

# “Brian Martin (social scientist)”: a Wikipedia entry annotated by its subject

Brian Martin

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## **Introduction**

In 2005, a Wikipedia entry was created about me. It changed gradually over the years and was innocuous. Then in January 2016, it was drastically rewritten, turned into an attack page. I have written about this separately in “Persistent bias on Wikipedia: methods and responses,” in which I list various ways to bias a Wikipedia entry, using my own page as a case study. There was insufficient space in that article for me to give details about the biases in the resulting form of my page—that is my aim here.

## **Background about my Wikipedia page**

My Wikipedia page was set up in 2005 and edited sporadically in following years, by a variety of editors. In only a couple of instances did I ever know the identity of an editor. In January 2006 the text was replaced by information about a different Brian Martin; this was immediately reversed. At another point (2006–2010), the page was questioned for my notability. Eventually enough suitable material was added so the warning was removed.

Overall, my page portrayed me favourably, emphasising my professional accomplishments and my work on whistleblowing and suppression of dissent, and listing a selection of my books and articles. One of my major areas of work, nonviolent action, was little mentioned, presumably because this was not of special interest to any editors. For years, my Wikipedia entry was not of much concern to me because I run my own website (<http://www.bmartin.cc/>), which gives a more complete portrayal of my work than Wikipedia.

Then, on 21 January 2016, Wikipedia admin JzG (aka Guy) rewrote most of my entry, turning it into an attack on my reputation. Supporting JzG’s framing of my entry, Gongwool made dozens of edits in the following months. Several editors attempted to moderate the new negative framing, and a shifting but still negative portrayal was maintained through hundreds of edits. The hostile editing of my entry came to my attention and stimulated me to develop a categorisation of techniques for biasing Wikipedia entries. I operate on the assumption that techniques used in one case are likely to be found elsewhere and, indeed, others have told me the same techniques have been used on other entries.

For each year my Wikipedia page has existed, Table 1 lists the total number of edits and the number of different editors, divided into bots (automated programs) and non-bots (humans).

**Table 1. Number of edits and editors of Wikipedia page “Brian Martin (social scientist),” 2005–July 2016**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total edits</b>	<b>Different editors (non-bot)</b>	<b>Different bot editors</b>
2005	7	5	1
2006	16	9	2
2007	14	3	0
2008	5	5	0
2009	8	3	1
2010	13	7	4
2011	8	5	2
2012	8	4	2
2013	13	4	1
2014	12	8	2
2015	25	5	4
2016 (January-July)	222	24	3

## Introduction to my page

Below is a complete reproduction of my Wikipedia entry as of 19 July 2016, a point of relative stability following hundreds of edits in the previous six months. My page has been edited subsequently, so this is a snapshot in its evolution, intended to provide some detail about the biases present at that time. These biases are typical of those instituted beginning in January 2016.

Following relevant sentences, I provide commentary—annotations, if you like—and additional references. This is my own point of view, and I am very far from a neutral observer. However, I am a very well informed observer, and I provide documentation that can be followed by anyone interested. As noted in “Persistent bias on Wikipedia,” my interest is in the techniques used to create and maintain bias, as an aid to efforts to improve Wikipedia.

For further commentary on the editing of my page, see Robert Dildine, “Wikipedia's strange certainty about Edward Hooper, Brian Martin, and the OPV/AIDS hypothesis,” May 2016, [http://www.aidsorigins.com/sites/all/files/pdfs/Wikipedias\\_Strange\\_Certainty.pdf](http://www.aidsorigins.com/sites/all/files/pdfs/Wikipedias_Strange_Certainty.pdf).

## Wikipedia entry (19 July 2016 version), annotated

In this section, I give the full text of my Wikipedia entry, with comments along the way.

### Brian Martin (social scientist)

<b>Brian Martin</b>	
<b>Born</b>	1947 <a href="#">Gary, Indiana, USA</a>
<b>Education</b>	<a href="#">Rice University</a> , (BA in Physics); <a href="#">University of Sydney</a> (PhD)
<b>Occupation</b>	Social scientist at <a href="#">University of Wollongong</a> (social study of dissent, peace studies); formerly mathematician at <a href="#">Australian National University</a>
<b>Years active</b>	1973–present
<b>Employer</b>	<a href="#">University of Wollongong</a>

**Brian Martin** (born 1947) is a social scientist at the Faculty of Arts School of Humanities and Social Inquiry at the [University of Wollongong](#) in NSW, [Australia](#).<sup>[1]</sup>

*Comment* Actually, I'm in the Faculty of Law, Humanities and the Arts, which incorporated and superseded the Faculty of Arts several years ago.

He became a professor there in 2007. His interest is in the research of the [suppression of dissent](#).<sup>[2][3]</sup>

*Comment* True, I've been researching suppression of dissent since the late 1970s. After my PhD in theoretical physics from Sydney University, I worked for a decade as an applied mathematician at the Australian National University. I then joined the University of Wollongong in 1986 as a lecturer, was promoted to senior lecturer in 1991, associate professor in 1996 and full professor in 2007. The rank of full professor in Australia is difficult to attain and relatively rare.

The references given for the Wikipedia statement are peculiar: why cite a newspaper article and a blog post when there are numerous scholarly papers referring to my research in this area. An example: Jason A. Delborne, "Transgenes and transgressions: scientific dissent as heterogeneous practice," *Social Studies of Science*, vol. 38, no. 4, 2008, pp. 509–541.

According to the BBC, he has studied [whistleblowing](#) in science.<sup>[4]</sup>

*Comment* Again, why cite BBC news when there are plenty of academic sources, such as Delborne's article above?

he was president of [Whistleblowers Australia](#) from 1996 to 1999 and remains their International Director.<sup>[5]</sup>

*Comment* This information is also available by looking at reports of annual general meetings of Whistleblowers Australia, reproduced in issues of the group's newsletter *The Whistle*, available at [http://www.bmartin.cc/dissent/contacts/au\\_wba/](http://www.bmartin.cc/dissent/contacts/au_wba/). It may be a peculiarity of

Wikipedia that it is preferable to cite a radio programme for this information, given that the information would have come from me or my website.

He is also a former member of the anti-vaccine [Australian Vaccination Network](#) as well as the pro-vaccine [Skeptics Society](#).<sup>[6]</sup>

**Comment** Both these memberships were subscription-generated: I subscribed to *Living Wisdom*, the magazine of the Australian Vaccination Network (AVN), and automatically became a member. The magazine discontinued publication and my associated membership lapsed. Likewise, since the 1990s I have subscribed to the US magazine *The Skeptic* and automatically became a member of the Skeptics Society. Subscription-generated memberships have no significance in terms of a conflict of interest. However, for years members of the pro-vaccination group Stop the Australian (Anti)Vaccination Network (SAVN) and others have been raising my membership in the AVN as if it shows some commitment to the beliefs of the AVN. The only reason these subscription-generated memberships are mentioned on my Wikipedia page is that SAVNers and their allies continue to try to paint me as a critic of vaccination. I doubt there is a single Wikipedia entry on any other individual that mentions subscription-generated memberships. My genuine memberships, for example in the National Tertiary Education Union or the Amateur Chamber Music Society, are not listed.

Martin has spoken at a [British Science Association](#) Festival of Science,<sup>[4]</sup> and testified at the [Australian Federal Senate's](#) Inquiry into Academic Freedom.<sup>[2][7]</sup>

**Comment** Why bother to mention these particular instances, giving media stories as sources? There are far more significant examples that could be used. I spoke at the Royal Society of London in 2000 (about the same time I spoke at the BSA Festival of Science)—as mentioned later in the Wikipedia entry—and in 1994 testified to the Senate Select Committee on Public Interest Whistleblowing (Sydney, 7 March 1994, Hansard report, pp. 765-826.

## Research

Martin's original academic field was stratospheric modelling and numerical methods.

*Comment* Technically, the *field* was theoretical physics, within which I worked on stratospheric modelling and numerical methods. In the decade after my PhD, as an applied mathematician at the Australian National University, I worked mainly on astrophysics, numerical methods and modelling of electricity grids incorporating wind power.

He has published extensively about the social dynamics and politicisation of controversial scientific topics.

*Comment* True, one of my main topics of research is scientific controversies. Most of the Wikipedia entry is about this research. However, I have also published extensively on nonviolent action, peace and war, strategies against injustice (the backfire model), demarchy (a democratic alternative to electoral politics), information issues, and plagiarism. For example, I have published half a dozen books and perhaps a hundred articles relating to nonviolent action, a book and dozens of articles on the backfire model, a co-authored book about random selection in politics and an influential article about demarchy, a book about information politics, and widely read articles about plagiarism. It is unreasonable to expect my Wikipedia entry to reflect this breadth of interests, but nonetheless it is striking that the focus is almost entirely on my work on scientific controversies.

His topics of inquiry have included the globalization of polarised science such as the origin of HIV/AIDS,<sup>[8]</sup> fluoridation and nuclear power.<sup>[9]</sup>

*Comment* I have studied a range of scientific controversies, including nuclear power, fluoridation, pesticides, the origin of AIDS, repetition strain injury (in collaboration with Gabriele Bammer) and vaccination, as well as nuclear winter, climate change and euthanasia. Although fluoridation and nuclear power are mentioned here, the focus in the Wikipedia entry is my work on the

origin-of-AIDS debate, which relates to vaccination, as well as the vaccination controversy itself. So why is there so much attention to particular aspects of my controversy research while the rest of it is largely ignored?

Reference 8, to a media story, is hardly a solid source for my research on the origin-of-AIDS debate.

He argues that there are situations in which scientific research that threatens vested interests can be suppressed. He identifies a number of direct and indirect mechanisms through which this can occur, ranging from the denial of funds and the denial of promotion and tenure, through to the creation of a "general climate of fear".<sup>[10]</sup>

Martin is known as one of the supporters of the [theory of OPV-AIDS](#).<sup>[11][12][13][14]</sup>

**Comment** I have never supported the theory of OPV-AIDS—namely that AIDS originated from contaminated oral polio vaccines—in the sense of advocating for it. My position has always been and remains that I think it is a theory worthy of consideration and that it has been marginalised using unfair or inappropriate means. References 11 and 12 are to opponents of the OPV-AIDS theory and thus are not reliable sources for the claim made about me. References 13 and 14 do not support the claim.

The hypothesis was first popularised in *Rolling Stone* magazine by way of journalist Curtis and AIDS activist Elswood in 1992, and was later further promoted by the journalist/writer Hooper and Martin,<sup>[11][15]</sup> with Hooper crediting Martin for giving the OPV-AIDS link hypothesis "further publicity and credibility".<sup>[13]</sup>

**Comment** As noted, I have promoted fair consideration of the theory rather than advocating for it. Reference 15 is to Tom Curtis' 1992 article in *Rolling Stone*, and thus seems to be a primary source. Reference 11 is to a book by Stephen Jenkins (which I discuss later), who seemingly took his information about the background to the OPV theory from my own writings.

Martin attended an AIDS Origin meeting and a press conference on the unproven theory<sup>[16]</sup> at the [Royal Society](#) in London in 2000.<sup>[12]</sup>

**Comment** Reference 16 is to a clarification published by *Rolling Stone* as part of a settlement of a defamation suit launched by Hilary Koprowski, polio vaccine pioneer. The OPV theory is that Koprowski's polio vaccine, given to nearly a million people in the Congo in the late 1950s, inadvertently led to the AIDS pandemic. Koprowski's legal action had the effect of deterring investigation into the theory.

To say that the theory is "unproven" is interesting, given that no theory for the origin of AIDS could fairly be said to be proven. Most of the effort by scientists working in the area has been to disprove the OPV theory, with little effort devoted to disproving the main alternative theory, the cut-hunter theory, for which there is no direct evidence. In my paper at the Royal Society conference, I emphasised the double standard involved in efforts to disprove or discredit the OPV theory, with the cut-hunter theory treated as the default option. Those who have written the section of my Wikipedia page about the origin of AIDS have used this same double standard.

It is a quirk of Wikipedia's emphasis on secondary sources that a news story is used as the source for my talk at the Royal Society. The source chosen is by an author hostile to the OPV theory. It would also be possible to cite one of Hooper's writings about my talk.

In 2004 Hammar even credited Martin for almost creating a "cottage industry around the sociological and philosophical implications of the thesis and ensuing cover-up".<sup>[14]</sup>

**Comment** Hammar's article is largely sympathetic to the OPV theory. The quote used in Wikipedia may suggest there is something wrong with my efforts. Here is an expanded quote from Hammar's article: "That HIV might be iatrogenic remains a barely thinkable, much less publicly utterable thought. It cannot—it *must not*—be true. Thankfully, there are many others pursuing the OPV thesis. One sociologist, Brian Martin, has almost spawned a cottage industry around the sociological and philosophical implications of the thesis and ensuing cover-up."

In 2010, Martin published a paper in which he argued that "medical researchers had



colluded to silence" the discredited OPV-AIDS hypothesis, and has said that although the peer-review process for the theory was almost "entirely negative", there can be situations where justice appears to be provided by the official processes, but "in many cases there is little corresponding substance".<sup>[17]</sup>

**Comment** This sentence makes it sound like that I wrote, in my 2010 paper, "medical researchers had colluded to silence" the OPV theory. However, those words are nowhere in my paper. The quote is actually from reference 17, an article by journalist Kylar Loussikian in *The Australian*. This is an example of my detractors trying to associate me with a belief in conspiracies, invoking the common idea that conspiracy theories are wrong and misguided, if not crackpot, and to be dismissed out of hand rather than carefully evaluated.

Loussikian's articles launched the public attack on the PhD thesis of my student Judy Wilyman (discussed below) and on me. I wrote a detailed critique of Loussikian's initial article: "News with a negative frame: a vaccination case study," <http://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/16Loussikian.html>.

It would be possible, according to Wikipedia guidelines, to list my 2010 paper in *Science as Culture*. This has not been done, so few readers of the entry would go to the trouble of tracking down the paper to see whether it has been fairly represented.

Martin has been criticised for supporting the theory even though it was disproved through genetic studies in 2008<sup>[11]</sup>

**Comment** The OPV theory of the origin of AIDS has been contested ever since it was proposed in the 1980s. On at least four occasions, the theory was pronounced disproved. For example, Manchester seaman David Carr died in 1959 apparently from AIDS, and in 1990 his tissues were found to contain HIV. This case was apparently incompatible with the OPV theory and used as the clinching evidence by the Wistar Committee that rejected the theory in 1992. However, a study published in 1995 showed that Carr's tissue samples did not contain HIV after all. The disproof was disproved. In science, no evidence is conclusive, because assumptions, methods and outcomes are open to disputation. And so it goes with the alleged 2008 disproof, which is far from

definitive. The citation here is to a book by Stephen Jenkins. It is a convenient source for opponents of the OPV theory, because it is a scholarly source—and it misrepresents my views. I have written a detailed response to Jenkins’ account, including commentary on the alleged 2008 disproof of the OPV theory. I wrote to Jenkins and offered to consider posting his reply to my response, but he did not take up my offer: “Critical thinking about the origin of AIDS: comments on Stephen Jenkins’ account”, 16 May 2016, <http://www.bmartin.cc/dissent/documents/AIDS/Martin16.pdf>

and it is now largely considered "debunked conspiracy theory".<sup>[18]</sup>

**Comment** The reference given is an unsigned summary from the website of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia that rejects the OPV-AIDS theory, giving references only against it and no mention of responses by Edward Hooper and others to alleged refutations of the theory. The OPV theory proposes that vaccines developed by Hilary Koprowski at the Wistar Institute in Philadelphia were responsible for AIDS, so there seems to be a Philadelphia connection. Note the reference to a conspiracy theory, though the OPV-AIDS theory proposes that AIDS was *inadvertently* caused by contaminated polio vaccines: there was no conspiracy involved at the time.

Martin has been active in the criticism of university systems. He has been critical of conflicts of interest within Universities where they are managing internal investigations which may lead to bad publicity, and recommends having independent groups investigating allegations of misconduct;<sup>[19]</sup> he has written about the unauthorised use of research produced by students and junior researchers by senior academics;<sup>[20]</sup> and he has been outspoken against sexual relationships between staff and students.<sup>[21][22]</sup>

**Comment** This is all pretty accurate. It is one facet of my work and, as noted above, not the most important. Note also the reliance on media stories as sources rather than scholarly publications.

He also reports that any bias within universities could simply be due to students

strategically working in-line with the biases of their teachers.<sup>[2]</sup>

**Comment** I don't think I have ever reported that "any bias within universities" could be for the reason given. The reference is to an opinion piece by right-wing commentator Miranda Devine, hardly the most solid source for my views about bias within universities.

Martin believes that if complainants go through the official channels the outcome is very predictable, in that organisation's internal grievance procedures or making a complaint to the relevant ombudsman doesn't work.<sup>[4]</sup> But he also believes whistleblower laws also don't work, saying; "Not only are whistleblower laws flawed through exemptions and in-built weaknesses but in their implementation they are rarely helpful".<sup>[23]</sup>

**Comment** This is another example of the curious quirk arising from Wikipedia relying on secondary sources. The author of reference 23 is quoting me. Apparently this is more appropriate than quoting me directly.

## Criticism

Martin has been criticised for his role in the **Judith Wilyman PhD controversy**<sup>[6]</sup>

**Comment** The graduation of my PhD student Judy Wilyman was the initial trigger for the drastic rewriting of my Wikipedia page beginning on 21 January 2016 by administrator JzG, as recounted in my article "Persistent bias on Wikipedia." I have replied to some of the criticisms in several articles and posts: <http://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/controversy.html> - [Wilyman](#).

Reference 6 is to a 2014 newspaper article by Rick Morton. I wrote a detailed analysis of this article: "Biased reporting: a vaccination case study," 18 March 2014, <http://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/14Morton.html>. The attacks on Judy's thesis occurred years before she graduated and before her critics even knew what was in her thesis.

where medical academics and the [AMA](#) raised concerns of whether Professor Martin had the necessary knowledge<sup>[24]</sup> to assess the topic of vaccine science.<sup>[17]</sup>

**Comment** Reference 24 is to what is essentially a gossip column in the newspaper *The Australian*. Kylar Loussikian and his editors at *The Australian* have latched onto the issue of Judy's thesis, but other mass media have hardly touched it. Reference 17 is to one of Loussikian's many articles about Judy's thesis.

[David Gorski](#) has criticised Martin, claiming that he is not distinguishing between dissent based on facts, science and logic as opposed to dissent based on pseudoscience and misinformation,<sup>[3]</sup>

**Comment** Gorski is well-known for his attacks on criticism of vaccination, or what he calls "antivaccine pseudoscience." To rely on his blog as a source suggests there are no scholarly sources for the point made.

and *The Australian* has criticised him for not recognising academic rigour over academic freedom.<sup>[24]</sup>

**Comment** As noted above, reference 24 is to a gossip column in a newspaper.

Others including [David Gorski](#) have criticised Martin as a defender of former surgeon and researcher [Andrew Wakefield](#),<sup>[3]</sup>

**Comment** Gorski is wrong or misleading. I have never defended Wakefield's ideas, but have written about his treatment as an example of what *might* be suppression of dissent. In my article "On the suppression of vaccination dissent," <http://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/15see.html>, I conclude "This assessment of the Wakefield saga has had a limited objective: to determine whether he has been dealt with in the same way as other scientists with similar records but who have not challenged orthodox views on vaccination. If the case presented by Wakefield and his supporters (CryShame, 2013; Wakefield, 2010; Walker, 2012) is accepted, then suppression of dissent definitely has been involved. If,

on the other hand, the case presented by Wakefield's critics (Deer, 2011; General Medical Council, 2010) is accepted, it is not feasible to make an informed assessment about suppression on present evidence: because the scrutiny of Wakefield has few comparators, it is not possible to do a simple double-standard comparison."

For a detailed analysis of Gorski's blog posts about Judy's graduation and my writings about the attack on her thesis, see my commentary "Gorski versus a Wollongong PhD thesis," <http://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/16Gorski.html>.

and *Agence Science Presse* reports Martin 'also defends the idea of a vaccine-autism link'.<sup>[8]</sup>

**Comment** I have never defended the idea of a vaccine-autism link. The *Agence Science Presse* report is wrong.

## Publications

In 2014 and 2015, Brian Martin published several books through Irene Publishing in Sweden, an activist publisher. These included *Non-violence Unbound*, *Backfire Manual*, *Whistleblowing: A Practical Guide*, and *The Controversy Manual*.

Information from the [National Library of Australia](#) show Martin has also published with [Praeger](#), [State University of New York Press](#), [Rowman & Littlefield](#), [War Resisters' International](#), [Angus and Robertson](#), [SUNY Press](#), and the [Freedom Press](#).<sup>[9]</sup>

**Comment** *Nonviolence Unbound* was published in 2015, *Backfire Manual* in 2012, *Whistleblowing: A Practical Guide* in 2013 and *The Controversy Manual* in 2014. I am pleased to be published by an "activist publisher," but the works should be judged on their merits, not their publisher. The list of publishers for many of my other books is accurate. As noted above, the issues covered in most of these books, and the bulk of my articles, are not addressed in my Wikipedia entry.

## References

1 ^ "Academic Staff #M, School of Humanities & Social Inquiry" . *University of*

- Wollongong*. Retrieved 27 November 2015.
- 2 ^ to: <sup>a b c</sup> Devine, Miranda (4 December 2008). "[Monoculture is killing thought](#)" . *Brisbane Times*. Retrieved 29 January 2010.
  - 3 ^ to: <sup>a b c</sup> Gorski, David (14 January 2016). "Brian Martin and Judy Wilyman: Promoting antivaccine pseudoscience as "dissent"" . *Science Blogs*. Retrieved 9 February 2016.
  - 4 ^ to: <sup>a b c</sup> Murcott, Toby (11 September 2000). "[Science needs its whistleblowers](#)" . *BBC News*. Retrieved 29 January 2010.
  - 5 ^ Barclay, Paul (10 May 2004). "[Perspective: Whistleblowers and Iraq](#)" . *ABC Radio*. Retrieved 29 January 2016.
  - 6 ^ to: <sup>a b</sup> Morton, Rick (28 January 2014). "University paid for anti-vaccine student to attend conference" . *The Australian*. Retrieved 22 January 2016. (subscription required (help)).
  - 7 ^ APH (9 October 2008). "[Inquiry into Academic Freedom](#)" . *Parliament of Australia*. Retrieved 29 January 2016.
  - 8 ^ to: <sup>a b</sup> Lapointe, Pascal (15 January 2016). "[L'anti-vaccination à l'université](#)" . *Agence Science Presse*. Quebec, CA. Retrieved 17 March 2016. translation= "The professor she chose as supervisor, Brian Martin, is known for his belief in a conspiracy to silence and hide the study that the AIDS virus was caused by the polio vaccine. And he also defends the idea of a vaccine-autism link."
  - 9 ^ to: <sup>a b</sup> "[Brian Martin, Search Results at National Library of Australia](#)" . *Online catalogue at NLA*. (Australia). Retrieved 18 March 2016.
  - 10 ^ Hess, David J. (1997). *Science Studies: An Advanced Introduction*, NYU Press (U.S.A.). ISBN 9780814735640. p152.
  - 11 ^ to: <sup>a b c</sup> Jenkins, Stephen H. (2015). *Tools for Critical Thinking in Biology*. New York: Oxford University Press. pp. 217–219. ISBN 978-0-19-998104-5. text= "Although Hooper and Martin are still promoting the tainted polio vaccine hypothesis, recent genetic work has convincingly disproven it... Worobey's team published their genetic comparison of HIV samples in 2008, but Brian Martin continued to promote the tainted polio vaccine hypothesis for the origin of AIDS as late as 2010 in a paper called "How to Attack a Scientific Theory and Get Away with It (Usually)..." p 218.
  - 12 ^ to: <sup>a b</sup> Cohen, Jon (15 September 2000). "[Vaccine Theory of AIDS Origins Disputed at Royal Society](#)" . *Science Magazine (U.S.A.)*. **289** (5486): pp 1850–

1851. Retrieved 29 February 2016.
- 13 ^ to: <sup>a b</sup> Hooper, Edward (1999). *The River: A Journey Back to the Source of HIV and AIDS*. (U.S.A.): Little Brown and Company. p. 797. ISBN 0-316-37261-7.
- 14 ^ to: <sup>a b</sup> Hammar, Lawrence (Anth/SocSc) (1 April 2004). "Dephlogistication, Imperial Display, Apes, Angels, and the Return of Monsieur Emile Zola" (PDF). *Papua New Guinea Medical Journal*. **47** (1-2, Mar-Jun 2004): pp 120, 124. Retrieved 14 March 2016.
- 15 ^ Curtis, Tom (19 March 1992). "The Origin of AIDS: A startling new theory attempts to answer the question, 'Was it an act of God or an act of man?'" . *Rolling Stone magazine* (626). pp. 54–9, 61, 106, 108.
- 16 ^ Editor (9 December 1993). "'Origin of AIDS' update - Clarification". *Rolling Stone magazine* (671). p. 39. This 'Clarification' article forms part of the defamation settlement when Hilary Koprowski sued Tom Curtis & Rolling Stone magazine in 1992-93.
- 17 ^ to: <sup>a b</sup> Loussikian, Kylar (16 January 2016). "Anti-vaccination activists spruik PhD thesis as proof of conspiracy" . *The Australian*. Retrieved 17 January 2016. (subscription required (help)).
- 18 ^ . (21 January 2016). "Debunked: The Polio Vaccine and HIV Link" . *College of Physicians of Philadelphia - historyofvaccines.org*. Retrieved 12 March 2016.
- 19 ^ Colvin, Mark (17 April 2014). "PM: Investigations mounting into research at University of New South Wales" . *ABC Radio*. Retrieved 29 January 2016.
- 20 ^ Matthews, David. (22 October 2015). "Papers retracted after authors used unauthorised data from junior researchers " , *Times Higher Education*, London. Retrieved 11 March 2016.
- 21 ^ Harvey, Sarah. (14 February 2010). "Staff-student review may have wider impact", *The Sunday Star-Times*, New Zealand. pA005.
- 22 ^ Powell, Stan. (29 May 1993). "Uni Staff Attacked for having Sex with Students", *The Sydney Morning Herald*, p11.
- 23 ^ Pickard, Gabrielle (25 December 2014). "Who Does The Whistleblower Protection Act Really Protect?" . *Top Secret Writers*. (U.S.A.). Retrieved 19 March 2016.
- 24 ^ to: <sup>a b</sup> . (2 February 2016). "When fulltime isn't quite that, and Queensland's

VET goes to Kerala" . *The Australian*. Retrieved 2 February 2016.

## External links

- Home page
- Brian Martin , University of Wollongong

Categories: [Australian academics](#) | [Living people](#) | [Australian activists](#) | [Nonviolence advocates](#) | [1947 births](#) | [University of Wollongong faculty](#) | [Free speech activists](#) | [Anti-vaccination activists](#) | [Criticism of science](#) | [AIDS origin hypotheses](#) | [Vaccine controversies](#)

*Comment* Most of these categories are appropriate. However, I am not an anti-vaccination activist. As repeatedly stated in my publications, I do not have a strong view about vaccination and my involvement in the debate is to support free speech by vaccine critics. It is true that I have written extensively on the critique of science, but not in the way undertaken by most of those listed on the strange Wikipedia page “Criticism of science.” My criticisms, for example in my first book, *The Bias of Science*, are primarily about the power structure of science: a political critique, if you like, with several dimensions. In any case, to put me in this category is peculiar, given that my most important works on the critique of science are not mentioned (see <http://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/sciencecritique.html>).

## Conclusion

The Wikipedia entry about me, as of 19 July 2016, displayed bias in various forms and ways. There are several features of significance.

First, the entry omitted reference to the bulk of my research and supervision and concentrated on two topics: my writings on the origin-of-AIDS debate and my supervision of Judy Wilyman.

Second, the orientation of the commentary on these two topics was mostly negative.

Third, despite the availability of numerous scholarly sources commenting



about my research, the entry relied heavily on news stories. Furthermore, some of these news stories are partisan treatments, part of an outpouring of condemnation about Judy's thesis. Here is a breakdown of the references in the entry, by source category.

13 news reports (##2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 12, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24)

4 books and journal articles (##10, 11, 13, 14)

4 institutional websites (##1, 7, 9, 18)

2 blog posts (##3, 23)

1 other (#16)

Fourth, those who wrote the material about my writings on the origin-of-AIDS debate took it upon themselves to make judgements about the debate itself. The debate has continued for over 25 years and it is only the judgement of advocates on one side that the OPV theory has been disproved. So here are editors and admins supposedly presenting a neutral point of view but in practice doing more than commenting on my writing, namely misrepresenting it, judging it and judging the theory that I have been writing about.

From the very beginning, I have written about how the OPV theory is threatening to the medical establishment, which is one reason why it has not received fair treatment. It seems that the theory remains highly threatening to those supportive of medical orthodoxy, so much so that a highly biased account of my writing, and of the theory, is introduced into my Wikipedia entry. Those who have done this have unwittingly exemplified what I have argued in my articles.

Analysing a Wikipedia entry that has been subject to persistent bias thus turns out to be an avenue for revealing the prejudices of some of the editors and admins, especially the hostile ones. That this can happen while maintaining a superficial adherence to Wikipedia policies shows that something needs to change.