

Hart-Sam-20050314060002

To: Julie L. Sigall
Associate Register for Policy & International Affairs

Date: 03/14/2005

From: Sam Hart

Comment:

In working on my freely distributable (licensed under the GNU General Public License) educational application, Tux Typing (see <http://www.tux4kids.com/>) I encountered situations where certain content (e.g., pictures and sounds) was available, but I could not contact the original copyright owner.

In the end, rather than risk liability and the liability of those schools and educators using my application, I wound up replacing the content I was unsure on with content I created. For a small non-profit project, this put much additional stress and strain on our development team.

Because of this problem, my parent non-profit organization created a sister project known as GOVIA (see <http://govia.osef.org/>) where multimedia and other materials could be housed under licenses and copyrights more friendly with a project such as our own.

Had the orphan works materials we encountered been public domain, it would have solved the problems of our struggling educational non-profit group long ago and we would have been able to get our educational software into the hands of students and educators much sooner.