

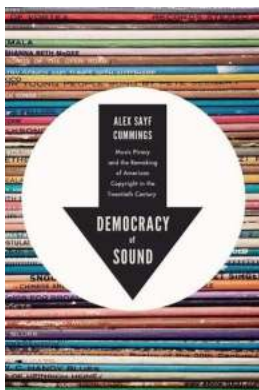
Music Piracy And The Remaking Of American Copyright In The Twentieth Century

Music piracy has been a contentious issue for the music industry for decades. With the advent of the internet, the problem has only escalated, leading to significant changes in American copyright laws and the way music is consumed and distributed. This article explores the historical context, impact, and the subsequent remaking of American copyright in the twentieth century due to music piracy.

The Rise of Music Piracy

Before delving into the remaking of American copyright, it is crucial to understand the origins and rise of music piracy. With the of cassette tapes and recordable CDs, it became easier for individuals to duplicate and share music without the consent of artists or record labels.

However, it was the advent of digital file-sharing platforms like Napster in the late 1990s that truly revolutionized the music piracy landscape. Suddenly, millions of users could share and download music for free, causing significant financial losses to the music industry.



Democracy of Sound: Music Piracy and the Remaking of American Copyright in the Twentieth Century

by Alex Sayf Cummings (Illustrated Edition, Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.9 out of 5

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Screen Reader : Supported



The Impact on the Music Industry

The rise of music piracy had a profound impact on the music industry. With the increased accessibility to free music, record sales plummeted, artists struggled to make a livelihood, and record labels faced financial instability. Many artists and industry professionals believed that music piracy threatened the existence of the music industry as they knew it.

Furthermore, the illegal sharing of music also resulted in a massive loss of revenue for songwriters, publishers, and other rights holders. This led to a growing demand for new legislation to protect musical works and tackle the issue of piracy.

The Legal Response

The music industry, backed by influential lobbying groups, urged the US government to introduce stricter copyright laws to combat music piracy effectively. In response, the government made significant revisions to copyright legislation, including the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) in 1998.

The DMCA criminalized the production and distribution of technologies, devices, or services intended to circumvent digital rights management measures. It also provided a framework for notice and takedown procedures, enabling copyright holders to request the removal of infringing content from online platforms.

The Shifting Landscape of Music Distribution

The impact of music piracy also forced the music industry to adapt and embrace digital distribution methods. With the rise of legal music streaming platforms like Spotify and Apple Music, the way people consumed music changed dramatically.

This shift from physical copies to digital streaming presented new opportunities for artists and record labels to reach a wider audience. However, it also raised concerns about fair compensation for artists, as streaming services' royalty rates remained a contentious issue.

Evolving Copyright Laws

As the music industry navigated the challenges posed by music piracy, copyright laws continued to evolve to keep up with technological advancements.

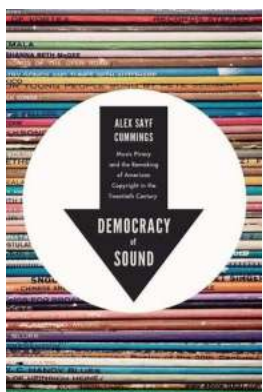
One significant development was the implementation of the Digital Performance Right in Sound Recordings Act (DPRA) in 1995. This act granted an exclusive right to perform digitally transmitted sound recordings and provided a framework for collecting and distributing royalties from digital performances.

Furthermore, the Copyright Term Extension Act (CTEA) passed in 1998 extended the copyright term by 20 years, ensuring that music rights holders had an extended period to profit from their works.

The remaking of American copyright in the twentieth century was a direct response to the rise of music piracy and the challenges it posed to the music industry. Through the of stricter laws and the shift towards digital distribution, the industry has been able to adapt and survive.

While music piracy remains an ongoing concern, the actions taken by the music industry and lawmakers have helped protect artists' rights and ensure fair compensation for their creative works. The evolution of copyright laws and the

embrace of digital distribution have opened up new opportunities for the music industry in the twenty-first century.



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It was a time when music fans copied and traded recordings without permission. An outraged music industry pushed Congress to pass anti-piracy legislation. Yes, that time is now; it was also the era of Napster in the 1990s, of cassette tapes in the 1970s, of reel-to-reel tapes in the 1950s, even the phonograph epoch of the 1930s. Piracy, it turns out, is as old as recorded music itself.

In *Democracy of Sound*, Alex Sayf Cummings uncovers the little-known history of music piracy and its sweeping effects on the definition of copyright in the United States. When copyright emerged, only visual material such as books and maps were thought to deserve protection; even musical compositions were not included until 1831. Once a performance could be captured on a wax cylinder or vinyl disc, profound questions arose over the meaning of intellectual property. Is only a written composition defined as a piece of art? If a singer performs a different

interpretation of a song, is it a new and distinct work? Such questions have only grown more pressing with the rise of sampling and other forms of musical pastiche. Indeed, music has become the prime battleground between piracy and copyright. It is compact, making it easy to copy. And it is highly social, shared or traded through social networks--often networks that arise around music itself. But such networks also pose a counter-argument: as channels for copying and sharing sounds, they were instrumental in nourishing hip-hop and other new forms of music central to American culture today. Piracy is not always a bad thing.

An insightful and often entertaining look at the history of music piracy, *Democracy of Sound* offers invaluable background to one of the hot-button issues involving creativity and the law.



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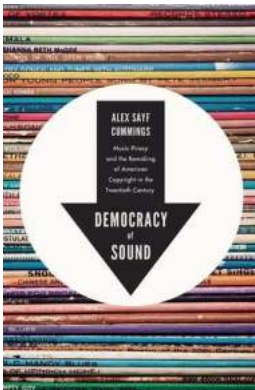
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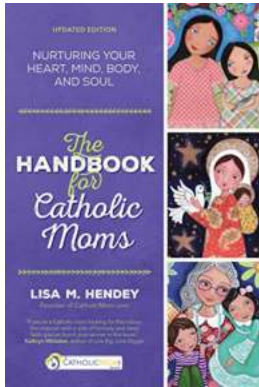
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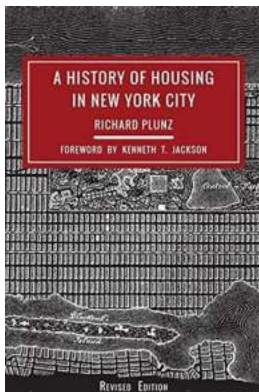
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