

History Fair Process Paper

I chose my topic of Disney's effects on copyright laws because it's something I'm very interested in that just so happened to fit with the annual theme. I love copyright laws due to their inherently complex nature and their effect on our day-to-day lives. My topic fits with the theme of debate and diplomacy because copyright is often shrouded in controversy that usually leads to discussion.

When it comes to research, the first thing I did was go through materials Disney currently has copyrighted. I identified the materials that were nearing their entry into the public domain. Next, I found articles containing information regarding the changes Disney has lobbied for in congress. I found a couple of books that gave historical context on copyright and its flaws. Lastly, I interviewed someone knowledgeable on the topic of copyright and its importance but also its issues.

I created my project in the form of a website using the National History Day NHDWEBCENTRAL tool. Using the NHDWEBCENTRAL tool, I set up a basic template for structuring my information in a website format. I created several pages for each section of my project. For example, I made a landing page and added a photo with hyperlinks to the other pages of my website. On the other pages of my website, I placed images and quotes followed by their respective citations.

The Walt Disney Company's impact on copyright law in the United States since their victory with the Copyright Act of 1976 has only expanded with The Sonny Bono Copyright Term Extension Act of 1998. Their influence has virtually halted the advancement date of the public domain for works that were protected by older fixed-term copyright laws meaning that works would not enter the public domain for more than a decade.

This topic is historically significant because it shows the importance of preventing large corporations from having too much influence in law-making. This topic further shows the importance copyright holds throughout history and the effects it has on the modern-day use of decades-old copyrighted material. Disney has had a massive impact on copyright laws that not only benefit them but also impede the progress of art and literature. This is especially true for materials that would have otherwise entered the public domain and been used remixed into many other works of art or literature.