

The History and Politics of Copyright Law

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About Me

I'm a freshman at the College of Engineering. I'm a native New Yorker, my intended major is Computer Science, and I'm passionate about open source and social justice. Naturally, I have my own views on copyright, but I'm going to stick to the facts as much as possible.

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1 Copyright Basics

2 Origins and History of Copyright Law

Copyright Basics

What is Copyright?

- Set of exclusive rights
- Granted to the author of a work for a limited period of time
- Meant to promote creativity

Basis of Copyright in the U.S. Constitution

“[The Congress shall have Power] To promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries.”

—Article I, Section 8, Clause 8

Limitations on Exclusive Rights

- Fair use/Fair dealing
- First-sale doctrine
- Works by the U.S. government cannot be copyrighted

Origins and History of Copyright Law

Statute of Anne