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⚠️ Fairness.com LLC logo and tag line "Life isn't fair... but we're working on it"®

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I. Overview

The previous module explained how to decide whether an Article would be good for our site. This module shows how to finish the process and actually add a good Article to our site.

Before deciding to add an Article, remember to use our site's Search box (*not the Google search box*) to make sure we don't already have a news story i) on the same news event, or ii) presenting a similar analysis of the same news event. If you decide your candidate Article isn't good for the site for this or any other reason just hit CTRL-W to close the data entry window described below (nothing was added, so you don't need to do any "clean up").

II. Data Fields You're Responsible For

[Note: A printscreen showing the first of these data entry fields (as of August 2008) is at: http://www.fairness.com/training/images/nonrss_data_entry.jpg]

A. Title (includes Subtitle)

If an Article has a reasonably short Title (e.g. `US Contemplates Withdrawal from Iraq`) and a reasonably short Subtitle (e.g. `Legal and Sovereignty Issues to Remain`), use a colon (:) character to combine them both in the Title field (`US Contemplates Withdrawal from Iraq: Legal and Sovereignty Issues to Remain`). This treatment works for 99% of the Articles you'll submit.

In the Title/Subtitle field, as well as in all other fields, you must to copy exactly what you find on the original site. **If there's a typo or grammatical error on the original site you must *not* fix it**. The only exceptions to this "just copy, don't change" rule are:

- Our site's style avoids ALL UPPERCASE capitalization (particularly in the Title and Subtitle fields). Rather than retype anything (and possibly make an error), copy the text into your word processor or other text utility, change the case to Title Case (i.e. only the initial letters of key words get capitalized), and then copy it onto our data entry form.

- if your browser isn't reproducing a non-English character properly (e.g. the accent mark in "Jiménez" shows incorrectly as "Jim?nez") then try to copy that name from another website (e.g. Google or other search engine). If the name from that page is also showing incorrectly then your browser is not configured correctly; check the encoding hints given in the initial RSS feed training. If that still doesn't work, try to pull up the original page with a different browser (Opera or Internet Explorer or Safari) to copy-and-paste the correct name into your Firefox data entry screen.

Some Fine Points

When the Title ends in a punctuation mark, usually a question mark or an exclamation point, then the colon isn't needed and should be left out, e.g. `Is Military Detention for Civilians Justified? A Survey of Unanswered Questions`).

In the rare cases where the Subtitle is too large to combine with the title (i.e. Subtitle is a small paragraph rather than just a sentence or sentence fragment), then your options are to either:

- put the Subtitle at the very top of the Fulltext field (see below), or;
- use the Subtitle in the Short Blurb field if it would make a good Quote (explained below).

When an Article appears as an installment of a daily, weekly, or other ongoing column you should use the Article name as the Title and the column name as the Subtitle, but we put the Column Name in parentheses and don't use a colon. For example, an Article entitled "Utility Judgment" from the ongoing *New York Times* column *The Ethicist* should be entered this way:

`Utility Judgment (The Ethicist)`

Give similar treatment to Articles that are part of special overarching series. For example, if a newspaper is running a four-part series "Life in America" and today's installment, #2, is "America's Cities: Growth and Opportunity", enter the Title/Subtitle as:

America's Cities: Growth and Opportunity ("Life in America" part 2 of 4)

And finally... we don't need to note in the Title (or anywhere else) if the information in the Article is related to a podcast or other media content.

B. URL

This is by far the trickiest field because there are a lot of subtleties in the ways different publishers handle URLs on various sites:

- Junk Characters in the URL

  Once you've analyzed the issues above and know that you're basically working with the right URL you then have to carefully inspect the URL to make sure it is as concise as possible. First, look for one of the following suffixes toward the end, but *not* the very end, of the URL:

  .html .htm .rss .xml .php .asp .jsp .adp .cfm

  Those suffixes normally indicate the end of the *real* URL, and some or all of the rest of the characters are probably *junk* characters that you can edit out. The presence of question mark (?) and/or ampersand (&) characters somewhere in the middle or near the end of the URL are also indicators that you can probably chop off some junk characters at the rightmost end of the URL and still have the Article still come up on the screen. In the following hypothetical URL:

  `http://www.fairness.com/testurl.html?u7e5`

  you'd note the question mark and .html in the middle and test for junk by copying the whole URL above into a new browser window (CTRL-N for most browsers), hitting "Enter" to go to the Article, deleting the characters "?u7e5" from the URL box, and then hitting "Enter" again to see if `http://www.fairness.com/testurl.html` was enough to pull up the same Article. If (and only if) the slimmed down URL brings up the Article should you go ahead and trim off any characters from the original URL.

  Here's another example:

  `http://www.law.com/jsp/ltn/pubArticleLTN.jsp?id=1118666114493&rss=ltn`

  The "?" character is followed by an Article ID#, and an Article ID# is always needed (you'll discover this when you delete it and see that the Article no longer comes up with the shorter URL). But the "&rss=ltn" can be safely deleted, i.e. the Article still pulls up without it.

  No URL other than a site's homepage ends in a slash, so this Article URL:

  `http://www.slate.com/id/2168757/`

  should shortened (after testing!) to:

  `http://www.slate.com/id/2168757`

  Some sites use "forwarding pages" whose only function is to transfer users to another page that has the information the users are looking for. This is called a URL "redirect". For Fairness.com purposes, the only part of the URL we really care about is the URL of the page that actually has the information. So, in this real example, the following Bankrate.com URL:

  `http://www.bankrate.com/hlink redirects/hlink redirects.aspx?link address=http://www.bankrate.com/brm/news/chk/20050706a1.`

  is for our purposes a 3-part URL (redirect + real URL + junk characters at the end):

  ```
  http://www.bankrate.com/hlink_redirects/hlink_redirects.aspx?link_address=
  http://www.bankrate.com/brm/news/chk/20050706a1.asp
  &ht=9&suid=16532&web=brm
  ```

  Not all redirects have the word "redirect" in the URL. Here's a Yahoo! News RSS feed URL that's a redirect to a *Christian Science Monitor* article (note the `www.csmonitor.com` towards the end of the URL!):

  `http://us.rd.yahoo.com/dailynews/rss/search/fairness/SIG=11ni80kjq/*http%3A//www.csmonitor.com/2005/0725/p17s01-cogn.html`

  [A vaguely related tip: if you have a URL that doesn't work try deleting any space characters within the URL. If that doesn't solve the problem, you may have to do a bit of research; some part of the URL, often the end, may have been inadvertently chopped off or typoed. For example, a page that was supposed to end .html ends incorrectly as .htm]

- Categorical URLs

  Like Fairness.com, most sites use ID#s with letters and numbers to permanently identify Articles and other content. URLs comprised of only dates or general category words like these:

  ```
  http://www.sample-site.com/todaysnews/sports.html
  http://www.sample-site.com/2006/March/06/sports.html
  http://www.sample-site.com/20060306/news/
  ```

  are probably just transitory page where breaking sports stories appear for the current day and are replaced the next day. We need to have the Articles' permanent URL (see our Finding URLs documentation to learn how to do this).

- Invalid URLs due to copy-and-paste

  If you do any copy-and-paste while editing a URL make sure the beginning of the URL (the "http://" and maybe the "www." part too) isn't duplicated. This can sometimes happen when our software has automatically filled in the "http://" and then you copy-and-pastes a full URL from a publisher's website without overwriting our "http://" (we stick in the "http://" because Google and some other sources leave it out when they provide a URL).

- Multiple formats

  For Fairness.com purposes the "real" URL of a Resource is the normal URL a user would be sent to when going to that Article/Resource from the publisher's home page (minus extraneous characters). The same article can often be found though on other pages (e.g. a "Story of the Day" page) or in a different format (e.g. a "printer friendly" page with no advertising and all the text on a single page).

C. Author Name(s)

Some feeds don't contain this data, and many give the names of editors instead of the authors (or even random text from the Article itself!). As with the Subtitle, **be especially vigilant about comparing this data field in the feed with the website data, and use the website data if the two are not identical.**

A few fine points:

a. Delete words/phrases like "by" or "written by" from this field.

b. The software can automatically handle two authors separated by the word "and"... if there more than two authors though, you should manually that should work even if there are many authors credited.

c. If there are multiple Authors for a Resource insert a slash mark "/" between each Author's name.
d. Don't use Editorials.

e. If the Author's name is given as "Staff" or similar (but not Editorial Staff, which indicates an Editorial), click the "Staff Writer(s)" link below the box.

f. If a Person's or Organization's name is **not** given, and it isn't a formal Editorial, and no other publication is credited as the owner of the Article (i.e. there is no "special to", "used by permission" or similar), click the "*Unknown" link below the data entry box.

g. Only give Author credit to the Persons or Organization that the Resource itself credits in the byline. For example, if the Fulltext says "John Doe contributed to this report" at the end of an Article but John Doe's name is *not* part of the publisher's site's byline then John Doe's name should **not** be entered into our Author Name field (but you should include the "John Doe contributed..." text as part of the Fulltext, described below).

D. Publication Date (Pub Date)

Always carefully check the publisher's frame to see what Publication Date is given; usually it is at the very top near the Title and byline or at the bottom of the Article.... but sometimes it is only hidden within the URL. If no Pub Date is given click the "Unknown" link below the data entry box.

[Note--- For unknown reasons, sometimes a date that is formatted perfectly well, e.g. "August 1, 2005", will be rejected by the software; in such cases changing the date to format "8/1/05" seems to magically solve the problem.]

E. Importance

Our site uses a formula that takes into account both the Importance rating you give here and the Publication Date to determine where (if at all) the Resource you are submitting will appear on our homepage. Importance ratings are inherently subjective; use the following system as a guide and don't worry too much about getting it just right (as long as every Article you do **isn't** given a 90+ ratings!!):

- 95-99: A "must-read" Resource that almost all our readers will be interested in
- 90-94: Perhaps not almost all of our readers will be interested in this Resource, but it's a very important one
- 85-89: Fairly important, and of broad interest to our readers, and
- 80-84: Fairly important, but only of moderate interest to our readers
- 75-79: Only somewhat important, though the topic is of broad interest to our readers, and
- 70-74: Only somewhat important, and the topic is only of moderate interest to our readers
- Anything that you're' less enthusiastic about than this shouldn't be submitted!

Note: After entering data into this field you may have to click twice in the next field before you can enter data into that next field. There's a long story as to why this is... but it's not a bug and you're not doing anything wrong.

F. Fulltext (Body of the Article only)

The Fulltext of the Article often has advertisements and links to other Articles mixed in with its Fulltext. To avoid this, look at the original Article on the publisher's site to see if there's a "Print Version", "Printer Friendly Format", "Print this Article", or some such link that will give you a "clean" page to do copy-and-paste from. If you don't see such a link right away go to the top of the page and do a search in your browser for the word "print", just to make sure.

Once you find the cleanest possible copy of the body of the Article:

1. Select/highlight only the *body* of the Article (*not* the whole page, i.e. not the Author/Title/Pub Date info you will enter into other fields)
2. Highlight and Past Copy that text into our data entry field.

3. Paste the Fulltext from the publisher's site into the Fulltext field on our data entry screen.

Important Notes about the Fulltext:

- If there is *not* a clean "Print Version" page available on the publisher's site (rare) be sure to strip out all the junk (advertisements, links, etc.) after you copy-and-paste the Fulltext into our data entry field.

- **An Article's Title, Pub Date, Author's name, Author contact information, and any copyright notices or reprint policies should *not* be copied into the Fulltext field**. The first three of those are put into other fields already. One exception: if a Dateline (essentially the Pub Date and/or the location from which the Article was filed) as the first few words of the body of the initial Fulltext paragraph then you *should* include it.

- Work credits such as "Staff researcher John Doe contributed to this report." **should** be included in the Fulltext; since we (and the Resource's publisher) don't consider these Persons to be Authors there isn't anywhere better to put this information.

- If an Article has a correction notice, include it in full with the Fulltext, placed at the same point in our Fulltext as it is on the original site (i.e. usually at either the beginning or end of the Article).

- Material that has been formatted as a small sidebar to the main story **should** be included in the Fulltext if it is included in the RSS feed Article (or, later in the training when you're doing older copy-and-paste data entry, if it appears on the original publisher's site as part of the Article).

- Text formatting (i.e. tables, bolding, italics, etc.) probably won't carry over when you copy-and-paste it into our Fulltext data entry box, but that doesn't make any difference since readers won't ever be seeing the Article on our site, only on the original publisher's site. **The only formatting that is important is paragraph breaks.** The two important things are that (i) you get the words into our Fulltext field, and (ii) you delete any extraneous advertising or references to other stories so that readers doing a keyword search on our site don't pull up this Article based on those extraneous words.

- Firefox (and other browsers) sometimes have trouble rendering some typographic characters (e.g. this sample printscreen in which question marks appear instead of apostrophe characters). When this happens, you must either (i) try to bring up the page in another browser and, if that browser does a better job, use that browser to get clean Fulltext, or (ii) copy the problematic Fulltext into a text editor, select the problem characters one at a time, and then do replaces operations to substitute the correct character that should have shown.

- Biographical information about the Author should *only* be included in the Fulltext if the Author does *not* generally work for that publication.

- No modification of the original is allowed, even if you see typos or inaccuracies!

- We only have the Fulltext on our system temporarily; once we finish processing (indexing) the Article we delete the Fulltext and only keep keywords.

- When a single URL has multiple (unrelated) stories, and you only want to use one, delete the unrelated material from the Fulltext and write these three words, using square brackets, at the start of the portion of the Fulltext you want to submit:

  [unrelated material deleted]

  you can then use the title of the relevant article, if there is one, as the Title of the submitted Resource.

  Note however that if there are one or more sidebars (highly related material) at that URL then you should put the sidebar material and the sidebar titles, if any, at the bottom of the main Article's Fulltext.

- **Beware** of big colored capital letters that *The NY Times* and a few other sites use at the start of articles and some interior paragraphs (here's an example); copy-and-paste may **not** capture those letters because they're really graphic images, so unless the publication has used special HTML coding (e.g. an ALT tag) to provide the text alternative, you have to manually type in such letters to get them into the Fulltext field. To avoid this problem, follow this procedure with such graphic characters:

  a. copy the paragraph(s) you want from the Source document into your paste buffer, paying attention to what the first word was
  b. insert the copied text into our Fulltext data entry box
  c. go back to the first word of that block of text and check whether the image letter was copied or not; if not, type it in where it's missing
  d. repeat this for any other graphic letter images in the Article

Carefully look over what you've entered so far; if there are no mistakes click the "OK" button.

Our software will then take you to a second page which has all the data you already entered and several additional fields, only two of which you need to enter data into.

Data Entry Screen 2

G. Relevant Dates

A Start Year field and an End Year field are used to define the time period for which this story is relevant. For example:

- an Article about the bombing of the World Trade Center and the invasion of Afghanistan would have a Start Year of 2001 and an End Year of 2002... though if it also talks significantly developments through 2005 then the End Year should be 2005.
- an Article about US economic policy since the Great Depression would use 1929 as the Start Year; if the story includes analysis of current events then the End Year would be whatever the current year is (e.g. 2008).
- an Article about a recent event would use the year of the event as the End Year, but if the Article includes a **significant** amount of information about

past events that lead up to the current event then the Start Year should be set to the earliest year for which significant information is given.

In rare cases where the Article is completely abstract (e.g. "What does the concept of Fairness mean") there is no date range of relevance; in these cases just input "9999" for **both** fields (never a real Year in one of the fields and a "9999" in the other).

H. Short Blurb (almost always a Quote)

This field is used to give readers a short, quick understanding of what the article is about, so they can decide for themselves if it's probably of interest or not. The field appears on the Fairness.com homepage and also in search results (e.g. if a reader searches for a word that appears in the Fulltext of the Article you're submitting, our search engine module will return the Title of the Article and also the Quote you select). The text you select for this field must meet two important criteria:

1. It tells readers what the Article is about
2. It must do this in a very short amount of space for two reasons— "Fair Use" copyright laws restrict how much of a work can be legally quoted, and (almost as important!) skimming readers have short attention spans.

The "Short Blurb" field is almost always a short quote directly from the Article, so that's the default radio button selected (to the left of the text box). Our software will automatically add 'QUOTE:' in front of whatever you enter into the textbox once you're done with data entry (promise!), so *don't enter any quotation marks yourself unless you've chosen text that the Article itself has in quote marks because it's a quote from someone other than the writer.*

Select a Quote that tells your reader the main subject of the Article and hopefully will also at least hint at what the fairness issue. Compare the effectiveness of these three excerpts:

- QUOTE: President Bush was very pleased with the results and will fund it in his next budget.
- QUOTE: President Bush supported $100 million in funding for Project X.
- QUOTE: President Bush supports $100 million in funding for Project X, but critics argued that Project X violates Congressional Resolution number 1234 designed to protect Thing Y.

The first is essentially worthless as a Quote because it doesn't tell your readers anything about what the Article is about or what the fairness issue is! The second one is OK, for it at least communicates the basic idea of the news story. The last one is ideal; it communicates both the news story/main story idea and what the fairness issue is.

The length of your Quote cannot be more than a small fraction of the length of the Article. Use at most a single full sentence (and not one that's very long) from a short Article, 1-2 sentences from a standard-length Article, and (very rarely) 3 sentences from a very long article. Another good option is to use one or two sentence fragments (often from the first paragraph in a news story or summary paragraph of a feature story). Discard relatively unimportant additional information or details. Take, for example, an Article whose lead paragraph is (the QUOTE automatically inserted by our software is given below so you get the full context):

QUOTE: John Doe was fired from his job at Acme Products, allegedly because he daydreamed for hours at a time and forgot what he was supposed to be doing. Union officials claim he was fired for being a union organizer.

More concise for our purposes would be:

QUOTE: John Doe was fired from his job at Acme Products, allegedly because he daydreamed ... Union officials claim he was fired for being a union organizer.

Note the use of the 3-dot ellipsis above (" ... ", spaces before and after the three dots) to indicate that some adjoining/nearby text has been left out. If you want to leave out a lot of text between the snippets to be joined you must use a 4 dot ellipsis ("....", no spaces before or after). A grammar/style book can give you all the rules for how to handle an ellipsis when there's ending punctuation or other special situations involved.

If John Doe is famous, e.g. a high-ranking government official or the president of a big company or a well-known entertainer, then you *should* include his name in any mention of his firing; but if he's not a known, high-profile person you can leave out his name:

QUOTE: fired from his job at Acme Products, allegedly because he daydreamed ... Union officials claim he was fired for being a union organizer.

Note that the lower case letter at the beginning of the Quote above informs readers that the beginning of the sentence has been omitted, so no ellipsis is needed at the beginning.

Try to minimize how often you use multiple ellipses within a quotation; multiple ellipses make reading your Short Blurb more difficult for your readers (i.e. makes the reading choppy). A forced example of what we'd like to avoid (but can't always) is:

QUOTE: John Doe was fired...because he daydreamed...forgot what he was supposed to be doing.

Most of the time the Quote should leave out contextual phrases to let skimming readers quickly grasp the key issues (unless you think it's absolutely critical for skimming readers to have that context). For example, a sentence like:

QUOTE: A government report released Monday predicts that illegally dumped toxic wastes will render the Earth uninhabitable by the year 2020.

should be shortened to

QUOTE: illegally dumped toxic wastes will render the Earth uninhabitable by the year 2020.

Similarly, we want the Quote to be readable on a 'stand alone' basis to tell a reader what the Resource/Article is all about, so add an editorial comment in square brackets if necessary to make the subject or other context explicit, e.g. replace:

```
QUOTE: The number should account for the victim's lost time, lost wages, and physical and mental suffering, as well as the
effects on his or her family.
```

with:

```
QUOTE: [Compensation for wrongful conviction] should account for the victim's lost time, lost wages, and physical and mental
suffering, as well as the effects on his or her family.
```

Readers interested in the story can go to the Fulltext to discover details like what government agency is predicting this, when the report was released, etc. Now if the President himself made such a major prediction then that would be important contextual information everyone would want to know and you would try to include the fact that the President said it in the Quote.

Note: It's OK to combine the end of one paragraph and the beginning of the next paragraph; if you use this technique you should *delete the white space between the paragraphs* and thus form an unbroken block of text as your Quote.

***Don't* use an abstract written by the newspaper or magazine or website itself** (unless that abstract is also a short and direct quote from the Article's Fulltext); we do not necessarily have permission to use it. As explained above in "Title", it's OK to use a long Subtitle as the Short Blurb if it meets the goals we have for this field.

There are also two pulldown menu fields related to the Short Blurb— (i) whether the Blurb is a quote or an abstract, and (ii) whether the text is plain text or HTML. You should leave the default values of "Quote" and "Plain Text" untouched unless you're doing something unusual.

You have now provided all the required fields; please carefully check what you've entered (note that we no longer use the "In Your Own Words" field; leave it blank).

If there are no mistakes on this page then click the "OK" button. Our software will take you to a 3rd page (what we call the "RFP page") which you can exit via Control-W. All your work will be saved on our server.

An Editor will send you feedback on your submission via email, usually but not always within a few days of submission.

Thank your for your contribution to our site!