

COLLECTION PERMANENCE*

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Abstract

Every collection needs a place where a physical copy of the results is kept safe, and a way to keep track of what rights collaborating scholars have, and a means of extending some of those rights to others. An undefinitive beginning of a guide to something that's usually simple, but can get complex.

Stable Copy Located At	<input type="text"/>
Rights Management	Open Publishing ▼
Year Copyright Asserted	1987

Figure 1: Information from the Collections panel about permanence of the collection.

The question of permanence has already come up in regard to what can be considered a published source in the age of digital archiving. Digital data repositories in universities, museums, and national archives are likely to be able to furnish your data to scholars after more than a century. Personal Web sites and your computer's hard disk are not.

Once you have a permanent home for your collection, you can enter the name or URL of the archive in the collection itself as "Stable copy." In the example above, the location of the stable copy is still up in the air. Eventually it will need to be settled.

Who has the right to allow reproduction of a work? That's a broader question than who holds the copyright.

If you share your Wordcorr collection with a colleague, and the colleague fills out a new analytical view of the data in the collection, the collection with the new view's analysis added is a derivative work — a hefty intellectual project that takes your original collection as its point of departure. It builds on it in the tradition of good scholarship. But it's still your collection, modified by someone else with your knowledge, and quite possibly with a good deal of communication between the two of you.

New questions of ownership have developed as computer usage grows. Computers create, store, copy, transform, and transmit information electronically. The medium opens up a potential for scientific and

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literary collaboration that did not exist when paper was about the only vehicle conceivable for writing, storing, copying, or disseminating information.

So it's not surprising that it's the computer people who have put a lot of effort into clarifying ways in which the rights of each person involved in creating, modifying or using information can be kept clear. Their efforts fall under the general rubric of rights management.

One of the best ideas that has come out of considerable discussion is that copyright is more than a means of preventing people from reproducing your work. It's perfectly proper for you as copyright holder to permit, and even encourage, other people to develop what you own further.

This has developed into the idea of **licensing** the use of copyrighted material. And more and more nowadays, under the impetus of the Open Source¹ movement, the license is granted without charge – provided you meet certain conditions that ensure that the information about you as originator of the document, and about changes in it that others have made, is sent along as part of the document itself. This tutorial, as you can see for yourself, is released under an open Creative Commons² license.

Wordcorr gives you the option of choosing among three types of open license: Open Publishing³, Common Content⁴, and GNU Documentation⁵.

You don't have to copyright your collection. But if you do decide to, you want to put the year in which you assert copyright into the collection metadata. Then you can register it when it's convenient.

NOTE: Things change constantly in rights management. Consider this tutorial probably out of date, and check around the Internet and in your institution to see what possibilities fit your situation best.

¹http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_Source

²<http://creativecommons.org/>

³<http://opencontent.org/openpub/>

⁴<http://creativecommons.org/>

⁵<http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/fdl.html>