Proposal to add the Copyleft Symbol to Unicode

by David Faulks (davidj_faulks@yahoo.ca)
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1. Introduction

The purpose of this proposal is to request that a codepoint be allocated in the UCS for the *Copyleft Symbol* ☞, a symbol which is derived from U+00A9 COPYRIGHT SIGN (©), only reversed. It is proposed that the symbol be allocated at U+1F12F[1] in the *Enclosed Alphanumeric Supplement Block*.

If the proposed name COPYLEFT SYMBOL (by far the most common name[2]) is not acceptable to the UTC, alternative names (such as COPYLEFT SIGN, or REVERSED COPYRIGHT SIGN) are acceptable.

Since the symbol is derived from U+00A9 copyright sign, the proposed character properties are based upon that character, but the UTC should feel free to alter the proposed properties if they wish.

```
1F12F;COPYLEFT SYMBOL;So;0;ON;;;;;N;;;;;
```

As a symbol, the copyleft symbol has no special line-breaking properties, and also has no defined collation, although one may suggest it be sorted just after (or before) ©.

The *Proposal Summary Form* is attached to the end of this proposal, as seems to be the practice nowadays.

2. History

Copyleft is a term that first gained popularity with Richard Stallman's GNU Project during the late 1980's, although the term itself can be traced back earlier. The term is currently used in a formal manner, to refer to licensing schemes for copyrighted works that are not 'All Rights Reserved' but rather grant some sort of copying and modification rights to the user or recipient automatically.[3]

Since the Copyright Sign (©) already existed long before the term 'Copyleft' was invented, it

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1 The original proposed position was 1F16C but the UTC decided on 1F12F, and this revision has been made to reflect that change.
2 A Google search for "copyleft symbol" returns over 8,700 results.
3 See: http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/

seems natural to come up with a reversed Copyright Sign to denote Copyleft. This submitter has not been able to find any precise origin or date for the Copyleft Symbol, but at least one TEX font family under development in 1996[4] included a glyph for the Copyleft Symbol. The symbol was informally adopted as a logo for those supporting the concept of copyleft, but was never trademarked, and even in 1996 there were hopes it would become available as an in-text symbol.

In 2000, a lengthy discussion on the Unicode mailing list[5] was the first to mention the possibility of encoding the symbol. However, the original posters did not understand that Unicode was intended for standardizing symbols *already* in-use in-text, and no submission resulted. Later, much shorter mentions of the Copyleft were made in the mailing list, in 2008, 2009, and 2012, but in general, characters do not get added to Unicode unless someone steps up and submits a proposal with evidence of usage.

However, this lack of a Unicode codepoint has not stopped some people from using the symbol in-text —as an alternative to the copyright sign— anyway.

3. Use

The Copyleft Symbol is typically used in 'copyright' statements, often alongside statements like 'All wrongs reserved' or 'All rights reversed'. The users are those who want to grant permission to copy the document, but who (in most cases) do not feel inclined to use a more formal method like *Creative Commons* or the *GNU Free Documentation License.*

4. Demand

This proposal is an individual proposal and is not made with the support or backing of any organization. Despite popularizing the term 'Copyleft', the Free Software Foundation does not promote use of the symbol, and notes using the symbol as a 'legal mistake'.[6] However, many individuals do wish to use the Copyleft Symbol in text, and often assume it is available for use as such, until they find out otherwise.

Evidence can be found by using Google to search for "copyleft symbol". Of the first 20 results, 9 are from those wanting or expecting to use the copyleft symbol as a symbol in text.[7]

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4 As documented in: https://www.tug.org/TUGboat/tb17-2/tb51omeg.pdf
5 See: http://unicode.org/mail-arch/unicode-ml/Archives-Old/UML022/thread.html#846
         http://unicode.org/mail-arch/unicode-ml/Archives-Old/UML022/thread.html#973
6 This is stated at the end of the Copyleft explanation at : http://www.gnu.org/licenses/copyleft.en.html
7 Try it yourself: https://www.google.ca/#q=%22copyleft+symbol%22

Figure 1: *Part of a screenshot of the Google results is to the right.*

Those asking questions on how to insert the copyleft symbol are typically told to insert images, or create their own font.[8] However, a number of people have come up with CSS styles using transforms to reverse a normal copyright sign instead[9]—a sign that they find using images unsatisfactory, and wish for a symbol that matches the typeface or font they are using.

5. A New Codepoint is Best

Theoretically, the copyleft symbol could be encoded using a sequence, using U+2184 LATIN SMALL LETTER REVERSED C or U+0254 LATIN SMALL LETTER OPEN O, followed by U+20DD COMBINING ENCLOSING CIRCLE.

However, this theory does not work well in practise. Only a small proportion of fonts even have a glyph for U+20DD, and almost none of them make any attempt to make the enclosing circle character work, as seen below:

Figure 2: *Attempting to write the copyleft using open o or reversed c, using the fonts* Consolas, Segoe UI Symbol, Symbola, *and* Yu Gothic UI. *These are the only 4 fonts on my system which have a glyph for U+20DD.*
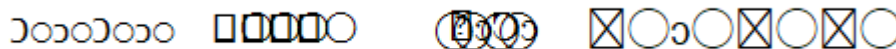
In addition, treating circled or enclosed letters as sequences does not seem to follow Unicode practice or encoding history. None of the circled or squared letters or digits have *canonical equivalence*[10] to the corresponding letters or digits followed by U+20DD or U+20DE. This includes

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8 As seen here: http://www.makeuseof.com/answers/write-copyleft-symbol-word-document/
9 Two examples: https://medium.com/@mmeida/how-to-insert-the-copyleft-symbol-f093113cc2cf#.s9owu3km1, and answer #6 at http://stackoverflow.com/questions/282171/how-to-writing-cc-the-creative-commons-logo-in-html
10 The decompositions given in http://www.unicode.org/Public/UCD/latest/ucd/UnicodeData.txt indicate compatibility decompositions only.

many squared characters in the *Enclosed Alphanumeric Supplement* Block, proposed in 2009[11] and released as part of Unicode 6 in 2010, well after the UTC had stopped accepting precomposed characters.

Therefore, this submitter feels that the Copyleft Symbol is best treated as an atomic character.
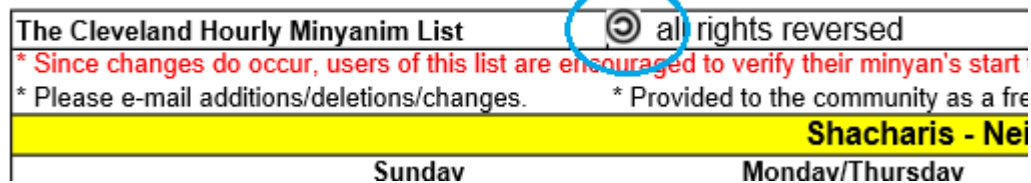
6. Samples

The following 15 samples, all located within PDF documents, were found via searching Google for documents containing typical copyleft phrases such as 'all rights reversed', or 'all wrongs reserved', and therefore do not necessarily reflect all the ways in which the copyleft symbol is used.

Within these samples, the copyleft symbol is circled in **sky blue**.

Sample 1

From: http://www.localjewishnews.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Cleveland-Minyanim-Hourly-Oct-21-2015.pdf

The top-left corner of the first page of contains the copyleft symbol.

Sample 2

From: http://liu.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:861292/FULLTEXT01.pdf

The copyleft symbol appears on Page 2 of the thesis: *Upscaling Organic Electronic Devices,* by Abdellah Malti.

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11 As seen here : http://www.unicode.org/L2/L2009/09295-n3671-abc.pdf

Sample 3

From: http://nemertes.lis.upatras.gr/jspui/bitstream/10889/991/3/Nimertis_Rautopoulou.pdf

The copyleft symbol appears on Page 4 of this Masters thesis for the University of Patras :
Ολοκληρωση Νεων Τεχνουργηματων στην Εφοδιαστικη Αλυσιδα των Επιχειρησεων, by Raftopoulou Angeliki.

ΡΑΥΤΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ ΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΗ

Διπλωματούχος Μηχανολόγος Μηχανικός τ

Sample 4

From: http://www.nathanson.org/davesays/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/Morse-Code-decoder-chart-a-z.pdf

This *Morse Code Receive Decoder Chart*, by Dave Nathanson has the copyleft symbol in the lower left corner.

Sample 5

From: https://my.sehir.edu.tr/UNI103/Documents/ckk-opensource.pdf

The copyleft symbol appears on the final page (page 11) of this slide-show presentation of *Open Source { Free } Software*, by Çetin Kaya Koç.

- Turkish: http://www.gnu.org/copyleft/copyle

- © All rights reserved   ◌ All wrongs reserved

Sample 6

From:
http://pub.epsilon.slu.se/11318/1/conference_book_8th_phd_students_conference_scandinavian_plant_physiology_society.pdf

The 3rd page of the Conference Book, for *The 8th Scandinavian Plant Physiology Society PhD Students Conference* contains the following, which includes the copyleft symbol.

Organizing Committee and various contributors

Ⓢ   2014 design by The 8th SPPS PhD Students Conference Committee. All wrongs reserved.

©   2014 content by various contributors. All rights reserved.

ⓘⓈ   2014 cover photo by Paulina Bengtsson. Some rights reser

Sample 7

From: http://s.cdn.victorz.ca/dl/docs/Hat%20Religion.pdf

The rather tongue-in-check document—*Hat-ism Religion Definition v1.2 Final*—contains the copyleft symbol near the upper right corner.

distribution is unlimited courtesy of the victorious Victor.
Copyleft Ⓢ 2011-2013 Victor. All wrongs reserved.

Sample 8

From: http://www.asiteaboutnothing.net/pdf_rhythms_4.pdf

Andy has included the copyleft symbol at the bottom right of this 'rhythm cheat sheet'.

or doon Ⓢcopyleft Andy/all wrongs reserved/compiled from public sources

Sample 9

From: http://www.smd.ff.vu.lt/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Figures-are-ugly.pdf

The copyleft symbol appears on page 1 of 'Gražūs grafikai' which seems to be a slide-show presentation (in Lithuanian) about the use of charts.

Vytis Valentinavicius

ALL WRONGS RESERVED ◎ 2013

Sample 10

From: http://webdiis.unizar.es/~ricardo/files/slides/academic/slides_RJM-ACSD-12.pdf

The first page of this slide-show—for a performance optimization tool called `PeabrainN`—has a copyleft symbol, despite the PDF document permissions being set to prevent Content Copying.

Rodriguez, Jorge Julvez,

◎All wrongs reserved

iguez, julvez, jmerse}

Sample 11

From: http://edoc.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/servlets/MCRFileNodeServlet/HALCoRe_derivate_00003994/schretter_thesis.pdf

The dissertation: *Correction of Non-Periodic Motion in Computed Tomography,* by Colas Schretter contains the copyleft symbol on Page 4.

Copyleft ◎ 2010 by Colas Schretter

All wrongs reserved. Any part of this publication may be rep trieval system and transmitted in any form and by any means

Sample 12

From: http://www.mbtrans.info/MB_Translations/Downloads_files/S%CC%8Cikmookej.pdf

This translation into Czech of Jack London's *The Chinago* contains the copyleft symbol under the name of the translator on page 1.

Překlad: Jan Bína

Copyleft ☺ All wrongs reserved

Sample 13

From: https://wessexsolidarity.files.wordpress.com/2013/08/aalu_a5.pdf

The leaflet: *An Anarchist argument for left unity*, by 'Mal Content' contains the sample below on page 4 of the PDF.

Anyone found copying and distributing this book without permission will be considered a mighty good friend of ours, because we don't give a durn. Far be it from us to tell you how to use it: read it, share it, copy it, give it away. We wrote it, that's all we wanted to do.

Copyleft Mal Content 2012, all wrongs reversed.

Sample 14

From: https://bodhipunx.files.wordpress.com/2013/07/spheres-of-revolution-by-adam.pdf

The document: *Spheres of Revolution : Specifism and Organizational Dualism*, by Adam, contains a copyleft symbol as well as a creative commons logo, on the first page.
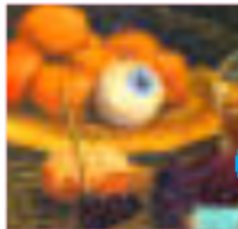
Samples 15 and 16

From: http://daltex.phpnet.org/daltex-lab/analogic-pixel_session01/pdf/images/DTX-lab.pdf

This PDF copy of a booklet from DALTeX-lab contains the copyleft symbol in several places, the samples below are from page 7 and page 13.

Nature_morte4_02
encaustique sur toile
◎DALTeX 2000
◎ http://www.daltex-lab.com/nature_morte

TEXTES, IMAGES, SONS ET INTERACTIVITE.

◎2000Angelo_Cirimele.txt://rasoir/texto
◎2000Sarah_de_Haro.txt://just_say_know
◎2000Alex_DALTeX_Nativel.psd://nature_morte.htm
◎2000Axel_SWIT©H_Nativel.3DS://cheval_jon.mov&bug.mov
◎2000Sterling_WEBmaSTER_Rhoads.fla://decalco
◎2000Guillaume_Follet.fla://seafight.swf
◎2000Jay_rKo.aif://sound_lab.midi
◎2000Alex_DALTeX_Nativel.EXE://votre_serviteur

Vive ◎opyleft !

courrier@daltex-lab.com

A. Administrative

1. **Title:** *Proposal to add the Copyleft Symbol to Unicode*

2. Requester's name: *David Faulks*

3. Requester type (Member body/Liaison/Individual contribution): *Individual contribution*

4. Submission date: *February 23, 2016*

5. Requester's reference (if applicable):

6. Choose one of the following:
   This is a complete proposal: *YES*
   (or) More information will be provided later:

B. Technical – General

1. Choose one of the following:
   a. This proposal is for a new script (set of characters): *NO*
      Proposed name of script:
   b. The proposal is for addition of character(s) to an existing block: *YES*
      Name of the existing block: *Enclosed Alphanumeric Supplement*

2. Number of characters in proposal: *1*

3. Proposed category (select one from below - see section 2.2 of P&P document):
   A-Contemporary ✔ B.1-Specialized (small collection) B.2-Specialized (large collection)
   C-Major extinct D-Attested extinct E-Minor extinct
   F-Archaic Hieroglyphic or Ideographic G-Obscure or questionable usage symbols

4. Is a repertoire including character names provided? *YES*
   a. If YES, are the names in accordance with the "character naming guidelines"
      in Annex L of P&P document? *YES*
   b. Are the character shapes attached in a legible form suitable for review? *YES*

5. Fonts related:
   a. Who will provide the appropriate computerized font to the Project Editor of 10646 for publishing the standard?
      The requester (David Faulks).
   b. Identify the party granting a license for use of the font by the editors (include address, e-mail, ftp-site, etc.):
      David Faulks (davidj_faulks@yahoo.ca)

6. References:
   a. Are references (to other character sets, dictionaries, descriptive texts etc.) provided? *YES*
   b. Are published examples of use (such as samples from newspapers, magazines, or other sources)
      of proposed characters attached? *YES*

7. Special encoding issues:
   Does the proposal address other aspects of character data processing (if applicable) such as input,
   presentation, sorting, searching, indexing, transliteration etc. (if yes please enclose information)? *NO*

8. Additional Information:

Submitters are invited to provide any additional information about Properties of the proposed Character(s) or Script that will assist in correct understanding of and correct linguistic processing of the proposed character(s) or script. Examples of such properties are: Casing information, Numeric information, Currency information, Display behaviour information such as line breaks, widths etc., Combining behaviour, Spacing behaviour, Directional behaviour, Default Collation behaviour, relevance in Mark Up contexts, Compatibility equivalence and other Unicode normalization related information. See the Unicode standard at http://www.unicode.org for such information on other scripts. Also see Unicode Character Database (http://www.unicode.org/reports/tr44/) and associated Unicode Technical Reports for information needed for consideration by the Unicode Technical Committee for inclusion in the Unicode Standard.

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12. Form number: N4502-F (Original 1994-10-14; Revised 1995-01, 1995-04, 1996-04, 1996-08, 1999-03, 2001-05, 2001-09, 2003-11, 2005-01, 2005-09, 2005-10, 2007-03, 2008-05, 2009-11, 2011-03, 2012-01)

C. Technical - Justification

1. Has this proposal for addition of character(s) been submitted before? _____ *NO* _____
    If YES explain _____
2. Has contact been made to members of the user community (for example: National Body,
    user groups of the script or characters, other experts, etc.)? _____ *NO* _____
        If YES, with whom? _____
        If YES, available relevant documents: _____
3. Information on the user community for the proposed characters (for example:
    size, demographics, information technology use, or publishing use) is included? _____ *YES* _____
    Reference: _____ *see §3. Use, and §4. Demand* _____
4. The context of use for the proposed characters (type of use; common or rare) _____ *currently rare* _____
    Reference: _____ *see §6. Samples* _____
5. Are the proposed characters in current use by the user community? _____ *YES* _____
    If YES, where? Reference: _____ *see §6. Samples* _____
6. After giving due considerations to the principles in the P&P document must the proposed characters be entirely
    in the BMP? _____ *NO* _____
        If YES, is a rationale provided? _____
        If YES, reference: _____
7. Should the proposed characters be kept together in a contiguous range (rather than being scattered)? _____ *N/A* _____
8. Can any of the proposed characters be considered a presentation form of an existing
    character or character sequence? _____ *NO* _____
        If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided? _____
        If YES, reference: _____
9. Can any of the proposed characters be encoded using a composed character sequence of either
    existing characters or other proposed characters? _____ *NO?* _____
        If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided? _____ *YES* _____
        If YES, reference: _____ *see §5. A New Codepoint is Best* _____
10. Can any of the proposed character(s) be considered to be similar (in appearance or function)
    to**,** or could be confused with, an existing character? _____ *NO* _____
        If YES, is a rationale for its inclusion provided? _____
        If YES, reference: _____
11. Does the proposal include use of combining characters and/or use of composite sequences? _____ *NO* _____
    If YES, is a rationale for such use provided? _____
        If YES, reference: _____
    Is a list of composite sequences and their corresponding glyph images (graphic symbols) provided? _____
        If YES, reference: _____
12. Does the proposal contain characters with any special properties such as
    control function or similar semantics? _____ *NO* _____
        If YES, describe in detail (include attachment if necessary) _____
13. Does the proposal contain any Ideographic compatibility characters? _____ *NO* _____
    If YES, are the equivalent corresponding unified ideographic characters identified? _____
        If YES, reference: _____