

NATIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE
FOR THE PROMOTION OF HISTORY



Administrative Offices: 400 A STREET SE
WASHINGTON, DC 20003/(202) 544-2422

Page Putnam Miller
Director

May 5, 1997

Members

- American Historical Association
- Organization of American Historians
- Society of American Archivists
- Phi Alpha Theta
- Southern Historical Association
- Society for Military History
- Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations
- National Council on Public History
- Western History Association
- American Council of Learned Societies
- Society for History Education
- H-NET, Humanities On Line
- Coordinating Council for Women in History
- History of Science Society
- Society for the History of Technology
- New England Historical Association
- American Political Science Association
- Society of Ohio Archivists
- Berkshire Conf. of Women Historians
- Peace History Society
- Immigration History Society
- American Association for State and Local History
- Conference Group for Central European History
- Women Historians of the Midwest
- American Historical Association
- Library Association Library
- Library Round Table
- Federation of State Humanities Councils
- Society for History in the Federal Government
- National Archives Assembly
- American Association for the History of Medicine
- Association for Documentary Editing
- Midwest Archives Conference
- National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators
- Federation of Genealogical Societies
- Oral History Association
- Mid Atlantic Regional Archives Conf.
- American Society for Legal History
- American Studies Association
- Council on America's Military Past
- Economic History Association
- History Associates, Inc.
- Institute for Historical Study (San Francisco)
- New England Archivists
- Society of Georgia Archivists
- Society for Industrial Archeology
- Southern Association for Women Historians
- Community College Humanities Association
- National Genealogical Society
- Urban History Association
- Western Association of Women Historians

Peter N. Fowler
Attorney-Advisor
Office of Legislative and International Affairs
U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
Box 4
Washington, DC 20231

Dear Mr. Fowler,

On behalf of the National Coordinating Committee for the Promotion of History (NCC), I am writing to comment on the Conference on Fair Use (CONFU) proposed guidelines. The NCC is composed of 53 historical and archival organizations that are made up primarily of those engaged in teaching history or in archival management. As a participant in most of the CONFU meetings, I have kept the NCC organizations informed of CONFU's deliberations and then alerted them to the proposed guidelines. To my knowledge none of the 53 NCC organizations have decided to endorse the guidelines. A number of the organizations have carefully reviewed the guidelines and have sent to you their own comments as to why they are not endorsing them.

There are a number of reasons why historical and archival organizations are not endorsing the guidelines. The key reasons are: the concern that the technology is changing so quickly that the guidelines will almost immediately be outdated, the opinion that the guidelines are overly restrictive in their specificity or flawed in some of their assumptions, and the fear that the guidelines will stifle useful experimentation.

The NCC organizations wish to emphasize that the failure to endorse the guideline does not imply that the organizations believe that the work of CONFU has not been extremely valuable. CONFU has played a significant role in advancing a greater understanding among varied parties as to issues that are involved in the applications of "fair use" to the digital environment.

Sincerely,

Page Putnam Miller
Director

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