

Abstract: "We should not focus on Intellectual Property when discussing content piracy. The real problem is that the Internet and the current Information Society requires new business models: more flexible and adapted to the current user needs. Success examples like Spotify and Netflix, which offer adapted content plus recommendations, suggestions and social networking are an example. Another example is that Intellectual Property would have prevented the development of disruptive tools such as ChatGPT. As long as companies and creators do not understand it, their position legitimates content piracy."

General Context:

The topic of content piracy has been addressed for many centuries, and has been evolving over time according to the necessities of society. In the digital age, a discussion in content piracy is vital to understand how the field of IT can evolve and create newer products while at the same time protecting the creators and users with fair laws. This discussion takes special importance in a world where we see innovations and advances everyday. As Jessica Silbey from the Boston School of Law mentioned, the Intellectual Property frameworks should be reviewed both by creators and lawmakers, also by users, considering not only the economical benefits of owning Intellectual Property but also those of fair trade, honesty, and consideration when creating content based on others work [10].

Opposition Criteria:

We value intellectual property rights as a vital asset for humanity, as they are the main means of rewarding people for their creative and innovative work. This is especially relevant in our field, where our work is entirely based on our intellect. We believe that our effort, skills and knowledge should be compensated proportionally to the benefits they bring to the users and the world. Therefore, we oppose piracy as a threat to the power of the mind. It harms those individuals and companies that take high risks to advance the world we live in and, consequently, it harms the economy.

Points of Arguments:

- Our first argument is that digital privacy reduces revenue for creators and companies. This disincentivizes content creators from investing in new innovation and creating more jobs. An article by the European Commission further supports this argument by stating that Intellectual Property stimulates the development and distribution of new products, specifically for start-ups and SMEs [3]. This affects the economy as a whole by decreasing the economic growth and employment opportunities of a country. This is a known issue that has been addressed in a study by the US Chamber of Commerce, which estimated the loss of \$29.2 billion because of global online piracy [1]. This evidence contradicts the argument made by the **proposition team**, as they claimed that products benefit from piracy, since it can increase their reach and popularity. However, this is irrelevant if the increased reach does not generate revenue for the company. This has been widely studied in the film industry, where a report by Harvard Business Review showed that piracy can have a negative impact on the sales of movies, especially those that are popular and high-quality [5].
- Not only this, but piracy also generates risks to the users either in the form of a low quality product or in potential security risks. Actually, intellectual property piracy can provide criminals with a way to store people's data, or even worse, harm them. It is not uncommon to find multiple viruses hidden in pirated software or in illegal streaming sites. A study performed by the Vienna University of Technology concluded that more than 50% of the pirated content of common software tools like Adobe Photoshop, Microsoft Office, and even Norton 360, which is an antivirus, come with malware that can potentially steal user's data and damage the economy by making wrong usage of this information [2]. This argument refutes the argument of the **proposition team** about the benefits of exposing digital content to the public, and their example about Microsoft's pirated applications. Often, these pirated applications were infected with

malware, used to steal personal information and harming both the individual and the reputation of Microsoft's software. A web page by Microsoft explains how they identify malware and potentially unwanted applications (PUA) that can harm users' devices and data. They also warn users to avoid pirated material on compromised websites, as they can contain malware that can steal personal information or damage the device [6].

- In another line of thought, pirated content, or traffic of pirated content can lead to adverse effects on the economy. A concrete example for this is shown by the European Union, who claims that the economic recovery after the COVID pandemic has been slowed by the improper use of pirated content or products. It is estimated that during this recovery, around 33% of the users that purchased products online suspect that their product is fake [4]. As a matter of fact, in their second intervention, the **proposition team** agreed that this affects the economy, even though they contradicted themselves by stating that in the long term this is beneficial. This is not beneficial because, as displayed in the example, the European Union is facing a slower recovery post pandemic era.
- Moreover, digital piracy has long-term negative impacts on both the economy and society. Pirated content providers do not pay taxes to the government and thus create an underground economy that forces higher burdens on taxpayers. As a result, honest consumers and businesses have to pay more taxes to compensate for the losses caused by piracy. This underground economy also deprives the maintenance and improvement of vital public services, such as education, health care, infrastructure, and security. Furthermore, digital piracy can facilitate tax evasion, money laundering, and other illicit activities that undermine the rule of law and the functioning of markets. In particular, a report published by ICC BASCAP and INTA showed that counterfeit and pirated products account for up to 2.5% of world trade, or as much as \$461 billion annually. The report also estimates that governments lose more than \$100 billion in tax revenues each year due to piracy [8].
- Continuing with this macroeconomic approach, we want to address how piracy can be seen as a competitor of established companies, pushing them to further invest in R&D and increasing innovation. The **proposition team** asserted that this is always the case, concluding that piracy is good for the economy in the long run. Nonetheless, and even if this is true when there is the case of an unnatural monopoly [7], this is not true in general. Piracy is increasing the risk that innovative ventures need to take, which translates into a decreased incentive for innovation and puts a stone in the path towards improving society in a long term perspective. As an example, a study conducted by researchers from Carnegie Mellon University showed that pre-release piracy causes a 19.1% decrease in revenue in the film industry, compared to the piracy that occurs post-release [9]. This discourages innovation in the film industry because their efforts are countered by piracy.

Final Considerations:

We believe that the best asset of the human kind as a whole, are the individual human beings. Specifically those who are willing and able to push our society further into a better future, by the power of their minds. Up to date, everything we see around us has been thought, designed and constructed by a person or a group of people. This is economy: the interactions of all minds on Earth. Thus, it is clear for us that our best opportunity into a better world is to foster these minds, by providing them with a good environment in which to develop, and where investing time and effort is seen as an opportunity, rather than as a foolish risk to take.

In conclusion, piracy is a threat to the economy and the development of technology and the society as a whole. Even if some examples arise in which piracy has been beneficial, we have shown how this is only anecdotal and how, in the long run, we must protect intellectual efforts with appropriate property rights, and punish pirate behavior accordingly.

References:

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