

Dan Aiello
613 Waldron St.
West Lafayette, IN 47906
765-746-4290
aielloda@cs.purdue.edu

I would like to strongly oppose the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. This act is utterly atrocious, and only will lead towards a more monopolistic society. Why should it be illegal for an intelligent person to reverse engineer a product? Destroying this creative spirit is quite a mistake.

Specifically addressing the recent upset about the DVD/DeCSS issue: the whole idea of encoding DVD players and disc is monopolistic. What this and the DeCSS encryption do is allow the licensees to completely control the entire DVD market. This seems to me to be an anti-trust violation, or at least similar. And this whole issue came up because a Linux user wanted to watch DVD movies on his computer. The person did not want to run Microsoft Windows, the most popular, but not necessarily the best, PC operating system. Since it isn't the most popular, there was not support for DVD, so he made his own way. He reverse engineered it so that he and hundreds, maybe thousands, of other Linux DVD users could watch DVD movies. He did this not for profit, not to hurt any person or any company, but to help himself and many others when the big corporations would not. And this is the kind of creativity, ingenuity and intelligence that you want to destroy with the DMCA. I can see no reason why this type of activity should be frowned upon. If a person is able to examine a car, and then figure out for himself how to build one, should he be punished? Of course not. He would be given license to start a corporation, building and selling cars. Why should it be any different with software? Software is engineered just like a car, or a building, or a road, or a television set.

Only big corporations can benefit from the DMCA. Very few people hold patents any more. Most are owned by corporations. In all areas of society, we see corporations being given higher priority than individuals. Insurance companies and hospitals can kick patients out because their coverage has run thin. If a person parks in my driveway and blocks me in so that I cannot leave to go anywhere, I have to wait 4 hours before I can have the car towed. However, if a person were to park in corporately reserved parking spaces, they can be towed immediately. This is a true scenario that I have actually experienced. I have found little aspects of our society that favor an individual over a corporation.

Individuality is what founded this country. We cannot allow our lives to continually be ruled by corporate agendas. We must get back to the roots of our society. That means encouraging entrepreneurship and putting individuals rights ahead of corporations. It means preventing the DMCA from being passed. Let's stop this before it gets out of control.

Thank you,
Dan Aiello

