

Supreme Court Audio Classics Enter P2P Zone Thanks to Creative Commons Licenses

Creative Commons Also Rolls Out Strategy for Embedding and Verifying License Information in MP3s and Other Files

Palo Alto and Chicago, USA – June 25, 2003 – Creative Commons and the OYEZ Project announced today the first-stage 100-hour release of MP3s from the Project's 2000+ hours of Supreme Court recordings using Creative Commons' machine-readable copyright licenses.

Creative Commons also announced its new metadata verification policy, designed to ease the legitimate distribution and copying of MP3s and other files by associating copyright information with the files themselves.

The OYEZ Project, <<http://www.OYEZ.org>>, is a multimedia archive dedicated to the business of the Supreme Court of the United States and the lives of its Justices. Founded in 1994 at Northwestern University, OYEZ will now host MP3 audio recordings of oral arguments before the Court dating back to the 1950s, including landmark cases such as

Gratz v. Bollinger, 2003 (affirmative action)
Grutter v. Bollinger, 2003 (affirmative action)
Bush v. Gore, 2000 (2000 presidential election)
Regents v. Bakke, 1978 (affirmative action)
Roe v. Wade, 1971 (abortion and reproductive rights)
New York Times v. United States, 1971 (the "Pentagon Papers" case)
Miranda v. Arizona, 1966 ("You have the right to remain silent . . .")
Gideon v. Wainwright, 1963 (a defendant's right to counsel).

Recordings of the oral arguments from these historic controversies are now available for free download from the OYEZ website under a Creative Commons copyright license, which encourages copying and redistribution of the recordings while imposing certain conditions on their use:

OYEZ must be attributed, commercial re-use is prohibited, and any modification of the files obligates licensing under the same Creative Commons terms as the original files.

"With the Creative Commons, we have for the first time found a way to license our content to assure use consistent with our objectives. As long as users meet the conditions of the license, they are free to enjoy and share a small treasure of America's legal and political heritage," said Jerry Goldman, Northwestern



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University political science professor and OYEZ project director.

"By releasing hundreds of important Supreme Court recordings under Creative Commons licenses, the OYEZ Project has demonstrated a commitment to filling the commons with high quality educational material for others to use and learn from," said Lawrence Lessig, chairman of Creative Commons and professor of law at Stanford.

"Just as important, the OYEZ Project's use of machine-readable licenses with its MP3s is a big step toward a world in which law and technology can work together to promote sharing," said Lessig.

More About Creative Commons' Metadata Embedding and Verification Policy

Creative Commons also announced today their new metadata embedding policy that defines a standard way to embed metadata into files verified by an external webpage.

"The Creative Commons license information embedded into each of the OYEZ Supreme Court files can be verified by an external webpage maintained by the copyright holder," said Mike Linksvayer, Creative Commons CTO. "We hope this will become the standard approach to embedding and verifying metadata."

More information **below (appendix)**, and at:

<<http://creativecommons.org/learn/licenses/embedding>>.

More about Creative Commons

A nonprofit corporation, Creative Commons promotes the creative re-use of intellectual works – whether owned or public domain. It is sustained by the generous support of The Center for the Public Domain and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Creative Commons is based at Stanford Law School, where it shares staff, space, and inspiration with the school's Center for Internet and Society. <<http://creativecommons.org>>

More about OYEZ

Today, The OYEZ Project provides access to more than 2000 hours of Supreme Court audio. All audio in the Court recorded since 1995 is included in the project. Before 1995, the audio collection is selective. OYEZ aims to create a



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complete and authoritative archive of Supreme Court audio covering the entire span from October 1955 through the most recent release. OYEZ receives support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Science Foundation, FindLaw, Northwestern University, and the law firm of Mayer Brown Rowe & Maw.

For more information <<http://www.OYEZ.org>>.

Contact

Glenn Otis Brown
Executive Director
Creative Commons
1.650.723.7572 (tel)
1.415.336.1433 (cell)
glenn@creativecommons.org

Jerry Goldman
Professor of Political Science
Director, The OYEZ Project
j-goldman@northwestern.edu
1.847.475.6671 (tel)
1.847.644.0218 (cell)

Neeru Paharia
Assistant Director
Creative Commons
1.650.724.3717 (tel)
1.510.823.1073 (cell)
neeru@creativecommons.org

Mike Linksvayer
Chief Technical Officer
Creative Commons
ml@creativecommons.org

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Appendix: More Detail About Metadata Embedding & Verification

Creative Commons licenses are attached to Web pages. But we also want our licenses to be useful for materials distributed in file formats around the Net.

The first format we've learned to tag is MP3, the popular audio compression format. Other common formats – image, video, text, other audio formats – will follow soon.

part 1: Metadata Embedding in MP3s

part 2: The Advantage of the Verification Link

part 3: Verification Link: Also a Traffic Engine

(1) Metadata Embedding in MP3s

Let's say Anita wants to license her song, "Volcano Love," with a Creative Commons license, and release it as an MP3. Here's what she'd do:

First, Anita would put a "Some Rights Reserved" button on the site where her song could be downloaded – along with a link to a license, some RDF metadata, and an assertion about the copyright status of the work. Nothing new here: this is what Creative Commons licensors do now.

With **file embedding**, though, this page will now serve the added function of **verification**. Here's how: Anita would insert the URL to that webpage in the copyright field of the MP3 file, along with a short, plain description of the work's license status. We call this the license **verification link** because it points back to a page that Anita herself controls.

Next, imagine Anita puts the MP3 on a file-sharing network. A user comes across her MP3 and can follow the **verification link** to Anita's page.

In the future, we hope that file-sharing networks, media players, and other applications will build tools that read the **verification link** automatically and inform users of the copyright assertions like Anita's.

(2) The Advantage of the Verification Link

Embedding this kind of "verification link" in MP3s, as opposed to merely the license metadata, is a measure of protection for artists against the incorrect or

fraudulent labeling and sharing of their work.

Take this example:

Honeysuckle is a popular commercial singer. She likes her songs “all rights reserved.”

John decides to license a Honeysuckle song under a Creative Commons license, to fool people into thinking she’s gone “some rights reserved.” He makes a fake Honeysuckle site on to his website, adds a Creative Commons license and RDF to it, and embeds a phony **verification link** to his page in the Honeysuckle MP3. Then he puts the song on a file-sharing network.

Honeysuckle visits the file-sharing network and sees copies of her song circulating. She finds this suspicious, given that she didn’t put the song on the network and always claims “all rights reserved.”

She follows the **verification link**, finds John, and forces him to take the fake page down.

With the phony verification page gone, users of the file-sharing network will see that the verification link is broken, or they will follow it to a page explaining that John fraudulently tried to license the song.

(3) Verification Link: Also a Traffic Engine

An added benefit of the verification link is that licensors, or the companies who do their hosting, can use them to **draw traffic to their websites**.

Example:

Ravi is an amateur photographer. He hosts his photos at SNAP, a website devoted to photography. Each time Ravi uploads his photos to the SNAP website, the SNAP software offers Ravi an opportunity to use Creative Commons licenses, and the tools to embed his webpage on SNAP with the appropriate RDF. Next, SNAP’s software automatically inserts the verification link into his photo files’ copyright fields.

Ravi circulates the photos among his schoolmates, whose photo-viewing software reads the copyright fields and takes them to the SNAP website, where they can see Ravi’s whole catalog of photography and links to other SNAP services.