

Subject: The Multimedia Guidelines
Date: Fri, 16 May 1997 09:33:36 -0900
From: romanelli@id.ucsb.edu (Bob Romanelli)
To: confu@uspto.gov
CC: lisal@phantom.cct.ccny.cuny.edu

To: Peter N. Fowler,
Chair, CONFU
U.S. Patent & Trademark Office

Dear Sir:

Having studied the Multimedia Guidelines provided at <http://www.libraries.psu.edu/avs/>, I feel an urgent concern to address the fact that educational associations, such as CCUMC, AACC, AECT, AAC&U, and ITC are indeed the RIGHT organizations to have created the document in the first place.

When I taught the course, The Science and Art of Teaching [Education 110] at Temple University, Philadelphia, some years ago, I stressed the fact that there is a big difference between "information" and "learning." Gatekeepers who try to control information, because they want to control other people, always insist that only THEY have the "right" to distribute information or the "right" to educate.

In efforts to control others, the gatekeepers mistake information for knowledge, mistake trivia for wisdom, and attempt to replace genuine learning with political machinations that benefit no one but themselves. Under such a totalitarian regime, learning gets trodden down in the streets.

Gatekeeping has always crushed efforts to bring learning and understanding and insight to the public, to students, to teachers, to cultural as a whole. Gatekeepers fear open access for all to good guidelines from the bottom-line educators in the trenches, because open-access learning limits the control of dictatorial power elites and benefits those who truly deserve to be unprejudicially benefited.

The political climate in America today is one that is not too happy with big governmental controls. The American people express strong issues regarding those in government who prefer to command rather than dialogue. Americans everywhere wonder what has happened to "for the people" and "by the people." People are highly suspicious of leadership that replaces "live and let live" with "rule or ruin," an attitude that demands, "If you won't let us rule you, we will crush you!"

You may ask yourself the question, Mr. Fowler, "Is this the way the Office of Legislative and International Affairs wants to be perceived by the world? Is this the way the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office wants to be perceived by the American public? Is this the way CONFU wants to be perceived by cutting-edge educational technologists across the nation?"

I have been a teacher for 20 years, an editor and publisher, an instructional technologist, and a promoter of open learning under fair guidelines. I see nothing serving educational justice more worthy of our support than The Multimedia Guidelines coming out of associations like CCUMC--guidelines that already benefit all of education in our country. Don't take these necessary tools away from us now by failing to help us facilitate national implementation of the document.

Thank you for considering this vital issue.

Respectfully,

Bob Romanelli

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