

of late pre-industrial England was far from moribund and that coal-fired steam engines did not initiate southern de-industrialisation. The only quibble I have relates to Jones' assumption that the great technological advances of his third (coal-dominated) phase were driven by the same process of market integration that propelled the regional restructuring of the previous two phases. One could, of course, build a plausible argument around industrial agglomerations reaching critical mass to support such a view, but that case is not made. Nor does demonstrating the earlier power of the market to transform regional economies do the job. Without more direct evidence, a sceptic could still contend that what happened in Jones' third phase was an entirely separate phenomenon. In other words, first markets integrated *and then* there was an industrial revolution, rather than market integration leading to industrial revolution. This may sound like pedantry but it isn't: each formulation has different policy implications. The former suggests that a separate trigger is needed for an industrial revolution-like event, the latter that the market and competition will suffice.

Another interesting feature of *Locating the Industrial Revolution* is that it shows, I believe, three ways in which the study of economic history can inform economics.

First, economic history provides real world context. By training, economists look for neat solutions; economic history exposes them to cases where the usual assumptions do not apply,

where, for example, responses do not automatically follow incentives and irrationality persists. In the wake of the global financial crisis, such knowledge is surely germane.

Second, economic history provides economists with a wealth of data to test theories. Care is needed here, though, for, as the book neatly illustrates, historical data can be unreliable. Moreover, merely using history as a lab without understanding the sources and period leads one to miss as much as one discovers. As Jones notes:

Models are not meant to map reality, yet the economist's professional urge is to go too far down this track, to see how far any model will run. It then becomes an exercise, not history. (p. 245)

Finally, the puzzles posed by economic history can be sources of useful new ideas. Properly taught, economic history and theory complement each other beautifully and yield powerful insights.

*Locating the Industrial Revolution* is an excellently written book that offers an intelligent, erudite and thoroughly entertaining account of one of history's most significant events. It is highly recommended.

**Reviewed by Gary Magee,  
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*Good Faith Collaboration:  
The Culture of Wikipedia*

**By Joseph M Reagle Jr**

MIT Press, 2010

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ISBN 9780262014472

**G**ood Faith Collaboration explores the genesis and operations of Wikipedia, as well as the community of Wikipedians who sit behind the online encyclopaedia. The book, which was originally written for a postgraduate dissertation, offers a detailed and sympathetic account of what Joseph Reagle, Jr. believes are the core features of the Wikipedia culture and community.

Reagle starts by chronicling modern attempts at developing a universal encyclopaedia. The task of capturing and cataloguing the world's knowledge, as it was and as it is, does not fit well with the static paper-based approaches used in the past. Yet electronic and web-based attempts did not automatically achieve success either. Wikipedia's predecessor Nupedia was a peer-reviewed web based encyclopaedia. Like Wikipedia, it allowed individuals to share their knowledge, but contributions had to come from authoritative experts. Though well intended, the need to submit whole entries and undergo the review process discouraged contributors and curtailed Nupedia's vision of being a free and accessible encyclopaedia.

The invention of the wiki, which allows readers of a webpage to edit it, enabled a new process where members could not only contribute entries but also amend and add to other people's work. Wikipedia uses the wiki idea,

but all material included on a Wikipedia page must be independently verifiable and referenced. Like Nupedia, Wikipedia monitors what material can be used, but it is important to note that Wikipedia was not an attempt to improve on Nupedia. Wikipedia incorporated elements of Nupedia's vision but has a dynamic democratisation of knowledge as its central vision.

Reagle attributes Wikipedia's scope for collaboration to two key principles: Neutral Point of View (NPOV) and Good Faith. With different views on what is fact, NPOV is essential to the encyclopaedia's operation. NPOV requires that users capture and accurately reflect the diversity of views on a given subject matter.

An article on evolution, for example, prompted significant debate among Wikipedians, including on how to account for divergent views on creationism. As is often the case with Wikipedia, its community of editors and contributors figured out a solution as they went along, typically following much impassioned and not always constructive debate.

Good Faith, in a similar way, is shown to be both a principle and an aspiration. The policy is that fellow Wikipedians should be treated as if their intention was to benefit the community. The hope is that applying the principle of good faith gives a redemptive quality to what could otherwise become unnecessarily divisive conduct. It reorients those participating in the disagreement

towards collaboration. Importantly, Reagle points out that the intention is not to avoid disagreement. It is the manner in which Wikipedians disagree that it is the key to Good Faith. The principle extends to encouraging participation and newer members of the community. One of my favourite Wikipedia maxims is 'don't bite the newcomer.'

Delving further, the book considers what is meant by openness in reference to both how the community runs and who may be a part of it. Openness exists within the confines of the community; while membership is not exclusive (far from it—'anyone can edit'), openness can only occur when Wikipedians participate in accordance

with the community's policies and principles. Some examples used are trolling and vandalism. Managing the latter is especially fraught as one strategy used to battle vandalism is to protect a page. This prevents contributors from editing the page in question entirely or limits who can edit for a period of time. While transparency is important to ensuring such restrictions are not abused, Wikipedia founder Jimmy Wales notes that an open system does not require that everyone can edit but rather that actions should not result in the system becoming closed.

While the overarching components of Wikipedia are set, much is still being figured out as situations arise and potential conflicts of stated

principles appear. Reagle is not concerned by this. Instead, he concludes that this is part of the beauty of Wikipedia. The objective is set, yet the path is unclear, and while rules, policies and procedures exist, they are in tension with one another at times. He shows using two 'laws' of Wikipedia that while the actions of one might be disruptive, it might also produce fruit.

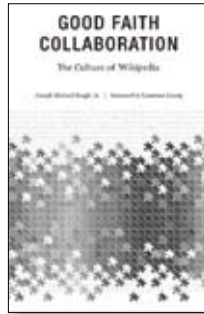
Problematic users will drive good users away from Wikipedia far more often than good users will drive away problematic ones.

— Extreme Uction's Third Law

Trolls are the driving force of Wikipedia. The worst trolls often spur the best editors into creating a brilliant article with watertight references where without the trollish escapades we would only have a brief stub.

— Bachmann's Law

Reagle uses the same theme of tension to dissect Wales's leadership. As a consensus driven community, and one in which membership is ever increasing, the influence of Wales has necessarily changed from intimate involvement to influencer. Considering what it means to be a leader in a highly decentralised community (read modern day management practice), Wales no longer arbitrates individual disputes or writes



every inch of policy. Instead, he appeals to the vision he has for Wikipedia and commends those individuals whose actions reinforce the values that underpin it.

Wikipedia's management has become increasingly bureaucratic as procedure within the community has been settled. Nonetheless, there is still a strong undercurrent that opposes unnecessary procedure. A high court of sorts has been created to arbitrate disputes among community members. Montesquieu would be disappointed, however, as the committee in question is also able to create policies.

Wales, who was once a futures trader, counts F.A. Hayek as a major influence on his vision for Wikipedia and its community. There are many aspects of Wikipedia that a Hayekian would appreciate: rule of law (of sorts); accountability (even Wales has found himself in trouble for not following his own principles and acting in the spirit of Wikipedia); and a competition for accuracy and information (a non-monetary market for knowledge). Nonetheless, it is the understanding of collective behaviour—the occurrence of spontaneous order—that was of most interest to Wales. Wikipedia, though messy and imperfect, is increasingly achieving this.

Good Faith Collaboration prompts consideration of a vast number of issues: running a business, teamwork, politics, legal theory, multiculturalism, and obviously, the scope for technology in society. Reagle's inclusion of Wikipedian laws, rules

and theorems is also a nice touch for non-Wikipedian readers to get a sense of the culture. Readers who fancy themselves technology gurus will also enjoy the detail included. The most interesting contribution of the book is that it is the operation of Hayekian organisation and structure and visionary leadership that allows the global community to flourish and make a contribution. For those who groan at the thought of Wikipedia's inaccuracies or partially complete articles, Wales and Reagle are clear: Wikipedia is a work in progress. To this end caveat emptor. Then again, perhaps it is one more reason to contribute to its pages.

**Reviewed by Alice Bailey**

*The Warcraft Civilization: Social Science in a Virtual World*

**By William Sims Bainbridge**

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ISBN 0262013703

Online communities are a growing use of the internet. Some of the most popular sites let internet users interact with others and build a distinctly personal space: MySpace, Facebook and YouTube—now household names—are examples.

Online gaming worlds are perhaps less known online communities, but many of these virtual worlds have millions of active users. A few examples include Everquest,

World of Warcraft, and Second Life. These worlds have a persistent online space in which people, through a virtual projection of themselves, can simultaneously interact with the environment or with other players. Participants identify with their virtual projection—their avatar—and develop it to their taste within the world's rules. In a sense, this virtual existence is analogous to our real life existence.

The fact that these worlds contain continually interacting human participants has encouraged academics to study them. In the field of medicine, virologists studied the spread of a highly contagious and fatal disease in a virtual world. What made that study compelling when compared to computer-based simulations was that it let researchers analyse the uncontrolled human behavioural response to the outbreak. This, obviously, has implications for drawing conclusions about real-world behaviour. Other contributions to the developing literature on virtual worlds have sought to shed light on the social, cultural and economic features of these worlds.

*Warcraft Civilization* by William

Sims Bainbridge is one of

these contributions.

The book examines the society that has developed within the online gaming world Azeroth of the game World of Warcraft, which is developed and maintained by Blizzard Entertainment. It is

wide-ranging and covers diverse

