

Copyright, Repatriation, and Restitution: Similarities & Differences

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Copyright is an extremely useful concept since protection of the artist, or the creator, of a work is a huge concern in today's internet driven world. While I do think it is okay to freely share things on the internet, there are boundaries of how far one should go with what they share and how it is shared if it is not theirs.

The internet has made it extremely easy for different types of work to be shared across social media platforms, websites, and other digital methods. Because of this, many people aren't aware that copyright laws exist even for all digital content. While there is a fair use checklist—the purpose and character of the use, the nature of the copyrighted work, the amount of substantiality, and the effect on the market (*Copyright Basics, 2009*)—many don't know about the concept of fair use or are unaware of what content would apply in each of these fair use categories. Since it is so easy to share works across the internet and many people aren't fully aware of the rules of copyright law, I don't think it is fully possible to keep people from using others' work without permission—this is why I think it is okay in some cases, but that there should be better regulations or at least better communication about what is shareable or how something is shareable. As stated by Jane Anderson in the video *Intellectual Property Law: Why it matters?* “copyright protects some knowledge and not all knowledge,” which I think portrays the idea of copyright in regards to the internet very well.

Copyright law covers the exclusive rights a copyright holder has to their work. To use a copyrighted work, you often need to request permission even in cases where one may want to “email a research report to your project team or customer, post an article or report on a company, wiki or internet site, reprint articles in the company newsletter, post a news story about their company on their website, or make a photocopy of a newspaper article and handout at a meeting” (*Copyright Basics, 2009*). Sharing, re-posting, and other similar interactions are normal and highly used metrics on almost all digital platforms, which means that it is essentially encouraged to share others' works without their permission. Potentially if someone were to put out their work on their website or on their social page and then ask for people to share it, it could be considered permission and would not fall under copyright law, but the ways that the content gets shared is still not regulated in this scenario.

There is also always the possibility that sharing someone's work would make the sharer some sort of profit, especially since many platforms have payment programs for creators. Many creators and other users of these platforms share both their own content and the content of others on a daily basis, most of which I am sure has not had permission requested. In this scenario it is quite difficult to determine if this would upset copyright law or not, and is not a scenario that concerns most users as it is completely normal for everyone.

Overall, I think digital information should be allowed to be shared as long as there are guidelines that are followed, such as the fair use check lists and such.

Sources:

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