**Music Piracy**

Music piracy is a prevalent issue in the music world. Pirating music has many consequences that affect more than just the revenue of the artist. Music piracy has affected how the music industry and musicians work. It has caused major shifts in what artists and labels focus on and how they market their products. Selling albums and songs is no longer a secure way of making profits because, in the end, not many songs and albums are actually being sold. Music piracy has changed the music world.

Album and song sales are no longer the crux of the music industries profiting model. Before the Internet and the ability to transfer data quickly and in large quantities, albums were printed and bought in vinyl; the hard, analog version of what consumers use today. Digital printing, be it on a CD or directly to a hard drive, has allowed the world to easily transfer musical data from any digital source to any digital destination. Now, anyone with a computer and an Internet connection can copy and listen to almost every album created without having to pay for the album. Artists can no longer depend on selling their work. Musicians’ music is no longer a commodity. Musicians cannot make music to make money.

Musicians and record labels are condemned to changing their entire approach to “selling music”. The focus is now on just about everything else that an artist can sell. Mainly, this requires artists to sell their image. From cloths to commercials, musicians now try and sell everything but their music. In fact, many artist have gone as far as freely distributing their music in order to just gain popularity, as opposed to using popularity to sell their music. This popularity is paramount in successfully marketing the rest of an artist’s products. The focus is now on selling irreplaceable commodity as opposed to creating enticing music that sells on its own merit. Artists now try to sell t-shirts and concert tickets as opposed to high quality music.

The main consequence of music piracy is the depreciation of music quality.

I extremely dislike this reality. When I was younger, I downloaded many albums and songs illegally. Though that may have been the case, I didn’t download nearly as much music illegal as many people do and I no longer download illegal music. Listening to full albums on the highest possible quality with the right equipment is the only way to do music justice. Not only do albums from CD’s sound significantly better then their low-quality distributed counterparts, but the artist is also supported by people’s purchases. In addition, listening to music this way allows for people to truly appreciate the work that artists have put into their work. Music piracy has caused music to become less and less diverse and complex because the focus is no longer on creating art.

Morally, pirating music is wrong. Like anything being sold, be it a salt shaker or a chair, using a product without the permission of the vendor is wrong. No one has the right to anything of anyone else’s; music is no exception. I am a huge fan of Spotify. It allows me to listen and enjoy albums from artists that I would normally not be able to listen too. I mainly use it as a tool to determine which albums and songs I would like to buy. This way, I can listen to what I’m buying before I commit to spending money on music that I may not like. Most people do not have the same approach as I do. I buy albums even if they are legally accessible for free. The reason is the same as explained before: music from a CD or vinyl is significantly better than their MP3 counterparts. Interestingly, many people have been living in the digital era for so long that they do not realize this important downside. Most people are ignorant to what good music is. Pirating music has lead to a depreciation in music because of its low quality bit-wise, its lower quality musically, and its accessibility. Music piracy is wrong.