

## Google –it aint just books. It's photos too!

BBC4's 'Google and the World Brain' prompts us\* to express our own anger.

Google is making it even easier for web users to copy and republish images without attribution. Not only that, they're using other websites' bandwidth to do it.

Google trawls the net for images which it republishes in Google Images. It's an amazing resource. But it's set up to flout the convention of Fair Use that's embodied in the suite of Creative Commons licences for web publishing.

Now Google has launched a restyled Google Images that makes it even easier to republish images without crediting the original creator.

Previously Google hotlinked to the image on the source website with the original page displayed and accessible behind it. Now they display the image alone, allowing the source page to be skipped. Every hotlink uses the source site's paid-for bandwidth: theft!

~~Previously Google took a copy of an image which users could link to on Google's servers. Now, to get round the charge that it is infringing copyright, Google instead gives a direct link to the original image on the source web page. It's called hotlinking and it's using the source site's paid for bandwidth. Theft!~~

In traditional publishing there's a convention of Fair Use: anyone may use or quote from another's work as long as the original work is cited and its author credited. Our contributors agree to their photos being published on the web on comparable terms.

\*We are the Geograph Project. Find us at [www.geograph.org.uk](http://www.geograph.org.uk)

We aim to collect, publish, organise and preserve images from every square kilometre of the British Isles. Our collection has over 3.3 million photos to date and is growing. We are sponsored by Ordnance Survey and archived by the British Library.

Our contributors are happy for their photos to be copied and used in any way – as long as their copyright is acknowledged in accordance with the Creative Commons licence.

### Contact

Robin Stott (Director): 01926 497038 and 07876 648874  
email: [robin.stott@icloud.com](mailto:robin.stott@icloud.com)

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