

Florence, Saturday the 10th of December 2005

Dear all,

I wanted to create a complete dossier, to start from the very (good) beginning early this year when we did began to refurbish the VL catalogue up to that moment maintained by Mr.Manning, but my time at this moment of the year is missing for that duty.

I will then start from the end, the “where we arrived” issues.¹ I will also speak from an academic/institutional point of view where some important issues have to be clear, well-known and transparent for any participated project which involves the server, the name and the logo of my institution, the European University Institute at [<http://www.iue.it>] for [<http://vlib.iue.it>], the WWW-VL History Central Catalogue. This “filter” for better understanding my reaction and my point of view, has to be clear to all of you: we are trying to create D-Spaces projects (<http://cadmus.iue.it/dspace/index.jsp>), we are Dublin Core compliant, we want to have Open sources project at the EUI, we do not want any compromise with commercial activities.

What are our grievances today against the Mr.Chapman/vlib.org/interarb.com way to run the old VL ? Before entering the details, here is a summary of the today situation:

The site of the WWW-VL History Central catalogue has been de-linked by vlib.org at the end of November 2005. The whole history network, maybe the most active an important set of maintained VLs, hosted at the EUI (European University Institute) from April 2004 after being moved from the Kansas/Lawrence University server, has been replaced at vlib.org by a page using our <TITLE></TITLE>, and our name. Single History VL maintainers were asked by Michael Chapman to leave our server and to re-host their indexes at the private vlib.org-interarb.com server. This server and the man who runs it, in few months, did took overall control of the main VL catalogue without sharing any access to it with the members of the last elected VL council and without any possibility to debate within VL maintainers.

A the end of November, the EUI authorities, (our secretary general), the maintainer of the History catalogue (Serge Noiret) and history maintainers, received confidential letters by Michael Chapman, who asked -in the name of a secret “Council”- which said was elected on a meeting in Geneva the 13th of October 2005, not to use a logo, the book and globe logo for which Chapman said and wrote in an imperative way, he was owning the copyright. As far as the vlib.org logo is concerned, Chapman knows perfectly that the EUI sites changed this logo earlier in November, using the different colors and form of the old logo copyrighted by Sir Tim Berners-Lee and uses a link to the copyright statement available at www.vlib.org archived at archive.org.

¹ I'm prepared to provide history maintainers and the rest of interested old VL council members and single VL maintainers with all documentation –I'm an historian...- they want in the next future. I personally have the all 2004-2005 correspondences archives of mails I have sent or received from all of you still and directly available.

Today, Michael Chapman's activity and his vlib.org site are behaving without any kind of control nor legitimacy which should be given under the VL constitution and by-laws and which should be clear to all VL maintainers. Furthermore the same person said he's organizing new elections for the VL council together with close familiar/associated and two non VL maintainers. As a summary of what happened in the Geneva meeting (only available in a close area of his own server) we indeed understand that 4 people, for which only two are VL maintainers (Chapman, Micah) which are living in the same French village, Culoz, have taken for themselves without any election nor control by an elected council, of the main VL catalogue, the vl-search engine, the VL finances and the VL domain name "vlib.org". The posts of treasurer, president, vice-president and secretary of the VL are all fulfilled by these same 4 persons. No lists of discussion are available and all the VL procedures for accepting new candidate to VL posts, are ignored. It would also be possible to candidate members for the a new council to be elected because of the non existence of a list of discussion. Furthermore, some of these possible candidates which are maintaining VL sites arbitrary de-linked by the same person, will not be now entitled to participate, others like Lynn H.Nelson, were sent to "pension" without any previous request. The only communication in the VL today are made by Mr.Chapman to all, or a single to Mr.Chapman both by letters, phone and e-mail.

The vlib.org-interarb.com site has become a secret site were even past web pages are not archived with archive.org and where all decisions are taken by a single person in the name of a phantom "caretaker" council which is destructing our network and de-linking VL web sites without following any legal VL procedures and only following personal criteria's and feelings..

The History network possibly cancelled all his links to this server (vlib.org-interarb.com) whit whom it is not clear which activities are run and which information are belonging to private activities and which to the vlib.org project: an academic institution like the EUI needs to be guaranteed on the transparency and the respect of the legal practice at the basis of the constitution of any projects with which the university is dealing with. Because of this situation, we also have asked to Mr.Chapman not to index anymore our pages in his vlib/interarb search engine together with non VL compliant information. This should be especially true when all our sites have been de-linked and our institution and project are under the threat of a single person not controlled anymore by an elected and responsible council.

Here are now all the details and the documents which are underlining and explaining as best as we can what happened from our point of view. I personally have all the correspondence activated between council members and myself during the refurbishment of the VL catalogue early in the year 2005, a refurbishment to which myself and Mr.Inaki Lopez Martin, my co-maintainer here at the EUI, did followed and helped as much as we could, both enthusiasts and convinced that the collaboration between Mr.Fenteany Mr.Laughead and Mr.Chapman would have succeeded to recreate a VL environment and to help to start again the project following his internal democracy and statutes. Nothing of that happened and, sadly, it has indeed happened that we were taken into personal threats between Mr.Laughead and Chapman and that only one man is now using the VL for his own purposes.

The VL need to gain control again on his main catalogue, on his name "vlib.org", on his finances and have to behave again properly organizing immediate council elections following his by-laws. Furthermore it is a central issue for us that the place were the central catalogue would be in the future would become a respectable

server belonging to a non-profit institution, preferably an academic institution or a scientific one.

There have been too much individual look at this project during the last months which ended in useless personal fights and a very low attention towards what I would like only to be concerned with: how to maintain catalogues, to look for their contents, to clear broken links, to recruit new maintainers, to share between us all possible technical solution to our web problems. This is the activity for which I took at the EUI the old Lynn Nelson catalogue and this is still the activity I will follow even if the battle for the democratic re-conquest of the VL will be lost by the VL maintainers against a one man activity and his "ad hominem" persecutions and polemics.

A. My participation to the VL

Before entering the single grievances of this actual dispute, I would like to say more about my work as history maintainer for the VL.

1. I'm maintaining the Italian History Index from 1995 (1999 adhesion to Lynn Nelson Catalogue) and some other indexes which were maintained by Lynn Nelson and are now waiting for new maintainers. (See my "presentation" in *histops-1* in *Addendum n.9*)

2. I was a candidate for the VL Council in 2002 without an election ever happened.

3. During the year 2005 when it was started to rebuild the old VL catalogue which was last updated in September 2004 if I remember well, I was very enthusiastic of the effective work done for recreating it by Michael Chapman, George Laughead and Gabriel Fenteany. Together with Inaki Lopez Marin, my co-maintainer, we did actively participated in translation for the new catalogue but I was not following the "administrative" part of it and I mentioned several times that I would not be again a candidate for a new council to be elected because of the lack of time to do it properly. (wish I would have known about how much time it takes to me from September onwards now !!!) (See *old correspondences* in "histops-1" in *Addendum n.9*)

4. My job is and was to look at the contents of VL's and to find new maintainers inside the EUI and elsewhere especially contacting specialized historical institutions. Each autumn I propose also a program of teaching and demonstration of the history network inside the history department called "Atelier Multimédia". This is where most of the new maintainers were recruited these last years. [<http://www.iue.it/LIB/Guides/History/InstructionCourses.shtml>]

5. My vision of the VL is based on what the VL was from the beginning: a free volunteer and shared activity made by specialists for all the navigators of the web for a free access to specialized and reliable web contents.

6. My mission after April 2004 was –together with Inaki Lopez Martin- to secure the excellent old Lynn Nelson catalogue in a safe and distinguished non-profit institution, to try to maintain and develop it as best as we can with the limitation we have from our computing service for the single maintainers to access their indexes directly.

B. From September this year, things are becoming worst:

Said this we have also to precise in which environment we moved from mid-September onwards this year:

-M.Chapman did call for a meeting of VL maintainers in Geneva the 19th of September 2005 for the 13th of October (*minutes in addendum n.5, added PDF file*)

-At that time M.Chapman had already taken on his server interarb.com/vlib.org the central catalogue and was refusing to share access to it to other members

-They were and they are no possibility of communicating between maintainers. Communication was only from Chapman to all and a single to Chapman: no lists of discussions were established even if this was a request made by Gabriel Fenteany in February 2005 approved at that time by Matthew Ciolek. (*see § D, grievance's list below and addendum n.6*).

C.The “casus belli” from Mr.Chapman to the History central catalogue and vice-versa.

The first real “casus belli” was at the beginning of September when I was involved directly by M.Chapman in a crusade against Mr.Laughead web site at the domain www.vlib.us. Mr.Chapman called me several times and convinced me that who was owning this domain, M.George Laughead, our USA History (and other web sites) maintainer (*see letter of adhesion from N.Laughead in April 2004 to the History Central catalogue in Addendum n.9*) was trying to recreate a VL on this domain. As M.Laughead was belonging to our History Network from more then a year now, I did sent a very polemical letter against this domain thinking that the VL was about to experience a real secession. Time passing, I understood that I did not understood exactly the real situation and that Mr.Chapman did used me against others and did continue to use this issue in many other correspondences to me against M.Laughead or my letter against Mr.Laughead.

The second real “casus belli” was in November this year, when Mr.Chapman, without informing anybody, did took away the direct link to vlib.iue.it from the history category on the vlib.org page. Mr.Chapman had already de-linked all Mr.Laughead web sites by the time and other concil members web sites, finally he just stole the title WWW-VL History Central catalogue on Wednesday the 30th of November 2005² and loaded this title with few remained links of unaware maintainers of history VL's, on his personal sever at [<http://vlib.org/vlhist/index>] using the exact phrasing in the <HEAD> we use for the title of our own original catalogue:

<title>WWW-VL: World History Index and History Central Catalogue | The World Wide Virtual Library</title>

without linking anymore to the real History Central catalogue at vlib.iue.it.

The day after, I declared that the History Central catalogue would have systematically cut all his links to Mr.Chapman server and that the VL was now dead, that we were going out this situation only maintaining and I warned this person to avoid continuing to index our sites with vlib.org/interarb.com robots were we are mixed with a lot of non VL information and commercial web sites pages, because we would have been obliged to blockade it on our server. (*See my letter 1st December 2005 in Addendum n.1.*)

² Exactly that day we were presenting some VL indexes in a seminar in our History department: M.Etienne Deschamps, and M.Christian Lekl ([CVCE - Centre virtuel de la connaissance sur l'Europe](http://www.cvce.eu)) A digital approach to *European Integration History The European Navigator: the history of European Integration on the Web* at [www.ena.lu] and [The WWW-VL History of European Integration](http://www.vlib.iue.it/hist-eur-integration/Index.html) at the EUI Library, the Historical Archives of the EU and the CVCE <http://vlib.iue.it/hist-eur-integration/Index.html> as you can see from <http://www.iue.it/LIB/Guides/History/InstructionCourses.shtml#autumn2005>

Early in November after being asked in one of the many letters Mr.Chapman sent to all of us,³ we already did changed the vlib.org/interarb.com logo on our web site using the old logo copyrighted by Tim Berners-Lee as at archive.org [http://web.archive.org/web/20040717231403/vlib.org/admin/Copyright.html] which we received from Lynn Nelson from the Kansas/Lawrence university server to continue to maintain the History Central catalogue at vlib.iue.it.⁴

Here are the two logo's:

Interarb/vlib:



and vlib.iue.it old logo of the WWW-VL without any change in the use of colours:



(<http://web.archive.org/web/20040717231403/vlib.org/admin/Copyright.html>):

Said that and settled some boundaries to this letter and his aims, what is the complete list of our grievances today against Mr.Chapman at vlib.org/interarb.com ?⁵

D.List of Grievances against Mr.Chapman & associates

These are the issues for which the WWW-VL History Central catalogue at the EUI decided to avoid linking to Mr.Chapman vlib.org/interarb.com commercial web site. The WWW-VL History Central catalogue has nothing to do today with Mr.Chapman even if he's continuing to index our sites in his search engine against our wish. We decided to quit this link with him also because institutions and academic institutions participating to the History Central catalogue in Europe and elsewhere can't afford to deal with a non transparent project misusing constitutions and by-laws of the same for own non clear purposes.

³ See this confidential letter in the addendum n.2 to this letter.

⁴ This is a short letter sent to us last week by Lynn Nelson which explain the history of the passage from KU to EUI, (*see addendum n.7*). After April 2004, together with the arrival of George Laughead in the WWW-VL History Central catalogue and together with Inaki Lopez Martin here at the EUI, we moved the old Lynn Nelson catalogue to our prestigious institution after his donation to me provided we would have followed his original goals.

⁵ I use this denomination because the private server interarb.com is using the old WWW-VL logo copyrighted by Sir Tim Berners-Lee and if you use vlib.org/interArb.com search engine you'll reach information belonging to the all server not just to vlib. The activities of a commercial firm and server used by Mr.Chapman are merged with vlib activities at least from the internet's point of view when receiving hits, mean that the content of what you have on one side of your server will help you with the commercial side of it. I know that this is a question and that Mr.Ciolek pointed out that a "non-for-profit" activity is being legitimate also from a VL point of view. To this Mr.Nelson already answered (*See Addendum letter n.10*) and what I would like to say is the following: are we sure that we are dealing with a "non-for-profit" server and activity in this case ? At least one important thing should be clear: the WWW-VL activity should be, following his by-laws and constitution very clear about it.

ISSUES:

Mr.Chapman did:

-Removed Sir Tim Berners-Lee from copyright notice for WWW-Virtual Library and WWW-VL globe and book logo.

-Ignored requests to correct listing. See: www.archive.org listing for correct copyright notice at <http://web.archive.org/web/20040717231403/vlib.org/admin/Copyright.html>, still honored by WWW-VL History network a vlib.iue.it: WWW-Virtual Library Copyright

-refused to create any public domain mailing list for VL maintainers even this has been offered by Mr.Ciolek to Mr.Fenteany early in February this year and many times from September onwards by myself directly to him.⁶

-Delinked the vlib.org/History page from the main vlib.org index -- first time in WWW-VL history that History is demoted.

-Removed the Naval and Maritime VL and many WWW-VL: History sites, including United States History Index from vlib.org/History page and others. This was done for personal reasons without informing the community of VL maintainers and without the involvement of Serge Noiret/Inaki Lopez Martin, WWW-VL: History maintainers. He

-Ignored requests to avoid ads or off-site links to personal web site, etc. Copyrighted all topics pages in his own name. Owns vlsearch.org in his own name. Owns www.vlib.info in his own name. All requests for these activities by VL maintainers to stop were ignored.

-changed ftp passwords, forcing other legal WWW-VL management committee members off his own server site. Refused to share passwords with Mr.Fenteany and Laughead.

-Refused to share maintainer email list prepared by other maintainers for review and proofing.

-Refused to call election after legal request by Lynn Nelson, founder of the WWW VL History Central catalogue at Kansas/Lawrence University now at EUI, Florence Italy in August 2005. (*See addendum n.7*)

⁶ I guess it is technically very difficult to use a WWW VL maintainer list of discussion like in the past, to inform everybody and start a discussion on all main WWW VL problems but thanks to Lynn Nelson in Kansas which accepted, I have offered to Michael Chapman (also at the phone and directly several times), the possibility to use the "histops-l", (our history maintainers list of discussion at histops-l@listproc.cc.ku.edu) for the goals of a general discussion between VL maintainers what is now doing Mr.Lynn Nelson de factob and more recently also Mr.Ciolek. I did this because it seemed that the WWW VL Announce Mailing List [VL-announce@vlib.org] was unable to offer our association more than a one way (Michael Chapman to all) mailing list which is, of course, in such a project like the VL, nor desirable nor acceptable because of the involvement of many different maintainers which all should have eventually a word to say to the others. Even Matthew Ciolek offered the following to us already on the 7th of February 2005 answering to Gabriel Fenteany request (*see addendum letter n.6.*)

-Called illegal physical meeting of the virtual library on the 13th of October 2005⁷ in which no VL maintainer attended but Mr.Chapman himself and Lisa Micah his wife/associate and used that meeting to justify the creation of a "caretaker" council named "council" in all his further correspondences. Following him, this "election" would have given him the legal authority to act against the old VL project..

-He had in this case an election of a council of 4 by 4 voters. (*see addendum n.5 taken out of a "closed area" for maintainers and also addendum n.8 letter from Mr.Ray Tygstad about aggression against the constitution/bylaws of the VL.*)⁸

-did elected an unknown person now 'president', a newly created position and did added a new vice-president Arthur Secret, not a VL maintainer. (*see again addendum n.5 taken out of a "closed area" for maintainers*)

-did nominated a close personal associate as new treasurer.

-did sent direct and confidential printed email letters to single history maintainers unaware of what was going on asking to reload history indexes on his commercial server because they were "problems with the EUI server". (*see letter addendum n.3*)

-did intervene in matters that are absolutely not his own business with history maintainers bypassing history coordinators Noiret and Lopez Martin.

⁷ The meeting agenda decide by Michael Chapman without any discussion was as follow (copy of the e-mail sent the 19th of September through a so-called "WWW VL Announce Mailing List [VL-announce@vlib.org]"): "1. Welcome, registration of those present.

2. Receipt of Reports on the Association's activities
from outgoing officers.

Acceptance of reports.

3. Election of a Bureau.

4. The motion "This Meeting calls on the Bureau to
organise elections as set out in Article VI of the
association's Constitution within seven days of
this meeting."

5. Close of meeting." For none of these 5 issues we -as VL maintainers- did received any information until heavily requested and this information, addendum n.5, is not available freely but using passwords for whom was not de-linked or sent out of the VL by Mr.Chapman himself.

⁸ *Full letter in addendum n.8.* I quote the following: "It is true that we did not elect a new Council when the current Council's term expired in 2002. As this contingency is not covered in our Constitution (<http://vlib.org/admin/Constitution>) or Bylaws (<http://vlib.org/admin/SepBylaws>), the assumption was-- and is--that the previously elected Council would constitute the Council until a new election was conducted. Sometime in the spring or summer of this year, as I understand it, a Council member, Michael Chapman, assumed responsibility for maintaining the index at vlib.org. He was assisted in some reorganization by Council member Gabriel Fenteany and by George Laughead Jr., who was also working on the history index. Mr. Chapman moved the Index of the VL to his own server and at some point following that action would no longer share passwords for access with anyone else on the VL. October 2005, Mr. Chapman held a physical meeting of the VL in Switzerland, attended by four people, at which a "caretaker council" was elected who in turn elected new officers. ***In my personal opinion*** (I cannot speak for the rest of the Council in this) this election was illegal as it did not follow the procedure prescribed in Article VI of our Constitution. On top of that, two of the four people in attendance, Arthur Secret and Raoul Sanchez, are not actually members of the Virtual Library as neither one, to my knowledge, maintain a VL. Minutes of this meeting may be found at http://vlnavmar.usnaweb.org/vlmembers/VL_ag05.pdf. I am absolutely certain that Michael Chapman has a completely different perspective on this and I sincerely hope he will take the time to explain his actions, but I know what our Constitution and Bylaws state and I know how things appear to those of the properly elected Council members who have been part of these discussions."

- did make a continuous harassment by confidential letters and phone-calls instead of opening public debates and discussion on clear issues for VL future.

-sent secret letters to some of us asking on which side we were “for him or against him” (all behaviours against any sense of cooperative and collective way of working in this project which he clearly thinks is his own personal business)

-stole the time of history maintainers (Inaki and myself) for his own translation of the VL index and history categories and for his search engine letting people thinking that this work was for the great “cause” of the new cooperative project requested by a council for refurbishing all project and in this case Gabriel Fenteany did asked for this to be accepted for the interim period and M.Ciolek did answer yes to it (addendum n.6)

-did mystified the interpretation of what was the www.vlib.us and created a case inside history maintainers and, when finally settled, did continued to argue that Noiret asked for a trial on this advocated to “council” when I clearly expressed myself to him several time at the phone and in written e-mails also to the old council saying that it was a settled matter..

-did used personal information belonging to the professional relationship of my co-maintainer Inaki Lopez Martin towards his employee (EUI)

-did protected his own server and other commercial server from being indexed by www.archive.org giving him the possibility to re-write and change whatever he would like to do without any clear public trace of it being archived like for all previous version of www.vlib.org.⁹

⁹ I'm not sure but this could be the java used on his pages as an example taken out the archived web pages in 2003 of www.interarb.com:

```
<!doctype html public "-//w3c//dtd html 4.0 transitional//en">
<html>
<head>
<BASE HREF="http://www.interarb.com/">
  <meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=iso-8859-1">
  <meta name="GENERATOR" content="Mozilla/4.5 [en] ">
  <title>You are lost, but hopefully will be found!</title>

<SCRIPT LANGUAGE="JavaScript">
<!--
setTimeout("top.location.href='/cgi-bin/lost.cgi'",50);
//-->
</SCRIPT>
</head>

<body>
&nbsp;
<p><font size=+3>Error:
<center>You have reached this page in error.</center>
<p><An attempt is being made to redirect you to the page your were probably looking for.
<br>If you are still 'here' in two seconds, click below to ask our Server to redirect you.
<br>&nbsp;

<blockquote>&nbsp;
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-did said that he will organize directly an election for a new VL council by himself, de-linking from the VL who he wants to (Georges, Ray, others etc.) and without any formal possibility to follow the procedures available under the VL by-laws. VL members will not be able to candidate themselves, to discuss their ideas and programs, to vote for the candidate they will choose; all the basic aspects of our formal internal "democracy" as they always were in the past, are cancelled.

---is maybe himself or others requested by him, rewriting the WWW VL information from *Wikipedia* re-creating for his own purposes some information and the history of the WWW VL (Mr.Ray Trygstad had to stop this activity as it can be seen at "http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talk:World_Wide_Web_Virtual_Library".)

etc..

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<p><center>
<form NAME="name" METHOD=GET ACTION="cgi-bin/lost.cgi"><input NAME="to"
TYPE=hidden VALUE='HTTP_HOST' ><input TYPE=submit></form></blockquote>
</center>
</font>
</body>
<SCRIPT language="Javascript">
<!--
// FILE ARCHIVED ON 20000303085528 AND RETRIEVED FROM THE
// INTERNET ARCHIVE ON 20051205062256.
// JAVASCRIPT APPENDED BY WAYBACK MACHINE, COPYRIGHT INTERNET ARCHIVE.
// ALL OTHER CONTENT MAY ALSO BE PROTECTED BY COPYRIGHT (17 U.S.C.
// SECTION 108(a)(3)).
var sWayBackCGI = "http://web.archive.org/web/20000303085528/";
function xLateUrl(aCollection, sProp) {
  var i = 0;
  for(i = 0; i < aCollection.length; i++)
    if (aCollection[i][sProp].indexOf("mailto:") == -1 &&
        aCollection[i][sProp].indexOf("javascript:") == -1)
      aCollection[i][sProp] = sWayBackCGI + aCollection[i][sProp];
}
if (document.links) xLateUrl(document.links, "href");
if (document.images) xLateUrl(document.images, "src");
if (document.embeds) xLateUrl(document.embeds, "src");
if (document.body && document.body.background)
  document.body.background = sWayBackCGI + document.body.background;
//-->
</SCRIPT>
</html>
```

E.ADDENDUM: some sources quoted in this letter.

1.My letter answering to Gabriel Fenteany's letter, announcing why for the History Central Catalogue point of view the VL was now broken and that we now needed some written excuses from Mr.Chapman.

From: Noiret, Serge
Sent: Friday, December 02, 2005 11:14 AM
To: 'Gabriel Fenteany'; trygstad@trygstad.org; Michael Chapman; Gerard Manning; Gene Thursby; T.Matthew Ciolek; Hanno E. Lecher; athornhill@conbio.org; Lynn H. Nelson; Lopez Martin, Ignacio; George Laughead Jr
Cc: Zaagsma, Gerben
Subject: NOIRET: VL now broken

Dear Gabriel,

I'm afraid that what you are asking is now out of date.

Mr.Chapman did send confidential and private printed letters dated 28th of November with a special delivery procedure to the secretary general of our University saying that he's acting "having been given clear instructions by Council" (my case is now under "Council examination") to ask the EUI (European University Institute) to withdraw the WWW VL materials from our eui.it server. This mean, in substance, taking away from the EUI all history indexes which -he now claims- are is own business ! (As you remember n Wednesday the 30th of November he did stole the name and title of Lynn Nelson's old catalogue now EUI copyrighted).

At the EUI today, the 2nd of December all references and links to his vlib.org/interarb.org server are now being killed (or in the process to be killed as soon as all our Ph.d. Researchers and our institutional maintainers will have time to do so).

You are very kind Gabriel to speak so politely. This is what I did for weeks with Mr.Chapman specifically saying and writing that he was destructing the VL project and asking only what you now ask (a bit late now I guess). As I said, this man will NEVER answer any precise request regarding his behaviour against the old VL project, old VL council members and VL single maintainers.

He now did too much and he did this not through email like me but "officially". This implies that he's taking now part of my professional time for informing my institution about what he's doing (see copy of letters to all of you from Yiddish history sources maintainers as an example, etc.).

As you remember, we are all volunteers offering a service and our history service has nothing to do with a man using a private server for his own purposes in Culoz.

What you ask Gabriel is ****for the History Central catalogue maintainers****, Inaki Lopez Martin and Serge Noiret, not enough now. If, by any chance, in the future a VL index will continue to collaborate with us these acts will now have to be done:

1.Chapman not only has to answer all what is repeatedly asked to him by you by Lynn, by Ray, by George etc. 2.but Chapman has also now ****to send printed confidential letters**** with all his apologizes for not having understood and having done mistakes about his assertions and entered other's business: the History Central catalogue own business.

3.Of course he should first take away the page with the title "History Central catalogue" that he has now stolen to Lynn Nelson's copyright on it (given to the EUI in Florence in April 2004) and should not anymore claim about the property of the old WWW VL logo witch we use now with the sentence "Legal protection of databases: The title "WWW Virtual Library" and the book-and-globe logo pictured above are copyright © by Tim Berners-Lee and the WWW Virtual Library" what is certified in all past versions of Mr.Gerard Manning main catalogue we have in our archives.

When all this will be done and when single VL maintainers and VL networks will see facts like lists of discussion, democratic election and democratic appeal for candidates, collective (you and George as it was planned) access to main VL catalogue, transparency of VL institutions at all levels, the WWW VL History Central catalogue will, ****eventually**** (but why should we and for what purposes now ?) discuss with the new council the case for a new participation on a new VL project which is now all to be refunded.

At the moment, we, ****history central catalogue****, have already and -will systematically cut- all our links and reference to interarb.com, we are not using anymore interarb.com logo nor interarb search engine. Furthermore with this letter I'm warning Mr.Chapman and ask him not to send anymore to our iue.it domain an indexing robot belonging to his commercial domain because, if this will continue to happen, we will stop his robot from indexing our pages like we do with all anti-spam agents.

It is a huge work that this man in Culoz succeeded to oblige us to do but, as you may understand Gabriel, it is a work without turning back to any previous and not clear situation.

Thank you Gabriel for your letters which I personally (and my co-maintainer Inaki Lopez Martin) shares entirely but for what the facts are now, you are coming too late.

As all these gentlemen's which are reading these letters may now understand, the VL problem is for you all old council members, only one, and this is ****Mr.Chapman himself****.

Serge Noiret

-----Original Message-----

From: Gabriel Fenteany [mailto:fenteany@uic.edu]

Sent: Thursday, December 01, 2005 7:35 PM

To: trygstad@trygstad.org; Michael Chapman; Gerard Manning; Gene Thursby; T.Matthew Ciolek; Hanno E. Lecher; athornhill@conbio.org; Noiret, Serge; Lynn H. Nelson; Lopez Martin, Ignacio; George Laughead Jr; Gabriel Fenteany
Subject: The VL on the verge of breakdown

Frankly, everyone, I think this whole thing is ridiculous in so many ways, and there is blame enough to go around. A lot of the problem is e-mail and the fact that it is easy to over-react or make a strawman out of things when you don't have ace-to-face personal contact.

We can resolve this whole thing and avoid a complete VL meltdown quite simply:

1) Michael, please reinstate all VL history sites to their previous state. Whatever issues you have regarding the organization of history VLs or any other objection, please discuss. All VL history sites must be reinstated with appropriate links on the vlib.org pages.

2) The fact is that the previous VL Council, whose principles - with the tragic exception of Bertrand - are all addressed in this e-mail communication, failed in its duties. We did. We did not really do anything in all these years and we certainly did not establish the mechanism for new elections. We failed. I failed. Because of this, perhaps it is not so bad a thing if a "caretaker" or interim Council organizes a new transition to "legitimate" elected "leadership." Nobody else but me - briefly - and Michael (of the original elected Council) seem to have done much in the last 5 years. We brought in George to help with some work while we updated the very outdated central VL catalog. That is the recent history, without value judgement. What to do? Michael, it is imperative that the caretaker council organize new elections immediately. Otherwise, I see the VL disintegrating in short order. A valid election can only be held with the reestablishment of a two-way, unmoderated VL-wide e-mail list. Why hasn't this been done already?

That's all. Michael, the ball is in your court, my friend. George and Serge, please give Michael a chance to resolve these issues without any further accusations. It seems that everyone has hurt feelings, but now is the time for some rational action to restore confidence.

Michael, the necessary action seems to be yours to take. I implore you to take the actions 1 and 2 above in order to save the VL. George and Serge, back off. Remember that Michael has done a lot for improving the VL structure, and so just wait and see without any further angry e-mails. I refuse to take sides. I am merely suggesting what I see as the only way out of this situation right now. There will be time for angry e-mail and ex-communications from everyone - Michael, George, Serge AND ME - if this all falls apart.

Come on! What would Tim Berners-Lee think? He has foregone a huge amount of personal glory and gain for the good of the community. We should adjust our words and actions to the example he has set.

Gabriel

P.S. If this situation is not resolved, I will be leaving the VL. My site will survive as BioChemWeb.org without the VL. I do hope that this step will not be necessary.

P.P.S. Please forward this e-mail to any other concerned parties. I do not have the e-mail addresses of everyone who may be relevant to this discussion.

.

2.Mr.Chapman's letter called "serge.pdf" on the 31/10/2005. This letter served also against the EUI secretary general one week after. I always refused to accept the idea of "confidential" letters in all this matter and explicitly repeated and wrote to Mr.Chapman about it saying that things sent to me would have received the widest possible audience.

See "serge.pdf" added to this letter

3.A copy of the forwarded letter received by History maintainers, Mr.Chapman did sent last week. Mr.Zaagsma is not the only one. (I had at least the protest against it from Mrs. Adriana Luna Gonzalez from the WWW-VL Mexico History Index).

Dear Gerben Zaagsma,

>

> This message contains important information about your WWW Virtual
> Library Catalog listing.

>

> For the past several weeks the WWWVL has been experiencing problems
> with some of the servers hosting a (very) few of its member virtual
> libraries.

> Problems have been varied, but have included the publication of
> misleading

> artwork and text and the creation of some bizarre link patterns.

> The former

> are all too likely to confuse human users of the VL, the latter

> risk being

> seen as 'link spamming' (akin to citation circles) by machine

> users. VL

> Council has tried (over the best part of two months) to obtain

> explanations,

> even resorting to sending couriered letters, and offering to

> physically visit

> one group of maintainers. This has been without success. Without

> reassurances

> as to the future, let alone explanations, Council must act to

> protect the

> integrity and well-being of the VL project.

>

> Unfortunately your Virtual Library is hosted on one of the 'problem
> servers'.

> Whether anyone at all is to blame for the confused mess that

> things are now

> in is one question, but your own status is quite another: I have

> absolutely

> no reason to believe other than that you and your VL (like the

> WWWVL as a

> whole) have been caught up in all this quite innocently.

> So:

> Regrettably, it seems as if it will be necessary to temporarily

> remove some

> links -possibly including yours- from the Catalog. This is a sad

> necessity to

> protect the good name of the project, and thus in the not-so long

> term the

> good name, also, of your own VL.

> If this does prove necessary, then thereafter:

> It is possible that 'eleventh hour' attempts to find out what has
> been going
> on, why, and what future assurances are, may succeed. I should
> though warn
> you that Council has commenced parallel actions to preserve the
> good standing
> of the WWWVL and matters are no longer simple.
> Or:
> You might choose to relocate your VL to a different server.
> Council has
> received a generous offer from one member to offer hosting (in the
> medium
> term at least) to anyone adversely affected by these events, such
> as yourself.
>
> I have tried to be as short as possible in this note. I have also
> tried to restrict myself to the facts that are likely to affect you.
> Until
> matters
> clear it would be inappropriate to comment in too great a detail on
> the
> underlying problems. If though I can assist about your personal VL and
> ensuring its continued viability and utility to users, do please
> contact me.
>
> Regards,
>
> Michael Chapman
>
> Secretary
> WWW Virtual Library
> --
>
> The World Wide Web Virtual Library
> The WWWVL is an association sans but lucratif established in the
> Republic and Canton of Geneva.
> <<http://vlib.org/>>
> Contact via email, or <<http://vlib.org/forms/general>>, or fax
> +33-4-79.87.16.33.

4. My letter to the old council on November the 29th “about what Mr. Ciolek is asking and what Mr. Laughead is denouncing” with what should be done to restore some legal activity in the VL project.

From: Noiret, Serge

Sent: Tuesday, November 29, 2005 5:14 PM

To: 'George Laughead Jr'; Gerard Manning; Michael Chapman; Gabriel Fenteany; Gene Thursby; T. Matthew Ciolek; Lynn H. Nelson; Hanno E. Lecher; athornhill@conbio.org; Gene R. Thursby; Ray Trygstad

Cc: Lopez Martin, Ignacio

Subject: NOIRET: about what Mr. Ciolek is asking and what Mr. Laughead is denouncing

Dear all, (long letter, sorry for that)

I have waited a week now to understand better the WWW-VL is now only Mr. Chapman affair or is still a confederated project belonging to his maintainers. This time three persons answered my mail, (better then in the past): Mr. Nelson, Mr. Manning and Mr. Ciolek. The latest asked me what I really wanted with my emails and the first is asking us to come back to a reasonable discussion in order to keep going in a fair way as VL project, a "sapiens" decision that I share if there is a place for discussion.

But these are the issues I personally would like an association like ours, would deal with and I hope that Mr. Ciolek will accept to say that they are quite important points to discuss between gentlemen's and for the future of the VL.

1. Necessity to recreate a VL discussion's list for ALL MAINTAINERS and not only receiving solitaire conversations from Mr. Chapman only to all, and only one person to Mr. Chapman.

2. The creation of a discussion's list with archives of the mails is a fundamental step in order to promote new candidates for the election of our association, a new council which would represent all of us. This would allow a global discussion with Old members of the council which -I guess- should still feel involved in this passage before a new democratic election will happen. This should mean: possibility of discussing aims and goals of the VL, his future policies, the place where to keep the main catalogue and eventual mirrors, new by-laws and -more important- who are he candidates for the council and for the association's post to be elected: all issues our members should be able to discuss and, if they feel, to promote and candidate themselves.

****3. Mr. Chapman said that he organized a so-called meeting of the association on the 13th of October in Geneva. I would like to know (may I say that ****I want to know and I should be informed**** as an important coordinator of history VL belonging to the WWW-VL project) and I want that ****all VL maintainers**** know:**

- a. who was there in Geneva on the 13th
- b. what were the issues discussed

- c.if they were votes on which issues and with which results.
- d.what were the candidates to which posts (presidency, council, treasury .. ?) and how much votes they and others received.
- e.a signed minutes of the contents of this meeting is fundamental and (I think) should also be published on the vlib.org site with all details.

If this will not be done, the actual VL.org site will lack of all the formal and basic legal authority to exist in the name of a voluntary association as was the WWW-VL. If during this meeting, the vlib.org became formally, another, commercial, association with a new business management, we all have to know what is now the situation and should be able to say yes or no and to move forward with the old project.

**4.In this meeting a person named Raoul Sanchez was elected president by a "council". Could we know more:

- a.which VL Mr.Sanchez is maintaining and from when, to have the possibility to become a candidate to the presidency of our association, the old WWW VL project ?
- b.who are the members of the council which, as presented below on the page "http://vlib.org/admin/president" is said by M.Chapman, is the "caretaker" VL council which elected Mr.Sanchez ?

I quote the vlib.org site: "Raoul Sanchez was elected president of the association on October 13th 2005. A caretaker council, which he chairs is in the process of organising council elections which will take place over the winter of 2005/06."

From the history page of the VL we have now the all VL association's posts filled: President, Vice-president and Treasurer as you may see at <http://vlib.org/admin/history>. Who elected these persons into this business ? Not me, any other VL maintainer ? The VL old council, a phantom new VL caretaker association council composed by Mr.Chapman (vice-president 2005-), Mr.Sanchez (president., 2005-) and Mrs.Lisa Micah (treasurer, 2005-) ? Others ?

Our new treasurer, Mrs.Lisa Micah has an artist page at <http://perso.wanadoo.fr/afro.art.cyber.gallery/artistes/micah/about.htm> and she was a VL maintainer of "Human figure" at <http://galabia.com/vl/>, last updated year 2000. Her address is 1 rue du Four, Culoz, 01350 as you may find clicking on the link available on her VL for her business site at <http://lisamicah.com/>. Furthermore, she has an art gallery of the same name located in the same village -Culoz- using the same name: "Galabia - galerie d'art, place Cotter, 01350 Culoz, France" as mentioned on her same business page at <http://lisamicah.com/>

Now, the interarb.com (or vlib.com oh sorry, vlib.org...) server is located, if we ask the domain server search engine "whois" for it at: "Chapman, Michael, contact@MCHAPMAN.COM, 1, rue du Four, Culoz, 01360, FR". This is a public information and nothing should be said to all this if everything would have been said, voted, known by all of us.

**5.We need also all the explanation from Mr.Chapman of the harassment he has made in the former weeks against Mr.Laughead and on the fact he did cancelled from the main vlib.org page the history central catalogue at vlib.iue.it (we are a university...)

and all the many good web sites which are maintained up to date by Mr.Laughead on the page <http://vlib.org/History> ? We also need to know why he did send a letter to Mr.Nelson excluding him de facto from the VL association etc.. In general, we need to know what Mr.Chapman is planning to do with the old Mr.Tim Berner's Lee project and eventually discuss his arguments in a general and broader discussion between VL maintainers ?

6.I was much in favour and enthusiastic (I helped to translate things like my co-maintainer Inaki Lopez martin) of the refurbishment of the VL and I still think that for doing this you need an infrastructure, time, skill and money and that not all maintainers should be like ours in our history project: free volunteers for an utopia. But, at least, and for this purpose, all the VL maintainers should discuss how better we could try to raise funds to maintain vlib.org and when decided, this policy should be transparent and accepted at least by a majority of us.

But, before continuing to discuss (if anybody would still like to do so with the good manners that Lynn Nelson wanted from us), could we understand better the relationship between Mr.Chapman, Mr.Sanchez and Mrs.Micah which are, at the moment, if we follow what's offered by vlib.org, our vice-president, president and treasurer ? At the moment the vlib.iue.it history central catalogue is using the OLD VL LOGO and not the new interarb.com one. We still hope that all this matter will be settled and that we may want again to use the new interarb logo but this depends on all of you gentlemen's.

It was a long letter sorry but I hope to have satisfied at least Mr.Ciolek this time: I never thought that taking the History central catalogue from Lynn's Nelson's hands, one and a half year ago now, would have been such a difficult matter ! I would like to dedicate all this time just to update my documents and libraries but with this ongoing situation at vlib.org it is impossible not to ask for transparency about the future ! Mine is an academic institution and he name of this institution is involved in a project for which we need to know exactly about.

Serge Noiret
History Information Specialist
PhD. in Contemporary History
European University Institute
Badia Fiesolana, Via dei Roccettini 9
50016 SAN DOMENICO (FI) - Italia
Tel.: +39-0554685-348 ~ Fax +39-0554685-283
CV: [<http://www.iue.it/Personal/Staff/Noiret/noiret.html>]
WWW-VL History Central catalogue: [<http://vlib.iue.it/>]

5.A surrealistic presentation of a VL meeting on the 13th of October of 2005 in Geneva. (The PDF file is available in the member's area of vlib.org. We understand reading this letter that Mr.Chapman elected himself together with his wife/associate Lisa Micah and an –at the time- VL outsider M.Arthur Secret on all charges of the VL; another non VL maintainer M.Sanchez was elected as President. From these important decisions, these 4 persons granted themselves all power to do what they wanted with the VLIB on a commercial server using the name and reputation of an old project.)

See the minutes as “VL_ag05.pdf” added to this letter

6.Letter from Matthew Ciolek offering to restore VL mailing lists from Canberra in Australia after specific request done for this by Gabriel Fenteany, 7/2/2005.

From: T.Matthew Ciolek [tmciolek@coombs.anu.edu.au]

Sent: Monday, February 07, 2005 5:35 AM

To: Gabriel Fenteany

Cc: Michael Chapman; Hanno E. Lecher; 'Gerard Manning'; 'Michael Chapman'; 'Lynn H.Nelson'; 'T.Matthew Ciolek'; 'Serge Noiret'; 'Ray Trygstad'; 'Jennifer A.Drummond'; 'Gene R.Thursby'; 'Dan Brickley'; Laughead Jr

Subject: MATTHEW> VL mailing lists - an offer from Canberra

WL Colleagues,

Gabriel wrote Sun, 6 Feb 2005 11:40:47

>[...]

>Partly because we do not have a mailing list in operation now, Michael

>and I have been forced to make some decisions on our own.

No worries. You have my moral support here.

The main thing is that the VL, as a whole, is resurgent. Thank you for that.

>We have

>always tried to contact members of the VL Council before making any

>changes.

Noted and appreciated.

>I would very much like to get the VL Council, VL Announce and VL

>Discussion mailing lists up and running as soon as possible, so that

>communication can resume. Without this, the VL sites evolve in

>different directions (like speciation!) - witness the growth of

>non-compliant sites. Communication would restore a sense of the VL as

>something vital that people feel a part of. I am sure that many

>maintainers scarcely realize that the VL as an organization is still

>alive.

I can set up all three lists (VL Council, VL Announce and

VL Discussion) withing a couple of hours.

They would be running from "coombs.anu.edu.au" address. Interested?

>We have already received many new requests for VL membership, and, as

>Michael said, Google rankings have increased, not that we are supposed

>to be so vain as to care, but we do. :)

Fantastic.

Matthew

-

Dr T. Matthew Ciolek tmciolek[use"@"]coombs.anu.edu.au

Head, Internet Publications Bureau, RSPAS,

The National Institute for Asia and the Pacific,

The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia

ph +61 (02) 6125 0110 fax: +61 (02) 6257 1893

<http://www.ciolek.com/PEOPLE/ciolek-tm.html>

7.Letter from Lynn H.Nelson on the 2nd of December explaining how the History central catalogue arrived at the EUI.

From: Lynn H. Nelson [lhnelson@raven.cc.ku.edu]
Sent: Thursday, December 01, 2005 6:42 PM
To: Noiret, Serge
Cc: Lynn H. Nelson; George Laughead Jr; Lopez Martin, Ignacio
Subject: Re: needed urgently letter from Lynn Nelson to EUI

To whom it may concern;

In early September 1993, I was contacted by Arthur Secret and Tim Berners-Lee, asking if I would modify HNSource, on the raven system of the University of Kansas, my lynx-based History server to an http/html-based web site with the mission of maintaining an index of web sites relevant to the study of History. I agreed, and WWW-VL History was in operation by 21 September 1993. Berners-Lee participated in the page design and provided the WWW-VL logo (the orb and book) that was to mark my page and any subsidiary pages I established.

I maintained WWW-VL history by myself, without funding, as a mega page of about 250 Kb for the next five years. I was joined from time to time by people who wished to set up pages supplementary to WWW-VL History and, with the approval of Arthur Secret, provided them with a link to the WWW-VL logo as well as one to the logo I has established for WWW-VL History sites subsidiary to my own. Serge Noiret was one of my earliest co-workers in this project.

In 1998 I became aware that the potential of WWW-VL History could not be realized using the structure that had evolved over the years, and so converted WWW-VL History from a mega-page of links to a catalogue pointing to the member WWW-VL History Index sites. At the same time, I realized that I neither could nor should be the sole developer of what was becoming the WWW-VL History Network. I encouraged Serge Noiret to take charge of developing the European section of our network while I concentrated on other regions. Serge and Inaki Lopez-Martin developed that section into the strongest part of the History Network.

In 2003, I lost most of my vision to Macular Degeneration and was no longer able to perform the functions necessary to maintaining the Network. It was clear that someone would have to take over the task of maintaining what had become the WWW-VL History Central Catalogue. The choice was obvious, and upon Serge Noiret's acceptance, I transferred to his care the WWW-VL logo that Tim Berner-Lee had given me, the mission with which I had been entrusted, the History logo that I had created, list ownership of HISTOPS-L, the discussion list established for the use of History site maintainers, and the coordination of Network activities that I had previously performed. He, along with Inaki Martin-Lopez are now managers and owners of the WWW-VL History Network's Central Catalogue, which was mine to give, subject only to the requirements of the mission with which I was entrusted by Tim Berners-Lee.

Lynn Harry Nelson
Professor Emeritus
University of Kansas
1631 Alabama Street
Lawrence KS 66044-4033 USA

8. Letter from M. Ray Trygstad to old VL council addressing Tim Berners-Lee and Gabriel Fenteany concerns, the 5 December 2005

(with some information about the illegal practices developed at vlib.org/interarb.com by Mr. Chapman against VL constitution/by-laws).

From: Ray Trygstad [trygstad@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, December 05, 2005 10:37 PM
To: Tim Berners-Lee
Cc: Gabriel Fenteany; Michael Chapman; Gerard Manning; Gene Thursby;
T. Matthew Ciolek; Hanno E. Lecher; athornhill@conbio.org; Noiret, Serge;
Lynn H. Nelson; Lopez Martin, Ignacio; George Laughead Jr
Subject: Re: Resignation from the WWW VL

(Taking a deep breath and plunging in...)

Some of this can be explained much better than I can, but I would like you to understand the core of the matter quickly since I gave you the first heads-up on this. I am certain that others who are party to this discussion will correct any errors I might have made here, and I speak for myself as a VL member and not on behalf of the VL or the VL Council.

It is true that we did not elect a new Council when the current Council's term expired in 2002. As this contingency is not covered in our Constitution (<http://vlib.org/admin/Constitution>) or Bylaws (<http://vlib.org/admin/SepBylaws>), the assumption was--and is--that the previously elected Council would constitute the Council until a new election was conducted. Sometime in the spring or summer of this year, as I understand it, a Council member, Michael Chapman, assumed responsibility for maintaining the index at vlib.org. He was assisted in some reorganization by Council member Gabriel Fenteany and by George Laughead Jr., who was also working on the history index. Mr. Chapman moved the Index of the VL to his own server and at some point following that action would no longer share passwords for access with anyone else on the VL. October 2005, Mr. Chapman held a physical meeting of the VL in Switzerland, attended by four people, at which a "caretaker council" was elected who in turn elected new officers. ***In my personal opinion*** (I cannot speak for the rest of the Council in this) this election was illegal as it did not follow the procedure prescribed in Article VI of our Constitution. On top of that, two of the four people in attendance, Arthur Secret and Raoul Sanchez, are not actually members of the Virtual Library as neither one, to my knowledge, maintain a VL. Minutes of this meeting may be found at http://vlnavmar.usnaweb.org/vlmembers/VL_ag05.pdf. I am absolutely certain that Michael Chapman has a completely different perspective on this and I sincerely hope he will take the time to explain his actions, but I know what our Constitution and Bylaws state and I know how things appear to those of the properly elected Council members who have been part of these discussions.

The other major part of this dispute is Mr. Chapman has unilaterally decided to dismiss what is probably the largest single section of the VL, the VL-History Index, based on vague charges of "creation of some bizarre link patterns [which] risk being seen as 'link spamming' (akin to citation circles) by machine users" as well as some other disputes that I am not entirely aware of. I believe that Serge Noiret, who now manages the VL History Index, will address his specific issues in a separate email. On

a minor note Mr. Chapman also dropped my site from the index and although he says I was notified as per the Bylaws, I find no such notification and nothing but pleasant exchanges between him and I in my email archives at the time he said it was done. As I have seen no evidence that termination of my membership in the VL followed the procedure established in our Bylaws, I still consider myself and my site to be members of the VL and will fight tooth and nail to preserve the integrity of the Virtual Library.

In all of our communications over the past week as things have deteriorated, Mr. Chapman has never responded (that I can see) to any of the calls for free and open elections involving all members of the VL; even if they were held today, he has complete control over the database of members and the mailing list, and many of those who would oppose him have either been dropped from membership or have withdrawn and could not participate in the process. Gabriel Fenteany, whose resignation has prompted this current email exchange, as recently as the end of August stated "As I understand it, George is worried that Michael is trying to take over the VL. I do not think this is true." and "I think that Michael is willing to share server access to others." I certainly understand that Gabriel feels betrayed but I sincerely wish he would remain and help the rest of us restore the VL to a member-run organization.

I am very saddened that the ring of mutual trust and respect that was the Council of the World Wide Web Virtual Library has been torn apart. I honestly do not know what you can do at this point, but your interest and concern means a great deal to those of us who wish to see the VL remain a viable, vibrant community of scholarship, and I hope you might work with us to restore full member governance of the VL.

--Ray

Ray Trygstad
Maintainer, Naval and Maritime pages of the WWWVL

On 12/4/05, Tim Berners-Lee <timbl@w3.org> wrote:

- > I am very saddened to hear of this crisis within the VL.
- >
- > Some organizations can weather such crises and survive.
- > In fact, many volunteer organizations do have such crises and do
- > survive. I don't know whether a teleconference or a face-face meeting
- > would be able to help here.
- >
- > I had hope that the VL would be run as a non-profit association
- > governed in a fair open and democratic way. When such is the case,
- > those in control can always be removed by election.
- >
- > Have general meetings not been held at all, and the council not been
- > re-elected? Who currently controls the VL?
- >
- > I have not been Ccd on the previous emails -- if they are archived,
- > could I have a pointer to the archive? I do not have anything like the
- > full picture.

>
> The Virtual Library is a valuable thing for the global community, and
> it does represent the integration of a lot of effort from many people.
> Those involve
> have a duty to ensure its survival in the original spirit.
>
> Tim Berners-Lee
>
> On Dec 3, 2005, at 13:49, Gabriel Fenteany wrote:
>
>> I have carefully looked over the e-mails sent by the maintainers of
>> different History WWW VL sites. I am shocked by what I have learned.
>> I am saddened by the fact that all the History WWW VLs are leaving
>> the VL project.
>>
>> As a member of the first and only generally elected WWW VL Council
>> - elected on Dec. 17, 1999 along with Michael Chapman, Matthew
>> Ciolek, Bertrand Ibrahim, Hanno Lecher, Gerard Manning, Lynn Nelson,
>> Charles Petrie, Alan Thursby and Ray Trygstad - I can only say that
>> the present VL seems to share little in spirit or practice to the VL
>> of that time.
>>
>> I am writing to say that I am hereby resigning from the WWW VL. I do
>> not wish to be associated with an organization that: (1) no longer
>> respects the efforts and contributions of maintainers, even those
>> whose histories with the VL go back to its very origin; (2) does not
>> respond to concerns raised by others, again even veteran members of
>> the VL community; (3) does not act in complete transparency, which
>> has always been the policy of the VL; (4) does not re-establish the
>> traditional means of dialogue that the VL has
>> used: the two-way, unmoderated VL-wide discussion list; (5) takes
>> actions against individual VLs without due process, without
>> informing the broader VL community and with opaque motives.
>>
>> I will consider rejoining a WWW VL that operates in the spirit of
>> the original one. Until that time, please remove my VL, [http://](http://www.biochemweb.org/)
>> www.biochemweb.org/, from the central VL catalog at [http://](http://vlib.org/)
>> vlib.org/. I will make the appropriate changes on my VL to
>> distinguish it from the remnants of the once-noble WWW VL project.
>>
>> To everyone: I regret this decision and have very much enjoyed
>> getting to know many of you. I have worked hard on behalf of the WWW
>> VL for the last, close-to 7 years. However, since the present VL has
>> changed so much from the original, and since I think its viability
>> as a distributed, expert-maintained community of subject directories
>> is very much in question, I feel I have no other alternative at this
>> time.
>>
>> Thank you and best regards,
>>

>> Gabriel
>>
>> Gabriel Fenteany
>> Assistant Professor
>> Department of Chemistry
>> University of Illinois, Chicago IL 60607
>> Tel: 708-386-0975

9. HISTOPS-L correspondences useful to understand our recent VL history central catalogue goals and participation to the VLIB project.

a. Tuesday, February 08, 2005: IUE: 8th (and 7th) Informative Bulletin about the VLIB project and the WWW-VL History Central catalogue

From: Noiret, Serge

Sent: Tuesday, February 08, 2005 10:46 AM

To: 'histops-l@listproc.cc.ku.edu'

Subject: IUE: 8th Informative Bulletin about the VLIB project and the WWW-VL History Central catalogue

Dear friends and virtual librarians,

as you have already understood, the year 2004 was a crucial year for the WWW VL History project created in 1993-1994 at the University of Kansas, Lawrence. My last e-mail to our list, the HISTOPS-L, dated 11th of November 2004, was asking you to confirm your contribution to the History project and to update your e-mail address and was the 7th e-mail to HISTOPS-L (see below) from the beginning of the move from Kansas to Europe.

As you all know, the former maintainer and creator of the History Central catalogue, Lynn H.Nelson from Kansas University, retired in March last year even if his friendly "virtual" presence and his suggestions are still helping us all to proceed in our great job and goal: maintaining a high standard portal to access history on the web as part of the oldest web project, the WWW Virtual library renewed recently by Michael Chapman and Gabriel Fenteany at <http://vlib.org>. (They also cleaned up and updated the VLIB main history section at <http://vlib.org/History>.)

In the History Central catalogue at the EUI, We have now -more or less- solved all the problems linked to the move of hundreds of pages thanks to the daily work of Georges Laughead in Kansas which became "our American" connection and friend. The project is now located in Italy, Europe, loaded on the European University Institute web server, (EUI in English IUE in Italian), in Florence (www.iue.it) where it is possible to update the VLIB pages through a VPN connection and not only sending us the pages through e-mail.

Our main task, as new general maintainers of the project, Inaki Lopez Martin and myself, was first to have the server able to receive all the contributions of the different editors and secondly, to promote with new collaborators and, especially I hope, with new "institutional" collaborators, through the world, the all WWW VL History Network.

In this sense, if all the persons and the institutions which promised in 2004 to give some contributions in maintaining, editing and promoting single History Virtual Libraries will firmly confirm their wish to contribute to the project, we will continue to grow and develop our non-commercial activities widely.

Currently we are many editors [<http://vlib.iue.it/history/about/maintainers.html>] and many others accepted recently to become maintainers of single VL: a new History

Index for the History of Armenia is now available; Indonesia will be edited by Eef Vermeij from the Bangkok Desk of the IISH (International Institute for Social History) in Amsterdam; The WWW-VL European Integration History Index is edited by Christian Lekl and Giuliano Terzuoli and became a joint project between the CVCE in Luxembourg, (www.ena.lu) and the Historical Archives of the European Union in Florence, Italy (<http://www.iue.it/ECArchives/>); Alessandro Cristofori is the new editor for the WWW-VL History of the Classical World at the Bologna University, Italy; Verity Gale will maintain a new index for Financial and Banking history at the EABH, European Association for Banking History in Frankfurt, [<http://www.bankinghistory.de/>] etc..

But what is still our main aim is to serve the web community and to recruit new maintainers and to increase our contents both locally at the EUI in Florence and remotely, where editors are keeping their VL as part of the History Network.

If you feel that you know other people which would like to dedicate some time to a Virtual Library in History, please help them to write to us and become part of our worldwide community; several libraries at vlib.iue.it are asking for a new maintainer and we accept contribution if they are stable, non commercial and good historical contribution in all fields which would follow our very few general rules and criteria's (<http://vlib.iue.it/history/about/about.html>). This e-mail will also be sent to several scientific mailing lists to promote better our project but please do it also by yourself using "copy/paste" and sending these information around !

And a final consideration: as you may know, web ranking are placing quite high the WWW-VL as a whole and also as specific sections of the history project (have a look in google for History United States, History Spain or History Italy etc..). At the moment, looking for a so general term like "history" in Yahoo will take you to the 12th listed position.

This mean also that contributing to this well know worldwide project is a good -even if indirect- contribution for the visibility on the web, of your own scientific institution.

With all my best wishes for our common work in 2005 !

Serge Noiret

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Tel.: +39-0554685-348 ~ Fax +39-0554685-283
CV: [<http://www.iue.it/Personal/Staff/Noiret/noiret.html>]
WWW-VL History Project: [<http://vlib.iue.it/>]

7th Bulletin:

Dear editors of History Virtual Libraries,

thanks to Georges Laughead and Lynn H.Nelson, we have more or less completed the move of the WWW-VL History Central catalogue at <http://vlib.iue.it> and redirected towards Italy each single old indexes.

Many of you still have to update their own indexes with the new URL's but in the meantime, it is now the moment to update the instrument we still have to communicate between us: the Kansas list of discussion HISTOPS-L which was created by Lynn Nelson. Lynn is still ready to keep it up to date.

During the last months, many things changed and new indexes were created and announced in the news, old indexes disappeared or were taken again by new editors. This, of course, obliges us to update the list of editors/maintainers and especially their active e-mail address at <http://vlib.iue.it/history/about/maintainers.html> and in HISTOPS-L.

In order to do so, I will send this email both through the list and also to all maintainers e-mails that Lynn sent to me recently using the "blind copy area". This will have a sense only if you will answer this e-mail.

Could you then please all of you answer to this email saying to me at serge.noiret@iue.it whether your email is still active. Once I will have collected all information and will notice who has not answered, we will update the list.

Please keep in mind that who will not answer to this mail will be cancelled from the list.

Once this will be done we will begin to inform each others like in the past and new indexes will be announced to all editors in order to receive the usual suggestions and critics during a month before being accepted in our project.

That's why I hope that you all will take the time to just answer to this e-mail saying:

"yes this e-mail is still active and I'm still maintaining the x or y history index" or "no, I receive the emails but I'm not anymore maintaining an History Index" or "I prefer to use the following email instead " etc..

Thank you very much in advance for your kind cooperation to our common project in his new development's phase.

Serge Noiret

b. Tuesday, September 14, 2004, IUE - 6th Informative Bulletin on the move from Kansas to Florence, Italy at <http://vlib.iue.it>.

From: Noiret, Serge

Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2004 11:17 AM

To: histops-l@listproc.cc.ku.edu

Cc: Georg Vogeler ; Tony Campbell; john.johnston@taos.fnsb.lib.ak.us; Stefan Blaschke; George Laughead; George Laughead; Douglas L. Miller; Peter McIntyre; Nikolai N. Kostyukovich; Steven Leysen; Luciano Mardones; Galba de Mambro; Stephen Alford; Marcelo Figueroa; Patrick Hohn; Christian Lekl; Stuart Jenks; David T. Borton; Shishir Thadani; Qumars Hojjaty; Ken Finlay; Nava Blum; Roberto delle Donne; Pietro Corrao; Alessandra Guigoni; Angelo Gaudio; Fabio Vecchio; Elena Sodini; Luca Bova; Berta Caikauskaite; Marijan Galevski; Theresa Vann; Lars Ivar Owsen-Lein Borge; Timo de Nijs; Adrian van der Meijden; Balazs Csercsa; Rick Phillips; Wieslaw Sieradzan; Ewin Martinez; Khlestkina, Daria; dasha@cinemateka.ru; Tatiana Fazio; Gijs Kessler; Padraic MacUidhir; Maria Salisova; Vesna Velkovich Bukilica; Lopez Martin, Ignacio; Sameera Malinda; Dennis de Bies; Umit Yoruk; Jim Halverson; John Johnston; Scott Cummings; Lynn A. Nelson; Amy Schleigh; Jon Green; Robert Spencer; Virginia Fedden; Theresa Mudrock; Tim Givan; Mark Lause; Gary Butler; Lisa H McNamara; Nancy Sween; HB Paksoy; Mary Luque; Alex K. Schiller; Dianna M. Fisher; e : Bill Thayer; Stephanie Marra; Co Seegers; Tony Campbell; Christian Lekl; David Little; Lombardo, Davide; Ralf Blank; Martinez Alos Moner, Andres; Meyer, Claus; Alan S. Weisberg; Jenneke Quast; Steffen Breßler; Mike Rodriguez; gerard-manning@ceolas.org

Subject: IUE - 6th Informative Bulletin on the move from Kansas to Florence, Italy at <http://vlib.iue.it>

A warm hello to all maintainers still on board of the WWW-VL History Central catalogue and on the HISTOPS-L !

For the people which are not registered in the list HISTOPS-L [histops-l@listproc.cc.ku.edu], I may say that this is the 6th bulletin about the complete move of the central catalogue from the University of Kansas/Lawrence where Lynn Nelson created the Virtual Library in 1993 until March 2004, to Florence, Italy at [<http://vlib.iue.it>].

The last issue of this provisional Bulletin was sent before the summer and academic holidays in mid-May.

Now, as you may have already discovered there is no more history central catalogue at the old address where Georges Laughead created a slow redirect to the new URL of the project: after 15th second you will be redirected to Florence Italy at the new address of the project which is <http://vlib.iue.it>

I have also asked to Gerard Manning, the maintainer of the Virtual Library main catalogue to update the page available at <http://www.vlib.org/History.html> and that was done before the summer. This page is not giving today a proper image of the list

of individually maintained VL History sites and should be suppressed in the long run or be replaced by another mirror of the History central catalogue to reflect the real situation. We should at least find a way to update it regularly if our idea would be to keep it.

The new home page at <http://vlib.iue.it> is now waiting for all your suggestion for a better presentation of contents and information. We have only followed the graphical style adopted at the European University Institute in Florence Italy adapting the old categories to the new environment. We have also added some information pages for the all project and updated -we hope- the list of maintainers to what is actually the situation with a direct link in the left column of the home page at <http://vlib.iue.it/history/about/maintainers.html>.

Unfortunately we were not able until today to enter the HISTOPS-L, erase old e-mails, add new emails for new maintainers, change emails which did change in the last month. This work is still underway and we are working together with Lynn Nelson to solve all problems. This is the reason why, until we will not be able to manage the list correctly, we will systematically add all available maintainer's emails to our messages in the "copy to" field. This is the reason why some of you will receive two copies of the emails but for the others, not registered in HISTOPS-L, this solution will finally give access to information and discussion if you "answer to all" directly using this message.

New indexes have been loaded, old indexes changed hand, several indexes are still waiting for a specific maintainer, and before Christmas there will be some very important new indexes added to our main history catalogue.

A new search engine is available actually only for pages loaded in Florence under the domain vlib.iue.it. Who want to maintain an index loaded here on our web server at the EUI, is able to send updates as attachment through emails or to use a VPN connection and FTP session as explained at: <http://csweb.iue.it/CITS/DocumentDetail.jsp?ID=113>.

Finally we would like to solicited all of you to update your own pages with the new address of the project and to communicate to the list and send us eventual change in your e-mail address.

Our search for volunteers will be always a priority and we count on you to develop your own indexes and project and to keep alive Lynn Nelson's dream of a virtual community of web sites world wide looking also all of you for other maintainers.

Please don't hesitate to ask to the list if you have any problem and to communicate your idea's and suggestion "replying to all" at this email

For the History central catalogue, the maintainers, Serge Noiret and Inaki Lopez Martin

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c Monday, February 23, 2004, Moving on with our VLs and the History project

From: Noiret, Serge

Sent: Monday, February 23, 2004 11:42 AM

To: histops-l@listproc.cc.ku.edu

Subject: Moving on with our VLs and the History project

Dear History VL maintainers,

We should never forget that our strength is the fact that we have a network of persons, world wide connected together, and offering a decisive reference tool for the web in history. We are so, only because we are numerous and relying on a soft but existing structure which is still today, after more then 10 years of history for the WWW, an important tool for research and learning in the field despite yahoo, google etc..

We should try to use HISTOPS-L better -like Lynn suggested recently- to solve our practical problems dealing with the creation and the maintenance of our libraries. Sometime we remain too isolated when, maybe, some of us have the answer.

Creation of new indexes is vital. Maintaining old indexes is also crucial because what is important is to have a qualified index in the sector but even more an index with few broken links and reliable on the long run. An index should also be a good starting point to a topic, regularly updated with new sites. They are also some "tips" which could be used in order to become and to remain a real reference tool on the net. We may want to discuss it sometime and have a "virtual round-table" about it.

Now the reason why somebody does a VL, maintain it and contribute in doing so to help other people using the web to find their way in the net, are many and very different. It could be interesting to know more about but what is -at the end- important is the fact that a History VL exists and is maintained, connected world wide with other VLs in a bigger network despite of each maintainer's interests in doing so.

Each of you has his/her own goals with a single VL. Visiting each single site, these different goals could be easily understood. Sometime, maintainers are individual people with different cultural backgrounds and ages but sometime too, they are individuals ****inside institutions**** (universities, libraries, archives, institutes) which are developing those very good tools, the VLs, together with other institutionals projects in order to complete them, to attract more attention on other chapters of a bigger project, this is the case of vlib france for instance.

Just to make a recent example: here at the EUI we just have signed a kind of institutional agreement between the European University Institute (www.iue.it), the Historical Archives of the European Union (<http://www.iue.it/ECArchives/>) and an important institution in Luxembourg the CVCE (Centre Virtuel pour la Connaissance de l'Europe - Virtual Resource Centre for Knowledge about Europe - <http://www.cvce.lu>) about the maintenance of a "WWW-VL European Integration History Index", [<http://vlib.iue.it/hist-eur-integration/Index.html>]. This mean, in other words, that an "individual project" -I was the only maintainer of it as you may still see- will become an institutional project in the near future without, of course, ceasing

to be connected to our project: these institutions have understood the importance to add to single other web projects, a Virtual Library like our ones continuing to adopt our rules and being part of the history network. We will benefit in the VL of the development of important new contents inside this single library.

This is what I mean when I say that there exists very different kind of motivations to create and maintain our History VL: this is not just a work for young and enthusiastic students although, young people are still the most creative ones. At the end, we all benefit of each other work and contribute to maintain a high standard project because of everybody's work, each at his own level.

I hope we could continue to discuss sometime together on all our practical and empirical problems and help each other like it was "re"-started by Lynn recently. I hope also that we could think how better being connected with the other levels of the WWW-VL project and to know better what is still alive of that project: search engine, general catalogue, way to update memberships, general discussion's lists, board, etc..

Best wishes from Florence, Italy

Serge Noiret

d. Thursday, March 04, 2004, Mr.Laughead request for adhesion to the History Central catalogue.

From: George Laughead [georgedcks@yahoo.com]

Sent: Thursday, March 04, 2004 10:01 PM
To: histops-l@listproc.cc.ku.edu
Subject: Re: WWW-VL Application

I would like to apply for membership in WWW-VL.

My indexes cover:

WWW-VL: History: Internet and W3 <http://www.ku.edu/kansas/internet/>

WWW-VL: History: W3 Search Engines <http://www.ku.edu/kansas/search/>

WWW-VL: History: Bosnia & Herzegovina <http://www.ku.edu/kansas/ba/>

My full name is George Laughead Jr.
glaughead@sbcglobal.net

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Beats In Kansas
<http://www.ku.edu/heritage/beats/>

Cooking In Kansas
<http://www.kansasart.us/cooking/>

Ford County Historical Society, Dodge City, KS <http://www.ku.edu/kansas/ford/>

Kansas Heritage Group
<http://www.ku.edu/heritage/>

WWW-VL: History: W3 Search Engines <http://www.ku.edu/kansas/search/>

Do you Yahoo!?
Yahoo! Search - Find what you're looking for faster <http://search.yahoo.com>

e.Wednesday, June 16, 1999, Serge Noiret presentation for the list of discussion HISTOPS-L

From: Serge Noiret [noiret@datacomm.iue.it]
Sent: Wednesday, June 16, 1999 11:23 AM
To: WWW-VL - History Index List

Subject: presentation

I saw that my colleagues are following Lynn suggestion and are presenting themselves and their work. Unfortunately i have no time till the second half of July to say a lot about myself and my work. Just to begin -I'll say more in the future- I'm 42 years old, belgian, living now from 20 years in Florence, Italy, two marvellous daughters: 6 years and 11 month old and an extraordinary wife, Susanna, Italian from Bologna, professor of comparative institutional law in that university. I have a Ph.D. in contemporary history, i'm specialized in contemporary political and institutional Italian history, 1860-1925 more or less. I wrote several books and articles in that area in Italian and English and for the moment i'm editing a book on "campaigning" in electoral processes in Europe, XIX-XXth centuries with the help of a lot of other historians each dealing with a national chapter. May i say that what i prefer in all jobs is when i'm working together with other people on a common project ? I didn't enter the Italian University which is very difficult for a stranger "even a european stranger". I only teach seminars from time to time and have small professor's contracts in that academic world. I'm working now from 1985 as the Library Assistant for the History & Civilization Department at the European University Institute and in that job i developed all knowledge's linked to "accessing information" for historians, now mainly in the digital world -not only internet-. I'm teaching practical courses on "internet for historians" around Italy and here at the EUI. I developed the EUI Library web site in 1995 but now i'm only maintaining a specialized web site belonging to the SISCO - the Italian society of contemporary Historians (see my signature for the URL). As an information broker for historians making a 3rd cycle (Ph.D. level) or even more, i really got into internet from two viewpoints: first the language of the new medium, second the contents, scientific contents, of the web. The 10th of July will be out a special issue of my -i'm one of the directors of the journals- journal "Memoria e Ricerca" dedicated to internet and history in which two of us, Lynn Nelson and Inaki Lopez Martin are participating with an essay. (I'll send you the index if you are interested). I made the introduction to the special issue "Languages and Spaces: the History Online" which correspond to a pragmatic or positivist approach to the topic, my idea of our interaction with the internet: this is just some lines of the english summary, badly written in my bad english -you are not alone Stefan !- "Making history on the Internet today means confronting ourselves with new languages, new professional practices and new communication procedures which should not be anymore ignored at the beginning of the third millennium. Nevertheless, Italy still suffers from being underdeveloped in Internet infrastructures. The WWW is lacking of consideration in the academic and institutional world in this country and this essay try to focus on how internet could be used by historians with the idea to reach only scientific and peered resources on the Web. In order to understand the changes and to mobilize the new virtual resources, three basic questions should be

answered before entering the WWW. First, we should ask ourselves "what" could be found and what would not yet be available on the Internet. Answering to this question obliges historians to acquire some knowledge of web developments and contents. "How to find what i'm looking for on the Internet ?" is the second question to be answered. "What could an historian do with what he has found on the net ?" is the last question. Answering those basic demands is the object of this introductory paper and is followed with different reflections and case studies which are trying to understand what is and what would be in the near future Internet's role in historical practices " .

Ok that's all for today -oh i forgot something- i'm trying to organize a small conference here in Florence at the beginning of the winter to discuss the topics of the special issue presented below and you will hear more about it -i hope- before the end of July .

I think like Stefan that we should discuss some kind of unification of the WWW-VL History Index pages, maybe not the graphical presentation because i may like or not colours, images, etc. but what's important in a site from my point of views :

- .1.How to reach clearly all information in the site: navigation
- .2.How to provide only important, peered and scientific information: contents specific to WWW-VL :
- 3..How to present texts information in the different pages with uniform contents: harmonization

Ex.: The Italian Index and Spanish Index based at the Sisscweb site are even visible with the good old "Lynx" browser. I like the campaign for "view able with any browser or Campaign for a Non Browser Specific WWW" [<http://www.anybrowser.org/campaign/>] if we think we should open our resources to everybody on the internet and especially to Third World Countries. BUT... it is very difficult for me to oblige myself to do so because i LOVE all new features of HTML 4.0, cascading style sheets, java animation's, tables, frames, etc. etc.. !! But i think that we should divide what we offer through WWW-VL and what are our other sites and pages where we may write, as i do with the Sisscweb home page :

"This web site is best viewed with Netscape version 4.x and with your monitor set on "800x600" with small fonts. Other browsers like Microsoft Internet Explorer version 4.x or Opera 3.x may also be used " .

Ciao a tutti voi and thanks to Lynn for the list which i hope will be a very good "working one "

P.S.Message for Bill Thayer: i like your "viola colour" in the background: that's the colour of my soccer team, the Fiorentina but i'm not able to download the all pages: too heavy from here, too much pictures. I have tried also the french version but after 20 minutes of slow downloading i had to give up. What should i do to see your pages from an underdeveloped internet country: Italy ?

P.S.Message for Inaki Lopez Martin: Inaki i had to re-write all our internal links (A Name urls) because lynks doesn't understand the following :

[[http://www.iue.it/LIB/SISSCO/references/eur-italy.html#Diplomatic History and International Relations](http://www.iue.it/LIB/SISSCO/references/eur-italy.html#Diplomatic_History_and_International_Relations)]

but only the following without spaces !!

]http://www.iue.it/LIB/SISSCO/references/eur-italy.html#Diplomatic-History-and-International-Relations [

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Serge Noiret

10.Mr.Lynn H.Nelson's letter to the HISTOPS-L about the distinction between non-for-profit and non-profit institutions and in general, the "money problem in the VLIB project.

From: owner-histops-l@listproc.cc.ku.edu on behalf of Lynn H. Nelson
[lhnelson@raven.cc.ku.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, December 07, 2005 6:00 AM
To: histops-l
Cc: Tim Berners-Lee
Subject: [HISTOPS-L:679] Cay=uses of Conflict.

I have been asked by some members of this list to explain the basic cause for the development of factions within the leadership of WWW-VL. Since I was not copied in many of the e-mail exchanges on this matter, I cannot answer this question with any certainty, but I have drawn some conclusions that I will share with you. If I am wrong, I'm sure that someone will take the time to correct me.

I believe that the basic issue is one of money.

The WWW-VL is registered in Switzerland as an organization "sans but lucratif." This is equivalent to the American "not for profit" as distinguished from "non-profit." The distinction is an important one. A non-profit organization must rely on gifts and contributions, as well as the out-of-pocket expenditures of its workers, to defray its costs, whereas a not-for-profit organization may develop revenue-producing activities to obtain revenues.

Moreover, the definition of "costs" for a not-for-profit organization is rather vague. Some not-for-profit organizations in the United States, for instance, have been found to have devoted over 90% of their incomes to "administrative costs," including exorbitant salaries for executive officers. Some of you may recall the scandal surrounding the compensation of the CEO of the United Way a few years ago.

Mr. Chapman has, it seems to me, seized control of WWW-VL in order to exploit that aspect of the not-for-profit status of the organization by selling advertising links, pointing to one's personal profit-making sites, and so forth. Make no mistake about it, the amount of money to be had from an organization such as WWW-VL is quite large.

This was a matter of discussion among the council some time ago, but was left unresolved. My personal feeling at that time was that, being already endowed by gifts, we had chosen not to allow our operations to become dependent on developing revenue sources.

Even so, the crucial issue was, if we were to seek revenues, what were the "legitimate costs" which they would be used to defray?

Mr. Chapman has not addressed this particular issue, but, in a response to Serge Noiret's complaint about the presence of advertising links on some WWW-VL pages, Matthew Ciolek responded that it was perfectly reasonable that maintainers should be

paid for the expenses of leasing space for their work on-line, and as compensation for the time and effort they expended in developing their sites.

I find the latter contention unacceptable. The WWW-VL was originally formed of volunteers committed to providing a public service and doing so freely. If maintainers are to be compensated for their work, then WWW-VL maintainers become mere hirelings.

Lynn Harry Nelson
Professor Emeritus
University of Kansas
1631 Alabama Street
Lawrence KS 66044-4033
USA