

**Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
Subcommittee on Children and Families
United States Senate**

“Keeping Children Safe from Internet Predators”

**Written testimony of
Donna Rice Hughes
Author, Kids Online: Protecting Your Children in Cyberspace**

March 28, 2000

SUMMARY STATEMENT by DONNA RICE HUGHES

From 1994 through July of 1999, I served as Communications Director and then Vice President of Enough Is Enough, a non-profit educational organization whose mission is to make the Internet safe for children and families. (www.enough.org) I had the privilege of leading Enough Is Enough's effort on the issue of online child safety and played a pioneering role in the national effort to make the Internet safe for children and families. While at Enough Is Enough, I developed a three-pronged strategy that involves the public, the technology industry and law enforcement, sharing the responsibility to protect children on the Internet. Many industry and government leaders have adopted this approach.

In September 1998, my book Kids Online: Protecting Your Children In Cyberspace (Revell,) was released as was my Internet safety website, www.protectkids.com. Presently, I am the co-founder and principal of Phoenix Financial and Advisory Services that serves small and mid-sized companies in the Internet and Information Technology industries. Since February 1999, I have been working in an advisory role to help build and launch FamilyClick.com as the premier, safe Internet Service Provider and destination site for the entire family. As an appointee by Senator Trent Lott, I am currently serving on the Child Online Protection Commission to examine technological solutions to protect children online.

As a member of the steering committee for the Internet Online Summit: Focus on Children in December of 1997, I proposed the Summit's adoption of an industry "ZERO Tolerance" policy against child pornography, which was endorsed by the Justice Department. Unfortunately, to my knowledge, little has been done to implement or enforce the ISP community's commitment to zero tolerance against child pornography since the Summit's public relations ended.

Finally, in my efforts to bring awareness as to the critical importance of Internet safety and protecting kids online, I have given over 1700 media interviews and spoken extensively on the subject in educational and professional forums across the country.

I will base my opening remarks on the material included in the following appendixes:

Appendix A- PowerPoint Presentation by Donna Rice Hughes

Appendix B- "The Positives and Perils of the Internet: Working Together to Make Your Family's Online Experience Safe and Fun" By, Donna Rice Hughes, October 29, 1999

Appendix C- "On-line Pedophiles Telling Each Other to Use Libraries" Filtering Facts Press Release by David Burt. ("Dangerous Access, 2000 Edition: Uncovering Internet Pornography in America's Libraries." <http://www.frc.org/misc/bl063.pdf>)

Appendix D- Sample of a Pedophile's Tactics-Taken from Safeguarding Our Children-United Mothers

Appendix A

SENATE HEARING

"Keeping Children Safe From Internet Predators"

Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
Subcommittee on Children and Families

Prepared by Donna Rice Hughes

(March 28, 2000)

Children Deserve

- A protected space of innocence
- A safe, educational and rewarding online experience
- The adult community to protect them from exposure to age-inappropriate content and activity
- Law enforcement and government to protect them from illegal content and activity

PROTECTING CHILDREN & FAMILIES IN CYBERSPACE

- Internet Benefits and Dangers
- Cyber-Sex & Addiction
- Access to Inappropriate Material
- Pedophiles' Access to Children
- An Overview of Solutions

Benefits of the Internet

- Exciting educational advantages
- A multitude of resources are at your fingertips
- Extraordinary communications vehicle
- Competitive advantage in school, workplace or business environment

Children's Internet Access

•HOME

- 17 million kids ages 2-18 years online in 1998 and expected to grow to more than 42 million in next five years

(Time Magazine May 10, 1999)

Teenagers Internet use occurs at home after school, when working parents are not at home (Arizona How Media Study, 10/99)

•SCHOOL

- 89% of public schools are connected to the Internet

(NICSI survey 1999)

TEENS ONLINE

- 47% of teens are online in 1999

•Top Five Activities

1. E-mail	83%
2. Search engine	78%
3. Music sites	59%
4. General research	58%
5. Games	51%

Resource: Newsweek Magazine May 10, 1999

INTERNET DANGERS

1. Free and easy access to inappropriate and illegal content

- Pornography (child pornography, obscenity, harmful to minors)
- Violence
- Bomb-making
- Hate speech

2. Predators have easy and anonymous access to unsuspecting kids

3. Other: Internet gangs, Advertising, Privacy, etc.

The Internet Pornography Industry

- Online pornography is the first consistently successful e-commerce product (C-net, 4/28,1999)
- At least 40,000 porn sites on the Web (US News & World Report, 3/27,2000)
- Web surfers spent \$970 million/yr in 1998 and expected to rise to \$3 billion/yr by 2003 (Datamonitor, US News & World Report, 3/27,2000)
- 69% of the \$1.4 billion of the pay-to-view online content market is adult material (US News & World Report, 3/27,2000)

Consider....

- The Internet delivers child pornography, obscenity, and other harmful material directly into homes, schools, libraries & businesses
- Free "teasers" are often featured on commercial web sites
- "The 250 naughty newsgroups (alt.sex.snuff.cannibalism) are all as accessible to an intrepid 10-yr-old as to an adult." (U.S. News & World Report 3/17/97)

CYBER-SEX

- "Cyber-sex is the crack cocaine of sexual addiction" (Dr. Robert Weiss, Sexual Recovery Institute, Washington Times 1/26/2000)
- Cyber-sex reinforces and normalizes sexual disorders (Dr. Robert Weiss, Washington Times 1/26/2000)
- A public health hazard exploding because very few are recognizing it as such or taking it seriously. (M-ERC/Stanford/Duquesne Study, Associated Press Online, 2/29/2000)

CYBER-SEX (CONTINUED)

- 60% of all web-site visits are sexual in nature
- Sex is the # 1 searched word online
- At least 20% of the estimated 60 million Americans visit sexually explicit websites
- Sexual pursuits are one of the most frequent recreational uses of the Internet. (All stats from M-ERC/Stanford/Duquesne Study, 2000)

ADDICTION

- 25 million Americans visit cyber-sex sites between 1-10 hours per week. Another 4.7 million in excess of 11 hours per week. (M-ERC/Stanford/Duquesne Study, Washington Times 1/26/2000)
- -At least 200,000 Internet users are hooked on porn sites, X-rated chat rooms or other sexual materials online (M-ERC/Stanford/Duquesne Study, Associated Press Online, 2/29/2000)

Students & CyberSex

- Students were most at risk for cybersex compulsions
 - Due to a combination of increased access to computers, more private leisure time, & developmental stage characterized by increased sexual awareness & experimentation.
 - Both computer classes & colleges might need to recognize this increased vulnerability and institute new primary prevention strategies
- (All stats from PEH EC/Stanford, Dupagne Study, 2000)

Unintentional Access

- Innocent Searches- toys, boys
- Misspelled Words- shareware vs. sharware
 - Stealth Sites- whitehouse.com
 - Brand Names
 - Unsolicited E-mail- 30% of all spam is from pornographers
 - Chat Rooms
 - Instant Messages

Unintentional Access Stats

- Unintentional Access – 91% of children accessing objectionable websites do so unintentionally
(Yankelovich Partner Survey, 9/30/99)
- 62% of parents are unaware that their children had accessed objectionable sites
(Yankelovich Partner Survey, 9/30/99)

Pornographers use of Brand Names

- 25% of porn sites are estimated to use popular brand names (search engine magnets, metatags and links)
 - Top ten most popular brands found in 19,000 porn web sites
- | | |
|-------------|--------------|
| 1. Disney | 6. Levis |
| 2. Barble | 7. ESPN |
| 3. CNN | 8. NBA |
| 4. Honda | 9. Chevy |
| 5. Mercedes | 10. Nintendo |
- Source: 1999 Cyveillance study

Watersports.com

Homepage depicts free picture of two men urinating into a woman's mouth. More such free images are found on this site.

(Example of unintentional access)

The Torture Chamber

- The homepage depicts pornographic images of women in bondage and the following welcome:
 - "We do not promote violence against women, we just want to make it possible for men to exercise their wildest fantasies. We are the leading bondage and sex crimes provider on the Internet."
- (Example of intentional access)**

HARMS

- Potential harms of exposure to inappropriate content
 - Affects attitudes, choices and behavior
 - Objectification
 - Desensitization
 - Addiction
 - Acting out

The Internet is the playground of the 90's for Predators

- Pedophiles & predators easy access to children- Anonymous Disguise
- Easy Access to Child Pornography
- Virtual Validation
- Trade Secrets & Teaching Tools
- Avoidance of law enforcement detection
- FBI reports a boom in the online exploitation of children (From 133 cases in 1996 to 1,497 in 1999)

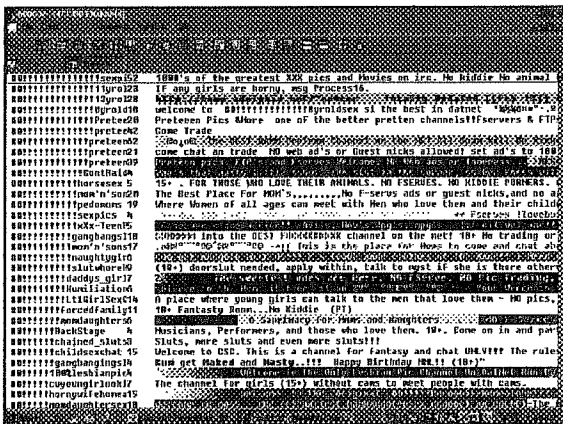
Pornography- Tool used by Pedophiles

- to arouse the child,
- to lower the child's inhibitions,
- to demonstrate to their victims what they want them to do,
- to communicate that a particular sexual activity is okay.

CHAT ROOMS

- Chatrooms are the contemporary playgrounds for pedophiles
- Most cybersex compulsives indicated that the chat room was a primary venue for acting out sexually online

(FBI/EC/Stanford/Cyberstalking Study, 2000)



Three Prong Solution

- A shared responsibility between the
 - Public- Parents, Schools, Libraries
 - Technology industry
 - Legal community- Law Enforcement & Public Policy
- Each provides an essential layer of protection

Public

WHAT CAN PARENTS, TEACHERS, & LIBRARIANS DO?

- Awareness, education and empowerment
- Safety Rules and Software tools- Both are essential, one without the other is ineffective
- Schools and libraries must take appropriate measures to protect kids online. Acceptable use policies must be combined with filtering software.

Public Libraries

- Lake Oswego, Oregon --- After a rash of incidents of pedophiles using public libraries to download child pornography, the pedophile monitoring group PedoWatch.org has confirmed that on-line pedophiles are telling each other to use public libraries to download child pornography.
- "Dangerous Access, 2000 Edition: Uncovering Internet Pornography in America's Libraries."
<http://www.frc.org/misc/bl063.pdf>

Safety Rules

- Keep the computer in a public area and monitor Internet use
- Spend time online with your children
- Know your child's online friends and activities
- Teach your children never to give out personal information such as their name, school, address, phone number or picture
- Instruct your child never to plan a face-to-face meeting with someone that they have met online
- Establish online rules

Safety Rules (continued)

- Do not allow your children to have an online profile
- Only let your children in chatrooms under your close direct supervision
- Only let your children use instant messaging with people you know and approve
- Utilize protective software tools

Technology Tools

- Desktop solutions - filtering, monitoring
- Server based solutions - Filtered ISP's
- "Go lists/Suggest lists" - (Internet Kids & Family Yellow Pages)
- Closed white lists - (FamilyClick.com's Children's Playroom)
- Search Engines - (Yahooligans!, AJKids.com)
- Content Rating - (PICS, RSACi & others)
- Filtering solutions are not 100% effective

Technology

WHAT CAN THE TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY DO?

- Develop technological solutions
- Implement technological solutions
- Corporate family friendly policy
- Choose not to offer newsgroups offering child pornography & obscenity
- Cooperate with law enforcement

FAMILYCLICK

- Filtered Internet Service Provider
Filtered Email & Filtered Searches
- Five Access Levels
- 100% Safe Children's Playroom
- Dynamic Portal Site (FamilyClick.com)

LEGAL

WHAT CAN GOVERNMENT & LAW ENFORCEMENT DO?

- Aggressive enforcement of current laws (child pornography, obscenity, child stalking laws)
- Close loopholes in the law (COPA)
- Extend laws that protect children and unconsenting adults in the physical world to the cyberworld

•NOTE: The public and the technology industry should not have to shoulder the burden to protect kids from illegal content and activity

Law Enforcement

- The public and the technology industry should not have to shoulder the burden to protect kids from illegal content and activity.... This is solely the role of law enforcement
- The Justice Department has not prosecuted any Internet obscenity cases

Protecting Children & Families in Cyberspace....

- In the history of telecommunications, both legal and illegal content has not been so easily accessible by so many children and adults with so few restrictions.
 - A shared responsibility between the public, the technology industry and the legal community is essential. Each sector provides a critical layer of protection.
- IT TAKES ALL OF US WORKING TOGETHER :-)

Appendix B

“The Positives and Perils of the Internet: Working Together to Make Your Family’s Online Experience Safe and Fun” By, Donna Rice Hughes, October 29, 1999

Our children typically know far more than we do about this new technology we call the Internet. While we're still trying to figure out how to set that annoying clock on our VCR, our children are clicking their way to exciting new worlds that didn't even exist when we were their age. In addition, many of our computer-literate children have been exposed already to the benefits-and the dangers-of the Internet.

There are many benefits to the Internet for your child. Access to the Internet can improve your child's reading skills by providing interesting materials to read and suggesting additional reading. As children use the Internet to connect with places around the world and exchange mail with electronic pen pals, they can learn about other cultures and traditions. Your children can use the Internet to access libraries around the corner or around the world and to specific collections of information and reference materials.

However if your child has full access to the Internet, you should not be without concern. With unrestricted access, any child with a computer and a modem can access pornographic material in seconds, and once it's been seen, the pornography can never be entirely erased from the mind. Just as disturbing as the pornography itself is the difficulty in protecting children from those people who have a sexual appetite for children and who search for victims through conversations with unsuspecting kids on the Internet.

With all the pros and cons of the Internet, you the parent should not feel you are without options. Child protection technology is abundant, but information on determining which technology is appropriate for your home and how to implement each tool is less plentiful and a bit more difficult to understand. I want to help you become comfortable with the tools available to you and your family and to encourage you to choose the tools that are right for your "digital toolbox." You can implement responsible safeguards, ensuring that your children will have safe, educational, and entertaining online experiences. Educate yourself about cyberspace. Raise your awareness of the benefits as well as the risks of going online.

Most of us find it difficult to talk to our children about sex in general, let alone the harmful effects of pornography. We want to protect the innocence and purity of childhood for as long as possible. Yet children need to know why certain rules about the computer and their access to the Internet exist. They may be less likely to violate the rules if they are told the truth about why they are not allowed to see everything on the Internet. We can begin to educate our children about protecting themselves from dangers in cyberspace.

How can the Internet become safe for my child, my family, and future generations? The answer lies in a shared responsibility among the public (parents, educators, librarians, and others who supervise children), the high-tech industry, and law enforcement. Each

provides a layer of protection and security for the safety of kids online. And whenever one of these entities endeavors to accept its responsibility for child safety online, we need to affirm and support those efforts.

For the Internet to survive as well as fulfill its potential as the communications vehicle of the future, it must achieve mainstream acceptance. As one of the most important developments in the history of communications, the Internet must become a safe and worthwhile medium for all users. There are many issues that confront this new medium. I want to challenge you to work alongside those of us at the grass roots as well as at the national and international levels, who are seeking solutions that will ensure a safe and secure Internet that will truly reach its wonderful potential. Protecting our children on the Internet is a shared responsibility! You are not powerless, and you are not alone!

Of the many solutions available on the market, the one I recommend to concerned parents is the selection of a "clean ISP" that filters out offensive/inappropriate material directly on its server. Clean ISPs offering server-based solutions are less likely to be circumvented by a computer-savvy child and are usually updated at the server, putting less pressure on you. Remember, however, that most blocking software—even when it is implemented at the server—cannot completely block inappropriate content. If your child will be online when you're not present, be sure your child understands and complies with your house rules.

Currently the only way to achieve 100 percent safety is through a closed secure system. Unlike filters or blocking software, closed systems allow young children access only to those preselected Internet sites that have been determined appropriate for young children. Unlike filtering or blocking software, closed systems lock *children* out of the Internet rather than locking *inappropriate content on the Internet* away from children.

Summary of Safety Tips for Children

- Never fill out questionnaires or any forms online or give out personal information
- Never agree to meet in person with anyone you have spoken to online.
- Never enter a chat room without Mom and/or Dad's presence or supervision.
- Never tell anyone online where you will be or what you will be doing without Mom and/or Dad's permission.
- Never respond to or send e-mail to new people you meet online.
- Never send a picture over the Internet or via regular mail to anyone you've met on the Internet.
- Never respond to any belligerent or suggestive contact or anything that makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Always tell Mom and/or Dad about something you saw that is upsetting.

Summary of Safety Tips for Parents

- Become more computer literate and develop Internet savvy .
- Place your computer in an area of your home where you can easily monitor your child's Internet activity.
- Talk with your kids about their online friends and activities.
- Implement parental controls available on your online service, install protective software on your home computer, or use a clean ISP .
- Monitor the amount of time your child spends on the Internet
- Establish online rules and an agreement with your child about Internet use while at home or away from home.
- Watch for changes in your child's behavior (mention of adults you don't know, secretiveness, inappropriate sexual knowledge, sleeping problems, etc.).

* * *

It has always been my conviction that the best approach towards protecting children on the Internet is through a shared responsibility between the public, the technology industry and the legal community. I have continued to advance this strategy since 1994 and have worked very closely with the private sector to further this goal.

In working with industry leaders towards building a medium we can all be proud of, I have continued to be frustrated at not having a solid solution to recommend to the public as the ideal service for family Internet use. It has been my vision to help to build a family-safe Internet service that would incorporate the very best in technology and family-oriented content, as a “one stop shop” for families online. Even though I have been approached by many in the corporate community for either endorsements or advice, I have chosen to remain neutral until now.

I am currently working in an advisory role with the management team of FamilyClick.com, led by Tim Robertson, the former CEO of The Family Channel. The mission of FamilyClick is to provide families with top-quality online content and protection from offensive Internet material and predatory activity. FamilyClick will accomplish this by operating an ISP to provide fast, reliable filtered access to the Internet on a national basis and by offering compelling original content in a newly created portal site.

Appendix C -On-line Pedophiles Telling Each Other to Use Libraries
<http://www.filteringfacts.org/pedolib.htm>

For Immediate Release

Friday, March 6, 2000

Contact: David Burt

David_Burt@filteringfacts.org

503 635-7048

Lake Oswego, Oregon --- After a rash of incidents of pedophiles using public libraries to download child pornography, the pedophile monitoring group PedoWatch.org has confirmed that on-line pedophiles are telling each other to use public libraries to download child pornography.

PedoWatch is "one of the oldest organizations on the Internet that is working with law enforcement worldwide to remove child pornography and child luring activity", and currently works with "over 125 law enforcement officers" to monitor the activities of on-line pedophiles. PedoWatch director Julie Posey sent this e-mail message to Filtering Facts:

"Basically what happens out there is that pedophiles on the Internet "network" together. It is much like just about any other interest that a person may have. There are mailing lists, message boards, chat rooms and multitudes of other resources that they use. When a particular pedophile finds that the library is a safe secure place to view and download pornography, he shares this information with others with his same interests that he comes in contact with. Some libraries won't allow downloading so that information is passed on too. Remember that before there can be child pornography in the first place, there has to be a perpetrator and a victim. I have seen cases where pedophiles on the Internet use the library to talk with children and eventually lure them to have a face-to-face meeting. These children are then molested, photos taken and further exploited when he sends the child's pictures to masses on the Internet."

Many public libraries employ policies that would seem to encourage the illegal transmission of child pornography, by offering privacy screens, destroying patron sign-up sheets after use, and employing computer programs that delete any trace of user activity. These policies make it very difficult for law enforcement to catch pedophiles using public library Internet stations to download child pornography. Some pedophiles have even used library computers to run child pornography businesses, as the Los Angeles Times reported:

A convicted child molester who routinely used computers at the Los Angeles Central Library to collect and distribute child pornography was arrested after planning what he thought would be a sexual liaison with six youngsters--one as young as 3, police said Thursday... "He would go to the library as soon as it opened up and signed up to use each computer on each floor," Miranda said. "From there he maintained his Web site, while e-mailing and communicating with members of his club. He sent me as many as 300 images of child pornography."

Not only do some libraries allow conditions for this illegal activity, but actually inform library staff they must tolerate it. At the Sonoma (CA) Public Library, a staff member sent an e-mail message to his supervisor stating:

"There are 3 men on my shift who come in regularly, perhaps daily. One views child porn of nude boys in tubs... These images are clearly visible...What does it mean to have child molester posters up in our staff lounge & yet we make daily Internet appointments for someone to watch kiddy porn in the library on the library comp? Isn't this crazy?"

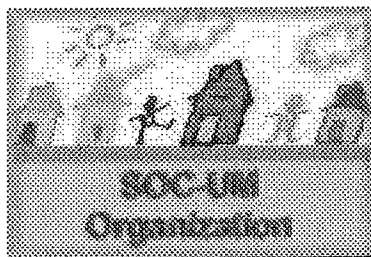
The supervisor responded:

"I don't like it either, but there is nothing we can do about it. The best thing for staff is to ignore it...please use your time in more constructive ways."

"The American Library Association is preparing a program for its annual conference on 'Erotica in Libraries' that will focus on how to bring more pornography into public libraries"* said Filtering Facts President David Burt. "ALA has conducted no programs on dealing with on-line pedophiles using libraries. Obviously, ALA's priorities are in need of serious adjustment."

- See <http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/PubLib/archive/0003/0058.html>

APPENDIX D



Sample of a Pedophile Page

! DANGER ! Child Predators on the Web

The Pedophile Liberation Front is one of the more outspoken pedophile websites (with the exception of Free Spirits <http://www.ivan.net>). The following is a sample from the Pedophile Liberation Front by "The Slurp" -- posted as an "open letter to children."

This is a sample of what predators tell kids.

Note: The Slurp's letter to children (Pedophile Liberation Front) ~

"Whoever says we are planning to send this letter to all the children that have e-mail addresses is completely out of his mind. Not only it would be an invasion of privacy, but it would also be impossible."

The following pedophile excerpt is from URL -- <http://pedo-lib-front.home.ml.org> (may be down - but he'll be back up soon) :(

You can say no, but you can also say yes.

Why you shouldn't tell anything, if you say yes.

But what exactly is a pedophile?

You can say no, but you can also say yes.

Somebody probably told you that "You can say no".

Maybe they explained what it meant: if some adult asks you to do "things", you don't have to do them.

This of course does not mean your Mother telling you to wash your teeth...

So, unless you feel really really bad about what you did with your friend, think about it very well!

But what exactly is a pedophile?

A "pedophile" is an adult that is sexually attracted to children.

"Sexually" means that this person may like to touch you, rub your body against his, be very affectionate and cuddly.

He (or sometimes, she) may also wish to touch your private parts, or have you touch his.

In short, a pedophile likes to do with children what everybody else likes to do with other adults.

Sometimes, you will find that there is someone you know that makes you feel good in a way you never felt before.

It's called "pleasure". It's something that not all children experience, and if you do, you're lucky.

The person that makes you feel pleasure may be a pedophile, or it may be anybody. It can be an adult or a child, a male or a female, black or white. It doesn't matter.

What matters is that you feel good.

When I was a child, I never met a pedophile. But I knew about pleasure.

I always wanted to touch and kiss my girl friends. I felt a sort of energy going through my body, when I smelled the skin of other girls.

I felt good.

So, if you have the chance to feel good, why be afraid?

To Report Pedophile and Child Porn Websites:

For reporting crimes in the US:

US Customs works hard tracking child porn and prosecuting those pedophiles who are acting out on their sexual attraction.

The **FBI** has a task force called innocent images.

For reporting crimes in other Countries:

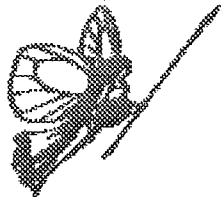
- RCMP -The place to report child pornography in **Canada**.
- Scotland Yard -Crimestoppers Division in the **UK**.
- MPS -The place to report child pornography in **Japan**.
- GPJ -Judicial Police child porn contact in **Belgium**.
- CrimeStoppers -Contact for busting crime in **Australia**.
- Hotline against child pornography on Internet in the **Netherlands**.
- INTERCPole is in German use a translator to report child pornography in **Austria**.

You can also use the SOC-UM Online Form to report pedophile and child porn websites; we will forward to the proper authorities.

Or, you can forward the pedophile website information to SOC-UM.

"A child's innocence can never be replaced."

Index of Information: Pedophiles on the Web



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Website propriety to D. Mahoney

Webmistress