

From: [Dennis Williford](#)
To: [FN-OMB-IntellectualProperty](#)
Subject: COPYRIGHT & INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
Date: Monday, March 22, 2010 2:19:29 PM

Dear Ms. Espinel and the Obama Administration,

The ASMP and the Copyright Alliance have informed me of this welcome invitation from the Obama Administration to share my thoughts on my rights as a creator.

I have been a victim of copyright infringement, and know first hand the effects of others who wish to take the work of someone else, and use it for self gains. In my case, it was a toy manufacturer who had taken my images of a wedding cake, done for another client right out of a bridal magazine, and used it on the front of their packing for a set of Barbie like dolls! My client happened to have been shopping in NJ at a mall store, when she spotted her cake on this packaging. She contacted me immediately, and I began my search to contact the owners of this company.

This is a boat I have been on a few times in my photographic career of some 30 years. With the help and advice of the attorneys at the ASMP, I was fortunate enough to solve my case with this company out of court for a rather handsome sum, based on the sales of the product and the out right thievery by this company. This brings us to a very basic point, we in this great nation have some very unique laws regarding intellectual property, and where there are always room for improvement. To diminish these laws would be a great disservice to our country and any creative individual around the world. The most basic of human training for most of us, is that our parents teach us to ask before just taking. In my case if the toy company had just looked up my name in the phone book, (my name was credited to the photo) they could have just paid a usage fee, and avoided the threat that they imposed upon themselves.

My case is not so unique, this happens everyday of the week and all creators must be protected period! The free wheel of the internet or any other device must not become a excuse for doing what is right. You want something? Create your own, or ask permission, this is not rocket science. Image the president of the United States or any member of the executive branch, writing a book or publishing a painting or photographs or any form of artistic expression and then having someone take that material, and manipulating it to their own advantage. I don't think there is a gavel strong enough to strike a surface in the call for attention. Please see this issue through our eyes, and let's work together for the sake of everyone.

Sincerely,
Dennis Williford

Dennis Williford / The PhotoCook (New Jersey / New York based commercial photographer & professional cook)
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Copyright Alliance info@copyrightalliance.org