MediaWell

News Item

How a false claim about the Wikipedia Recession article sparked a right-wing media frenzy | Slate

By Samuel Breslow
August 15, 2022

> July 29, when Beyoncé's new album dropped, was a great day for her Wikipedia article, which received more than 90,000 views. But that same day, another article, Recession, racked up more than 200,000 views, pushing it past the entries for Beyoncé, the COVID-19 pandemic, Joe Biden, Donald Trump, World War II, and Earth—combined.
>
> The deluge of traffic, which briefly shot the article's popularity rank to No. 2 out of 6.5 million (No. 1 was Hunter Moore, the subject of a recent Netflix documentary), came from conservative tweets and media coverage claiming that the encyclopedia had manipulated its definition of a recession to favor the Biden administration.
>
> The actual story of what happened bears little resemblance to that narrative. The reality is a very typical case study of how Wikipedians modify articles in response to current events—and a clear example of how some conservatives are learning to weaponize the encyclopedia as part of a political battle to delegitimize traditional sources.
>
> […]

Source: How a false claim about the Wikipedia Recession article sparked a right-wing media frenzy.