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Copyright Do's and Don'ts for Schools

By Carol Simpson

DO make sure that all AV material shown to students directly relates to the curriculum.

DON'T show films or videos for reinforcement or reward. You may rent movies for such performances, paying a minimal public performance fee, from suppliers such as Movie Licensing USA. Video rental stores cannot authorize you to give public performances.

DO ask your faculty to sign a copyright compliance agreement.

DON'T loan VCRs or DVD-Rs with patch cords. Watch for questionable situations: why would a teacher need two recorders except to copy programs?

DO write the record date on all videos you record.

DON'T copy commercial computer software, except to make an archival (one that isn't used) copy.

DO keep receipts and purchase orders for all videos and computer software. Keep the catalog (or pertinent pages) to verify purchase of public performance rights.

DON'T copy cartoon or TV or film characters for decorations, bulletin boards, or handouts.

DO require teachers to verify recording date and source for all home-recorded videos. Fair use guidelines say that programs must be used for classroom instruction within 10 days of taping.

DO write for permission to retain recordings of useful programs. The worst a copyright holder can do is say no.

DO remember that the person who pushes the button is also liable. So is the principal who knows copyright is being violated.

DO keep a link to Cable in the Classroom Online (www.ciconline.org) to verify taping rights from the various networks.

DON'T apologize for obeying federal law. If you would like a free copy of the law, visit the Copyright Office Web site for a copy of Circular 92.

Carol Simpson is a professor, lawyer, and the author of *Copyright for Administrators* (Linworth Publishing, 2008).

need to have a company or organization vouching for them. The information about any curator is highly visible and, in searching, you have the ability to include only curators you know and trust or exclude those you don't trust. Ideally you might end up with a situation where a given school could have its own entryway to the archive, with a customized interface and a filter that selected certain age levels or state standards.

Q: If all educational materials in the future are open and free, how will edu-

cational content providers be reimbursed for their expertise and their work?

A: Many people mistakenly accuse CC of being antibusiness, based on the fact that we make it legally possible for people to do the things that the Internet enables, rather than making criminals of us all. Fortunately, there are many businesses that realize that times are changing and they had better start thinking of ways to adapt and take advantage of the new opportunities.

John Seely Brown has said that,