

# The undue weight of truth on wikipedia by messer-kruse

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



The paper "The Undue Weight of Truth on Wikipedia by Messer-Kruse" is a delightful example of an article on English. The main thrust of Wikipedia as an online contributor-based social encyclopedia limits itself to the assertions and writings of a book and the stance of the majority to the exclusion of others. The unbending policy of Wikipedia regarding its sources founded primarily upon verifiability and undue weight was experienced first-hand, and on multiple occasions in fact, by author Timothy Messer-Kruse. This occurred as a reaction to the Wikipedia entry on the Haymarket riot and trial of 1886 and involves an attempt to modify the facts regarding the evidence of the trial and the misconception it lacked evidence. Messer-Kruse's extensive study led him to the findings that the most prevailing accounts are not in fact accurate. But his editing was prevented by the Wikipedia editors since the statement is inconsistent with most authors. This poses a major problem because the website restrains in such a way that the majority view prevails, despite its lack of basis, over the minority with well-founded evidence based on actual facts. This battle of sources where Wikipedia has adopted a doctrine of reliability according to popular estimation makes it impossible to successfully contribute when the numbers are not in your favor. New information and findings would also be a problem when the strict policy of undue weight is considered since this would inadvertently lead to rejecting the same because of overwhelming past scholarly proclamations. As a reaction of one Wikipedia editor has told him, "If all historians save one say that the sky was green in 1888, our policies require that we write Most historians write that the sky was green, but one says the sky was blue" (as cited by Messer-Kruse, 2012). This is relevant because it provides for another

reason to a well-known erudite belief that it is ill-advised to rely on Wikipedia as an academic source. Advanced English Composition teaches us the necessity of reliable sources in our research to produce quality and substantiated papers. The system of Wikipedia in comparison to the tedious process of editing, revising and fact-checking embraced by Scholars and even journalistic writers yields for the margin of error to be significantly reduced than social networking media such as Wikipedia.