

1 Criminalization of Music Piracy is misguided (refute)

For references in this document please see page 6.

Music. The sweet, sweet, combination of tunes that is so enjoyable to the human ear. There is music to match every mood. Feeling Happy? Play upbeat music. Feeling Sad? Play gloomy music. Music: kills depression, numbs the pain, and amplifies happiness. Music serves as a reminder to reality and likewise provides an escape. As Walter De La Mare (circa late 1800s)¹ says in his poem “Music”:

*“When music sounds, gone is the earth I know
And all her lovely things, even lovelier grow”*

A maker of such magnificent piece of art should definitely be held in high esteems and *compensated handsomely* to encourage the creation of more like it. Yet, we have some claiming that consumers and music industry benefit from free availability of music and hence criminalization of music piracy is misguided. The notion that consumers benefit from the free availability of music is understandable (even if not true), but how this phenomenon has any remote benefit to the music industry is incomprehensible. Music is a form of *art*. Creation of an artistic piece requires great amount of dedication and effort from its artist. The belief that music should be available for free to everyone without any benefit or compensation to its creator is clearly unethical (see page 5.) It diminishes and undervalues the work and dedication of artists who have worked countless hours to produce a musical piece. It also risks the livelihood of those who work full time in music industry. Additionally, availability of free music on sketchy and unsecure websites makes it a prey for mischievous hackers who stain the music files with all kinds of viruses.

1.1 Entertainment

Music provides entertainment in all its splendor and beauty; it is, in fact, *the best* form of entertainment. We enjoy music and listen to it almost daily, yet we are apathetic to the creative artist who has dedicated his precious time to create a harmonious masterpiece that is so melodious to our ears. Surely, these artists deserve, at least, a shed of our appreciation and empathy. By pirating music, we are stealing, both metaphorically and literally, them of their rightful recognition and appreciation which they deserve for their intellectual property. By making use of their art without their consent, we are disrespecting artists and desecrating their work. Furthermore, the lack of appreciation for creative hard work disheartens and discourages the young artists still trying to make it in the industry. As Joe Kraus (founder of Digitalconsumer.org) correctly said during a seminar (2019)²:

“Institute of Policy Innovations (2007)), “Music”, ; Don’t squash innovation”

1.2 Musical Production

Production of a well-orchestrated musical piece requires collaboration and work of dozens of people. From musicians, to singers, from composers to editors, from equipment specialists to

sound engineers; there are lots of people involved. Not everyone of them are doing this out of passion or for some sort of creative expression, they are doing this as a full-time job to make ends meet and feed themselves and their families. Music piracy directly affects their earnings. According to Institute of Policy Innovations “IPI of USA” (2007)³, music piracy costs the music industry workers \$2.7 billion every year. This figure is generated at the time when laws declaring piracy “illegal” are in place. Even then, the cost ramifications in US alone are huge. So, let’s say if suddenly, music piracy was to become legal and music was to be available without any fee or charges to everyone; where would all the workers go? How would they make their livelihood? And most importantly; what would motivate them to create any more music after they have nothing left to gain from it? It would effectively render them unemployed and the music industry incapacitated. If we consider these points carefully, legalization of music piracy quickly transforms from a legal debate to an ethical one, which makes the pirate morally stained for brazenly stealing from a working (wo)man.

1.2.1 Not without risk

The pirate isn’t safe himself/herself when searching pirated content. Blissfully Ignorant of any of the consequences; when a pirate is browsing the web for the counterfeit copy of his/her favourite music by going on shady and untrustworthy websites, he/she is exposing himself/herself to a wide plethora of cyber criminals on the web. A potential hacker instantly preys on such naïve and unwary users. They are the easiest to launch a cyber-attack on. The hacker could defect the music file with some sort of virus or produce spam on the website, it could be a ransomware attack which would lock down the user’s device until a payment is made or even a phishing attack which would grant the hacker access to user’s sensitive data like his/her personal or financial information. All of these are serious threats which could have very ugly consequences. An article published in the US Cyber security Magazine stated (2019)⁴: “It can be tempting to pirate digital content, but the risks outweigh the benefits. A hacker may use the pirated content to spread virus. The only way to protect yourself is to not download illegally.” So, piracy of music is not only a matter of principle or ethics, but a matter of security too; serious security threats are posed by free availability of music on the internet on shady websites. The only better alternative, as suggested by US Cybersecurity magazine, is to download from certified websites possessing original copyrighted content.

1.2.1.1 Intellectual property

Theft of intellectual property is just as serious a crime as that of theft of physical property; In fact, it has more severe repercussions which range from financial damage to multiple working-class people, to serious security threats to individuals. Criminalization of music piracy, hence, is not misguided, what’s misguided is the statement implying so. No one would benefit from the free availability of music, rather it would create unfavourable circumstances for the consumers and music industry alike. That is why, keeping in view all the arguments provided above; Not only should piracy of music *remain illegal* but also it should be monitored and implemented more strictly than ever before.

1.2.1.2 Another level 4

Body text

1.2.1.3 And another level 4

Body text

1.2.1.3.1 A new level 5

Body text which cross references to 1.1 above.

1.2.1.3.2 And another level 5

Body text

1.2.2 Emotion

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2 References

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