there's no canonical list. These are just some examples. Hoxne Challenge we said the reverse of the feature article prize; that was you pick and topic and we'll support you, but you run it and if you are first then you get a prize. Hoxne Challenge was no prize, but it was we pick the topic and we focus everyone on that. The Hoxne Challenge referred to the Hoxne Hoard – Hoxne is a town in England where the largest ever collection of Roman gold and silver coins and jewelry was discovered about 1992, if memory serves. This is a picture of the reconstructed box of some of the jewelry. It's not all on display, but this is part of it that's on display. Case about this big, extremely valuable. None of the big silver plates like you see in other things like the Mildenhall Treasure. But you can assume that this was as rich as this box was, there were probably other boxes that have subsequently been lost. This was a really rich family.

And we said, okay, the catalog – the 20 years in the making catalog – has just been published this year. All of the experts are in-house: the metallurgists, the geologists, the Roman experts, the Celtic, English, the whole shenanigans, everything's onsite, all the knowledge, all the books, all the footnotes, all the experts, all the collection is there. And yet the online information is abysmal. There is a very poor Wikipedia article that is three sentences long. There is a British Museum "explore the collection" record, which is the kind of entry-level fun page for cool stuff that's about half a web site page long saying come along and see it, it's in room 33. But all of the academic, all of the detailed information is either in a book that 20 people are going to buy, ever, or in the collection records management system, where every single individual coin or spoon has a record – that's in the archival context of here's the archival record of the existence of this coin, item number 3,012. It's not collated in any way; there's no overarching... there's place on the British Museum's web site talking about the Hoxne Hoard. So we said, let's do this. How long does it take to get an article from nothing to fantastic? And we said let's do it in a week. Let's see if we can get this article to feature status in a week. And we'll announce it on a Friday; we'll have an in-house event next Friday, where we'll get 20 Wikipedians and 20 experts and some of the objects that are on display, and I'll lock them in a room with coffee and wifi and see



what happens. And it was really quite astounding what we did achieve.

We didn't achieve feature article. Well, eventually we did, but we didn't achieve feature article in 24 hours. But we did achieve – hope this runs. This is a time lapse video of the editing process on that day, where everyone's coming in and they're moving around and sorting out the books and they're breaking off into little side teams and they rearrange the tables. This is the afternoon. In the morning we did a tour, and in the afternoon we come in here and we write. Okay we've decided. We've worked up a plan and broken into groups. They're working on coins and they're working on the geographic context. And then a third group breaks off. And here's a guy the curator, the keep of the collection, doing a little dance on the left-hand side. The lady in green keeps wandering back and forward; she's the one who wrote the book. And so this is 20 people who, the week before, had never heard of this thing, who spend the entire day deeply involved in this collection, in this content. It's truly extraordinary; it's like history on steroids. And you ended up with the Wikipedia article Hoxne Hoard. Actually let me first show you what the Wikipedia article looked like before this challenge was announced. It was about, there we go, two paragraphs long. One footnote to the British Museum collection record, two further readings. And, okay, the current revision had, look at the sidebar here. That's the contents page – archaeological history point 1, point 2, point 3; items point 2.1, 2.1.1; burial, historic context; acquisition, display, and impact; see notes. It's been translated into French, and Italian and Arabic as well. Maps, beautiful photographs, and a list of – every single item is footnoted – list of individual objects. Many of the related articles, like the articles about individual Roman coin denominations, now exist as articles in their own right. So there was a kind of ecosystem of articles around this that developed out, an ecosystem of... Roman trade with Britain in this period, is now an article.

Coins – this is where all the coins were minted. Tables of which coins came from where. This is demonstrating how coins were clipped around the edges to melt down, to get the raw silver, melted into new coins and try and pass off the original coin as still full value. Jewelry, pull quotes, these are all the inscriptions on the spoons. This is, we think this is a toothbrush. And then if you go to the end, you look at some of the footnotes. Nearly all of these people are British Museum curators, and they're British Museum publications. So Johns.... Oh, what; I think this is working now. Johns, Bland, Guest, they're all curators at the British Museum. We've just given them the biggest possible plug for their books that you could ever get. And if they're published by British Museum press, that's advertising for their sales catalog, if you want to think of it in that way. So let me move on a bit. Is this working? No.

Then we also did a translation project. This was a French high school that was coming to visit for a school visit to the British Museum. They were coming to England as part of their summer program, learn English, trip together. They came to the British Museum, and I said to them beforehand – okay, I'll give you the ten most important articles about British Museum objects that don't exist in the French Wikipedia, and you will on the trip over in the school bus in groups translate the

opening two paragraphs from English into French, and then hand that into your teachers. And they did. It was something they could practice English and research. And some of the objects were French historical objects, so they were learning about French cultural history anyway. Then when they got to the British Museum the teachers gave me their compiled sheets, corrected and so forth, and we could upload those articles – we did it for them – upload those articles to the French Wikipedia. Now their two paragraphs long, not particularly efficient way of going and writing five Wikipedia articles of two paragraphs long. But it meant that those students would then, went around the British Museum finding the objects in the collection that they'd spent the last three hours writing about. And so it made a really digital to reality crossover project. And then they could then go home and look at the content, look at the assignment that they've been writing, and show their parents, and feel like the work that they've done, their schoolwork – their school assignment, their homework – was alive. And people were actually reading it, and – crumbs, I better make sure that my English is good now! It was... there's... people spend much more time working on school assignments when they know that someone is actually going to read it, if it's not going to just be read once by the professor, marked, and then handed in and thrown away, put under the bed. If the work is actually published for all the world to see, they'll spend a lot more time doing it, even if it doesn't get an equivalent more grade point, um, value associated with that assignment.

So they were the five or six projects that I ran. Some of the statistics that came from this were quite impressive. In blue you see the page view, the combined page view numbers on the English Wikipedia – not German and French as well, which were quite significant, just the English Wikipedia – brought down by two orders of magnitude. So that spike in about April 2009, that's one million page views – one million page views in April, one million page views in May. I'll come back to why there's a spike there. Then you can see that over the corpus of British Museum articles for the previous two... Articles related to the British Museum, so not Rome, or not Egyptian history. Ancient Egypt, ancient Egypt clearly has a relationship with the British Museum, but it's not a subject that's inherent to the British Museum. Rosetta Stone, Elgin Marbles, these are inherent to the British Museum, but the Parthenon is not inherent to the British Museum, if you see what I mean. So this is the combined page view numbers in blue for all those articles that are categorized as inherent to the British Museum, month by month. And you can see that when I was there in June 2010, we ended up over the course of one month doubling the organic page view numbers and doubling the number of articles that were categorized and related to the British Museum. More people were aware of the British Museum project within the Wikiverse, and so they were thinking – oh, I'll link to that; I'll help out with this, and I'll translate that. It became much more... there was a momentum. And so we *doubled* the number of people who were actually looking at this stuff, which is a valuable thing in its own right. But then we also had the red line. Red is the click through statistics from the Wikipedia articles anywhere in Wikipedia to anywhere in the British Museum website. So red is from their own analytics. We publish the blue line; we publish all of our data. Red is data that they gave me. So you can see that on average, about 5,000 people would

click through from Wikipedia to the British Museum in any given month. Somewhere. But by the end of my time, we're ticking up – in the next month after that and the next month after that – we're ticking up to 10,000 people. We're getting spikes – not 10,000 – we're getting spikes double the original lows and an organic number that's increasing. And that's not Wikipedians, that's visitors, that's readers, who have no idea there's a relationship between these two organizations, clicking through.

We want people to leave Wikipedia. Many, many websites want people to stay and don't have external links. We consider anyone who leaves Wikipedia by a footnote to be a satisfied customer because they've found what they wanted and they've been able to be directed to more information, like a reference desk librarian. If someone comes to the reference desk librarian and is still there 20 minutes later asking more questions, that's not a satisfied customer. You know, if they've come, they've asked the question, they've gone thanks very much, and they've gone and found the book that they were after, that's a satisfied customer. We want to send people to your original materials, to your collection records.

The spike, in both blue and red, but particularly blue, in April 2009, is for one article, the Crystal Skull. Crystal Skull is an object. It's a fake Mesoamerican or Central American skull that was created... are any of you aware of this object? There's three of them. One of them is at the British Museum. But it's a fake. It was a nineteenth-century recreation that was sold to the British Museum as this great find. And it looks like that. And it's on display, but it's hidden away in the corner because [whispers] it's actually a fake. But it's really cool. And the British Museum were unaware of the fact that in July, April and July, in 2008 that was receiving a million page views a month. And that moreover, people were... there was a spike, a number of people were clicking through to that article on their own collection record from Wikipedia. The reason there was that spike was because that was the month that the film Indiana Jones and the Temple of the Crystal Skull was released. And millions and millions of people were Googling Crystal Skull looking for the session times, probably. And they were coming to Wikipedia – they were probably clicked I'm Feeling Lucky – came to Wikipedia and the article about the object. And many of them probably went – ah, that's not what I wanted and went to the film. But clearly several thousand of them, who previously were not looking at the article – this is the red spike – were not looking at that article, probably didn't know that article existed, were so interested that they went and clicked through to the British Museum's catalog record for that object. Which is a fantastic conversion in two clicks from pop culture session times to British Museum collection record database. That's a... and there's no way you can get those people to the British Museum without doing a massive PR campaign at the same time as the film is launched, buying bus shelter advertisements saying – we've got the object that film is vaguely related to! So we can do some really weird things.

So the point of all of these projects that I do, none of them were about... sorry, all of them were about improving content. They weren't about marketing or advertising the institution, they're about the educational principles of the

encyclopedia, knowledge. They focused on personal relationships. None of these were mass upload things. We've done mass upload projects, which are fantastic, with both metadata, with text, with multimedia. We've got lots of projects with mass uploading and mass creation of articles and mass importing of metadata formats and things, which are brilliant. None of these were that. It's not obliged. All of these were about communities: communities of experts in-house, communities of Wikipedia on-site, local, and global. None of these were about me. None of these – although it could be a resident doing the actual work, writing the articles, and that's fine – none of them actually required me to write the text itself. Because people in Wikipedia-land were, once they'd been invited, once they felt valued – they engaged automatically. It's a volunteer community and anyone whose worked with volunteers knows that it doesn't... it's not about paying people. You don't pay someone and then the work gets better. You pay them in a sense of trust and a sense of value, that their contribution matters. Every institution could do something. It's not obliged to do it this way, but you can do something.

So I think at that point, I could go into some more theoretical elements about... especially about the copyright of Wikipedia, which are of great interest to Wikipedians but potentially not great interest to anyone else. If you like to talk about copyright, please ask any Wikipedian ever.

It's now quarter past two. We've got how long? Till about 3:30. Or 2:30.

Audience Members: [Inaudible]

Liam Wyatt: Okay, so we've got a lot of time. Does anyone have...

Audience Members: It's an hour later...

Liam Wyatt: Oh, it's an hour later. Okay, sorry, the computer's wrong. Does anybody have any questions on that or would like to go into greater detail of a particular area, an area you think I might have missed? Or like to talk about what can be done in the NARA context?

Questioner 1: [Inaudible]

Liam Wyatt: It's being recorded, so if you could go up to the microphone.

Questioner 1: So the British Museum expressed interest to have you come in the beginning, but when you say the British Museum, was that like the higher-ups or were there little people on the ground who were interested? And either way, did you have trouble convincing the people who were going to be actually doing the work to work with you?

Liam Wyatt: The particular person that I was working with was the head of the website department, so within their Department of Communications and Audiences. His name is Matthew Cock, and he is awesome for having agreed to stick his neck out

and do this thing. In some circumstances in some institutions it comes from upon high, but in this circumstance it was a division leader. It's important to have someone in the institution who will be willing to back up and actually sign on to the project. And that the institution in some way, shape, or form has buy-in. We were expecting, both he and I were expecting there to be a great deal of reticence, and indeed the risk assessment process for having... before they had formally invited me to come there took six months. And in which time I didn't even know they were doing a risk assessment process. I'd asked, and they said – we'll get back to you. And then six months later they said – you're on. In the meantime he was behind-the-scenes fighting away because it was the first time and, as I said at the beginning, the most... the biggest risk that they could come up with was negative publicity. In the end, there was only positive publicity. There was lots of it, and it was all good, which broke down a lot of barriers at a lot of other institutions, most notably the Smithsonian and – who was it, I think – especially the Smithsonian, rang up my boss and said – how did you get a Wikipedia? We want a Wikipedia. If you can do it, we can do it. So if jealousy is a motivator between institutions for doing cool things, then great. And that's why I'm particularly pleased to promote the British Museum as the first people to have done this because that's cool. Does that answer your question?

Questioner 2:

Hi, I was curious of the... with so many objects at the British Museum, with so many ways you could have gone, how you came about deciding on the five you decided on. I mean there's just such a wealth of material. What did you use as kind of your criteria, or a serendipity that brought you to the projects you decided on?

Liam Wyatt:

So those projects that we ran were – what am I looking at – those projects that we ran were by and large projects suggested and agreed upon in a vague sense at the backstage pass lunch. There was point in me, especially within five weeks, to try and pitch, sell, win over people to do projects or in departments that just didn't want to be involved. It was, you know, try and find the low-hanging fruit. And other people will then come on board when they see the projects. So I wasn't there trying to bash down the most tricky thing. So that's how decided on those five projects.

The other way of... in terms of the five articles that won the feature article prize, they were self-chosen. Wikipedians just started writing articles and the first five to say "I win" got the prize. The other we did was this assessment. In Wikipedia-land, we have what's called WikiProjects. WikiProject Libraries, WikiProject Arthropods, WikiProject Bacon – I kid you not – who collect and categorize in terms of quality and importance the article in Wikipedia related to that subject area.

So in June, I did that for the British Museum. I found all the article that existed related to the British Museum and categorized them. There were 148; you probably can't read the small number, but it was 148 English Wikipedia articles about the British Museum, give or take a few that I might have missed. And I reassessed all of them to be of top importance, so the article British Museum, the article Rosetta Stone, the article Round Reading Room, things you would probably...

things that are the most important if you want to understand the British Museum, and that's top. Then high importance; I classified 22. They vaguely would be things that you would pick up in the fire if you were having to run out right away, what would you collect? What would be the desert island objects, you know? Which 20 things must you have if you're going to save the collection? It's a bit arbitrary, but I tried to categorize them in terms of, you know, core and... low importance were things that were related to but not inherent to the British Museum, not really important. So there is an old... there's a few books that talk about the British Museum. There's an old tube station called British Museum that's now closed down; it was used as a bomb shelter. Now that's definitely related to the British Museum, but it's not important to the British Museum. That's how I classified it that way. And then vertically, quality, that we have quite extensive peer-reviewing systems for feature article, good article, B, C, start, and stub. These are the levels of arranging, of peer-reviewing in Wikipedia. That quality assessment is not visible publicly. You have to click on the discussion page, on the talk page. Every article has an article and an equivalent discussion, and that's where that assessment is kept.

So I could see that, in the initial assessment – okay, that's not going to work – in the initial assessment, there were two articles that were stub and high importance, which we didn't know beforehand because it had never been mapped out, put in this matrix. So I said... I found people who were interested in those articles and said, "I will focus my attentions on you first." Because this is the thing of most... of greatest need, where the least effort will bring the greatest reward. And that's how we could try and divide up the work a bit. By the end of it, you'll notice there are now 262 articles. So we created lots of new ones and also found some other ones that hadn't been categorized properly. There are still only 30 stubs. So despite the fact that we doubled the number of articles, the proportion of articles that are of very poor quality decreased. So we were able to increase qualitatively and quantitatively. And there are now stub high quality articles. We even got a top feature quality. That's the Rosetta Stone; that's that Latin translation. So you know, we tried basically to push everything to the top left-hand corner. Does that answer your question?

How are we doing for time? Another five minutes. Yes could you... someone could take the microphone out and pass it down the line.

Questioner 3: You talked a little bit... you mentioned something about the copyright issues, and I'm kind of, you know, since no one else... I'm interested in that.

Liam Wyatt: Fantastic.

Questioner 3: Sorry guys.

Liam Wyatt: So copyright in five minutes. The... Wikipedia is the free encyclopedia that anyone can edit. And when we say free, we mean it in two senses. Is anyone familiar with

free software, open source software, Linux, and so forth? When they say that, they mean it in two senses of *gratis* and *libre*, free as in speech... sorry, free as in beer – free, no cost – and free as in speech – freedom, abilities to do what you want. Wikipedia, and all of the Wikimedia projects, everything we do – our software, our statistics, our content – is free in both senses. So we cannot, despite the fact that we're a non-profit volunteer organization, we cannot accept anything that has a non-commercial restriction on it, or a non-derivative restriction on it, or a for Wikipedia use only restriction on it, or a for educational use or personal use only restriction on it. Alright. Do you understand why? We don't want to stop anyone from taking Wikipedia content, and putting it in their own project, which may or may not be commercial. Indeed, what defines commercial is extremely vague. Cost-recovery, is that commercial? Ads down the side, is that commercial? We don't want to stop anyone from using our information in any way that they might do, as long as they don't... as long as they attribute where it comes from, as long as they don't pretend that we support what they're doing (that's a trademark, that's a branding issue), and as long as any changes that they make – this is what's called the Share Alike clause, or the viral license – any changes they make down the line have to be shared under the same terms. So you can't take something that's free and then restrict it again. What is public stays public.

So on the spectrum of licenses that are available for Wikipedia content, Wikipedia use – there we go – we accept a few licenses, but not all. Everything has to – we have has to be able to be used... everyone can use it and enjoy the benefits of using it. So it's not restricted by which language you're reading or which... whether you're paying more for it. You must be able to apply knowledge acquired from it. So if you make some fantastic commercial product, if you win an award or gain a degree using Wikipedia information, Wikipedia-derived information, we're not going to come after you and ask for a royalty cut. We must have the freedom to make and redistribute copies in whole or in part. You must be able to make derived works and print it out and hand it to your students.

In Australia, educational use – printing out and handing to your students – is considered a commercial use. Alright. And the school department has to pay a royalty fee to the National Museum. The Educational Department pays via a collections agency, which keeps its 20 percent cut or 15 percent cut, the Culture Department. Robbing Peter to pay Paul: private company gets money, and education is worse off as a result. So a lot of the time Australian institutions use American or overseas or BBC content because it's free. And so Australian school students have to use foreign information because it's cheaper. That's not cool.

So on the spectrum of copyright licenses... there's a ... copyright is a spectrum of all rights reserved – you can't do anything without asking my permission - that's the default. You create something that's of intellectual value; you get all rights reserved by default. You don't have to apply for it. Many people think you have to apply for it. Then the other end of the spectrum is public domain, or all rights expired, copyright has expired. And the amount of time it takes to get to "expired" depends by country. It's generally 70 years after the death of the author, which is a

long time. And if the original purpose of copyright is to encourage the creation of new cultural works by giving you a temporary period over which you can commercially exploit that work, to basically be able to repay you so you can eat and make new cultural things, then having rights over that 70 years after you die doesn't encourage to make new works. All it does is encourage your family members to not work. Or the Disney corporation to not let anyone else make derivative works of Brothers Grimm stories. Brothers Grimm, this is what I mean by the viral clause. You take a Brothers Grimm tale – it's the public's, it's the world's cultural heritage. You make a derivative work of it – you know, a Disney film – that's now copyrighted. You can't make your own version of Snow White that riffs off or derives or mashes up Snow White in any active way. You can make a blog post or something that's minor. But if you actually try and sell as a mass commercial object something that's derived from the Snow White story, Disney corporation will come down on you and say, "No, we own – *we own* – Snow White." I thought personally I thought that was collective cultural heritage. No, it's Disney's cultural heritage. So it used to be 50 years; it's now 70 years after death, also known as the Mickey Mouse Extension Act.

So in the middle are several Creative Commons licenses. Creative Commons... everything that's Creative Commons is in copyright. It's not an anti-copyright regime; it's a permission in advance copyright regime. You don't have to come and ask for certain clauses. And what they've done is said here are six different ways in which you can give permission in advance. From the more restrictive at the top, so Creative Commons attribution-non-commercial-non-derivative; that is you can use it, but you have to attribute where it comes from, you can't use it for commercial purposes, and you can't directly derive works, you can't change it. Obviously because of those freedoms I described before, we can't accept that on Wikipedia. We must allow commercial reuse, or potential commercial reuse. And we must allow people to change it; it's a wiki after all. Then it comes down, down and down and down. We accept these bottom two, of Creative Commons licenses. Attribution only: so we can copy it and paste it and integrate it, as long as we attribute where it comes from. Fine. And attribution share alike: you can copy it and paste it and attribute it, and every change down the line must be equally available, under that license.

So all of Wikipedia text, the entire corpus of information, can be used for whatever you want to do with it, as long as if you make a change, and you mash it up and do something really clever, that you can't then go and put a C-circle logo on it. And that's why a lot of cultural institutions – in America you have the fantastic fact that everything federal government is public domain from birth – but in most countries, cultural institutions – public cultural institutions – sit in the non-commercial area. They're allowed to use it, but only for non-commercial purposes. And we can't touch it, which is really a shame. Australian politicians have to... when we want a photograph of an Australian politician or Australian prominent figure, often we can only use photographs when they visit the White House and the official press photography – federal government agency, public domain. We then take that photograph, crop the person out, use that as their portrait. You can't use... I can't



go to my Australian Parliamentary library and get the official portrait of my prime minister because the official response is we will keep this as Crown copyright, all rights reserved, to discourage satire.

Questioner 4: I wanted to ask about, because of your work in dealing with national governments, have you come up with your own list of, well I'm just saying, maybe three or five of the best or the most cooperative governments, and then your list of the worst?

Liam Wyatt: I haven't ranked them.

Questioner 4: And I was wondering in particular did you have a special analysis of the National Archives here in the U.S.?

Liam Wyatt: The National Archives in the U.S. has the fantastic fact that everything is public domain that's made by an American federal government institution. So that really aids the fact that you by law are allowed everything to be downstream use. I used to work for the Australian Legal Information Institute, AustLII, which publishes all of Australia's laws online, integrated. So a lawyer can look up – or anyone in the public – can look up the law without having to buy the big... you know the textbook. Australian law is a Crown copyright. They're all rights reserved for the duration of the existence of the Crown. The Crown doesn't die, alright. The Crown, long live the Crown... long live the Queen; the Queen is dead. The Crown doesn't die. So Australian law technically is always fully copyrighted, and technically that means that the Australian government can legally stop you from copying it and distributing it. I mean they're not going to, but it's on the books. So the American government – and this is the reason why Wikipedia and all of our servers are based in America – is the best in terms of public domain. By far, the public domain by default is the best law in all the world in terms of government information.

Then you also have the quite reasonable laws about safe harbors: that YouTube and Wikipedia and Google are not responsible for things that happen to have come through those services, and they will respond via DMCA takedown notices quickly but they don't have to act preemptively to potentially remove content. We have extremely active deletion and libel checking and review processes, so we will actually delete libelous material in advance or copyright violation material in advance, whereas Facebook and YouTube and so forth will only take material down when someone complains. We're the only people who give two hoots about copyright on the Internet. It is why we are so anally retentive about copyright when it's restricted in order that we can stand up and put our foot down on things that are actually free. And when someone tries to claim rights over, for example, scans. Here's the Mona Lisa and it's a 300-year-old painting, or however-many-hundred-year-old painting, and then you try and make a faithful reproduction of it and then claim copyright in that. I'm sorry, you don't get to copyright in Mona Lisa.

Questioner 4: Even with what you're saying about Australia, wouldn't it be one of the better countries or governments in the world...?

Liam Wyatt: It's one of the better ones.

Questioner 4: And I mean would you put like China, Cuba, North Korea, I don't know, Saudi Arabia, would they be...?

Liam Wyatt: We're certainly not going to put our servers in China, Cuba, or North Korea. There's no ranking; at least we don't make a ranking. Probably Reporters Without Borders, or a similar organization, would have a ranking of Internet freedom. We're the only organization.... Sorry?

Audience Member: Freedom House.

Liam Wyatt: Freedom House.

We're the only organization that I know of in terms of the most prominent 100 websites that doesn't have a China feed. So you go to Google; you get a different result than if you – in China – than you would elsewhere. We provide the same information to China as anywhere else in the world. And if China wants to do something at their end, well then we can't stop them. But we're not actually going to give different information because the Chinese government says so. Ultimately we are responsible to the American government, but we do try very carefully to look after every country's copyright law. So we take the host country – America – and the country of origin – France, Argentina, Australia – whichever one's copyright law is stronger, harder, longer, that's the one as a matter of policy. Legally, we only have to follow America, but it's a matter of policy. If a French student is looking up a photograph by a Frenchman on a French Wikipedia article in France, then he should feel... he shouldn't have to be worried that that's going to be not following French copyright law. That answer your question?

Questioner 4: [Inaudible]

Liam Wyatt: I think we're out of time. Thanks very much for coming along. If you'd like to know more – ah! – if you'd like to know more about anything to do cultural institutions and Wikipedia, go to G-L-A-M-W-I-K-I dot org: [glamwiki.org](http://glamwiki.org). And that takes you to our homepage for this information, which we've been greatly improving over the last weekend, it has model projects, case studies, success stories, how to get started in all of this, how to edit Wikipedia as an individual, and contact information for local ambassadors around the world. Thank you very much for your time.