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How to Commit a Legal Rip-off: Creative Commons

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How to Commit a Legal Rip-off: Creative Commons

Anne Arendt 10.21.09

In order to not be plagiarizing materials, we need to ensure adequate copyright release and attribution for resources we use inside and outside the classroom. This presentation, instead of focusing on copyright issues and limitations, will focus on items placed in whole or in part into the public domain.

PUBLIC DOMAIN

Public domain items are available for anyone to use for any purpose. It should be noted that a number of books that are public domain are old – potentially very old – in order to be free of all copyrights. For example, the Project Gutenberg Encyclopedia is from a 1911 version (Project Gutenberg).

Some examples of Public Domain resources:

- http://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Main_Page
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_Domain_Resource

Public domain resources are good, but limited since all rights must be given up. Therefore, a new trend is taking place and that trend is selective or limited release. One example of this is the Creative Commons; another example is Australia's AShareNet licensing system.

CREATIVE COMMONS

Larry Lessig of Stanford is pursuing something called the Creative Commons which frees materials from automatically applied copyright restrictions by providing free, easy-to-use, flexible licenses for creators to place on their digital materials that permit the originator to grant rights as they see fit (Fitzgerald, 2007; Smith & Casserly, 2006). As the Creative Commons Website located at <http://creativecommons.org/> noted, "Creative Commons provides free tools that let authors, scientists, artists, and educators easily mark their creative work with the freedoms they want it to carry. You can use CC to change your copyright terms from 'All Rights Reserved' to 'Some Rights Reserved'" (Creative Commons, 2007). This holds promise for OER movements because it helps control the costs and legal issues revolving around offering materials freely online (Caswell et al., 2008). Currently, over 30 nations now have creative commons licenses although it has only been in place for four years (Smith & Casserly).





A summary video can be found at <http://creativecommons.org/about/> that explains CC well. Other videos, equally good in explain CC, can be found at <http://creativecommons.org/videos/>

CC License Variations

Before we go further, let's remind ourselves what attribution is. It is the ascribing of a work (as of literature or art) to a particular author or artist (Merriam-Webster).

All information below was taken from <http://creativecommons.org/about/licenses/>. However, the emphasis is by the author of this article.

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It should also be noted that there is one more option, CC0, which permits you to waive your copyright rights to the fullest extent permitted by law. See http://wiki.creativecommons.org/CC0_FAQ for more information.

Finding Creative Commons Resources

Individuals place Creative Commons licenses on individual items. Thus, there is no fool-proof way to search all items with some type of CC release on them. However, there are some good resources to get you started:

- <http://search.creativecommons.org/>
- http://wiki.creativecommons.org/Content_Curators

Equally, there are a number of area-specific methods of searching for creative commons released items. Some examples are below:

Images

- http://images.google.com/advanced_image_search?hl=en (usage rights section)
- http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Main_Page
 - http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Pictures_and_images
- <http://www.flickr.com/creativecommons/>

Video

- http://www.archive.org/details/opensource_movies

Music & Audio

- http://www.archive.org/details/opensource_audio
- http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Music_sound
- <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Sound>

Other

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_projects_using_Creative_Commons_licenses

CCLEARN

A development stemming from Creative Commons is ccLearn, which was launched in July of 2007, focused specifically on open learning and open educational resources. It emphasizes diminishing legal, technical, and social barriers. A primary goal of ccLearn is to build a

comprehensive directory of open educational resources with the assistance of Google with encourages their discovery and subsequent use (Atkins et al., 2007; Bissell, 2007; Brantley, 2007).

Learn more about ccLearn and the Open Education Community at <http://learn.creativecommons.org/>

Finding ccLearn Resources

A good place to find educational resources that are creative commons released, visit one of the below resources:

- <http://discovered.creativecommons.org/search/>
- <http://www.ocwfinder.com/>
- <http://www.oerrecommender.org/>

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If you want to learn more about AESharenet as compared to Creative Commons, visit <http://www.aesharenet.com.au/aesharenet/pdf/FAQAEShareNet%2520and%2520Creative%25200Commons3.pdf>

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