

**Re: A supporting comment for the EFF/OTW exemption request**

**Attention: Copyright Office**

**To: Register of Copyrights**

My name is Johanna Blakley and I am the Managing Director and Director of Research at the Norman Lear Center at the Annenberg School of Communication and Journalism at the University of Southern California. For the last twelve years, the Lear Center has performed and published research and hosted events that address the impact of entertainment and media on society. Our goal is to raise the level of conversation about the powerful role that entertainment and media play in economics, politics, education, religion and virtually every other aspect of modern life. Located in Los Angeles, we bring together diverse constituencies from academia, the entertainment industries, government and the non-profit world in order to better understand the consequences of our media-saturated society, to disseminate accurate research about it and to find ways to harness the power of entertainment to improve people's lives.

Because the media is our primary object of study at the Lear Center, we need timely access to high-quality clips of mainstream media content. **This is why we support the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) remix exemption request.**

Ever since the Lear Center launched, we have been committed to taking our research to the broadest public audience. We have often used the tremendous affordances of networked digital technology in order to share our research quickly and freely with the world. When we completed a recent research project on how primetime TV dramas depict the War on Terror and the War on Drugs we realized how important it was to use clips from those dramas to illustrate the findings from our detailed content analysis. Countless studies have demonstrated the impact that TV depictions can have on individual attitudes and behavior, but it can be very difficult to characterize those depictions accurately across multiple networks and TV shows over a period of time. Our content analysis provided us with a detailed portrait with over 800 variables, including how terrorists and drug users are depicted and whether they are arrested and tried. By using a short video summary of our findings, we knew we could reach a much broader audience than if we issued a standard academic research report. Also, the video format lent itself perfectly to our object of study, which was televisual material.

Naturally, we wanted our content analysis to cover the most recently aired episodes and so we focused on the highest rated shows that had aired in the 2010-11 season. We issued the research report and the first video in the series just before the ten year anniversary of 9/11. At this point in time, many of the shows were not yet available on DVD. Because of this experience, we realize the need for circumvention with respect to material not available on DVDs for projects that are time-sensitive in nature.

We are a non-profit enterprise and virtually all of our work serves a clear educational purpose and is made available freely to the public. For both of the videos associated with this project – *Primetime War on Terror* (<http://primetimeterror.com>) and *The Primetime War on Drugs* (forthcoming at <http://primetimedrugs.com>) – we required the assistance of an outside contractor in order to produce a

high-quality, technically complex video that combines footage from dozens of the TV shows in our research sample with infographics that explain our findings. Because of this experience, we realize the need for a broad definition of “noncommercial” in order to successfully produce and disseminate research that benefits the general public.

We have been very pleased with the results of *The Primetime War on Terror* video, which was picked up by the *New York Times*, *Variety* and *The Daily Beast* and promoted across the Web by BoingBoing, one of the most popular blogs in the world, and digg, an influential social bookmarking service. The video does an excellent job of laying out the methodology for this research project, and so it has been very effective in college classrooms, where students have responded enthusiastically to material that can be dry and confusing in a conventional academic article. This is why we are now completing a second video, which summarizes our findings about depictions of the War on Drugs. We plan to release future research findings in a “viral video” format as well, especially if the subject of our research is in video format. Obviously, approval of the EFF remix exemption request would assist us in our work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Johanna Blakley". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line that serves as a separator.

Johanna Blakley, Ph.D.

Managing Director & Director of Research

The Norman Lear Center

Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism

University of Southern California