

## 2007-12-19 Show Notes

Offset	Topic
00:17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Intro</li></ul>
01:39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Word of the Week: crawling horror</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="http://catb.org/jargon/html/C/crawling-horror.html">http://catb.org/jargon/html/C/crawling-horror.html</a></li></ul>
03:04	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Feature</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Washington Post op-ed got me thinking about this<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/11/30/AR2007113001802.html">http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/11/30/AR2007113001802.html</a></li><li>• Rife with examples</li><li>• This is not new, but implies we are getting to a stage where legislators should have adjusted</li><li>• Suggests this is generational</li><li>• Also cites a lack of leadership</li><li>• Thinks today's Vannevar Bush's end up in private sector</li><li>• I disagree, we have Feltens, Lessigs</li><li>• Why are they not ending up as advisors, policy makers?</li><li>• Also points to gap in lobbying with older industries</li><li>• Implies, and I agree, that tech companies eschew government, show a libertarian streak</li><li>• Many tech companies have learned the hard way that this is not healthy</li><li>• Suggests we use the presidential election to force the issue</li><li>• I think we need a more sustained change to norms</li></ul></li><li>• Legislators aren't experts on all things<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have staffers to provide expertise</li><li>• Technology should be no different</li><li>• <a href="http://techdirt.com/articles/20071203/095421.shtml">http://techdirt.com/articles/20071203/095421.shtml</a></li><li>• Tim Lee makes similar point</li><li>• Warns that the risk is for legislators to fool themselves into thinking they know it all</li><li>• Could lead to even worse, ill conceived legislation than out of ignorance</li></ul></li><li>• Lessig is exploring idea of US CTO<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="http://lessig.org/blog/2007/12/a_us_cto.html">http://lessig.org/blog/2007/12/a_us_cto.html</a></li><li>• Just an idea for discussion</li><li>• I am concerned that this would also allow legislators to abdicate responsibility</li><li>• Think it would be better to have expertise more widely distributed</li><li>• Not sure what he is suggesting would be mutually exclusive</li><li>• Just concerned at risk</li><li>• Hope Lessig also tackles issue of failed or lacking norm</li></ul></li></ul>

## Offset

## Topic

- Would be a more direct response to issues highlighted in Post's op-ed
- Is speed of change to blame?
  - I don't think information age is unique
  - Industrial age saw such massive change in short time, too
  - I think we saw similar disconnects, bad predictions
  - Why not study this to better understand how to deal?
  - Enlightenment saw similar trends
  - Use of science to accelerate development of science
  - Patronage of science was popular
  - Not sure that model would work in a non-gentry society
  - Seems to be a popular back lash against science
  - Hard to talk of science funding without foundering on faith debates
  - Can technology be separated from questions of science funding and policy?
  - If we think of it as infrastructure, like energy, transportation, commerce
- There are existing advisory groups
  - Some have agendas, like Public Knowledge
  - Others seem more reactionary
  - USACM responds to calls for comments, drafts positions in response to specific issues
  - Need sustained expertise, local to individual legislators
- Individual technologists and policy often seem in conflict
  - Few staffers I've met are either techies or wonks but not both
  - Techies are often idealists of some strip--utopian, libertarian
  - Policy is dealing with law as it is, working with the system
  - Techies often have a hard time coming to grips, getting past how broke policy making seems to be
  - Libertarian techies often reject the system outright, see no point in participating
  - Problem is that there are plenty of interests willing, and skilled, to participate in policy
  - Need to adjust both sets of norms
    - Get technologists engaged, willing to advise, help, work with the system
    - Make legislators understand they need more assistance
    - This would better distribute knowledge
    - Should lead to better deliberation on technology policy
- Rhetorical failures
  - Commons sense metaphors often break down
  - When they do, lead to opportunities for vested interests
  - Big media and copyright as "property"

## Offset

## Topic

- Law enforcement and network as "telephone"
- Need to move past metaphor and understand the thing on its own
- This, again, requires strong technology, rhetorical, policy thinkers
- We have a few good thinkers
- Need to make them more accessible to public
- Do we need a "Sagan of information technology"?
- Does advocacy for the masses make sense?
- Motivated techies are one thing, but can hardly redress issues of norms
- Upping the tech literacy of the public would help improve norms for legislators
- Had some good folks, LaPorte and crew, but lost public venue
- Podcasting is too niche to be as effective
- Radio markets too segmented

26:26

## • Outro

- Contact me
  - Email to [feedback@thecommandline.net](mailto:feedback@thecommandline.net)
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  - del.icio.us tag is "for:cmdln"
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