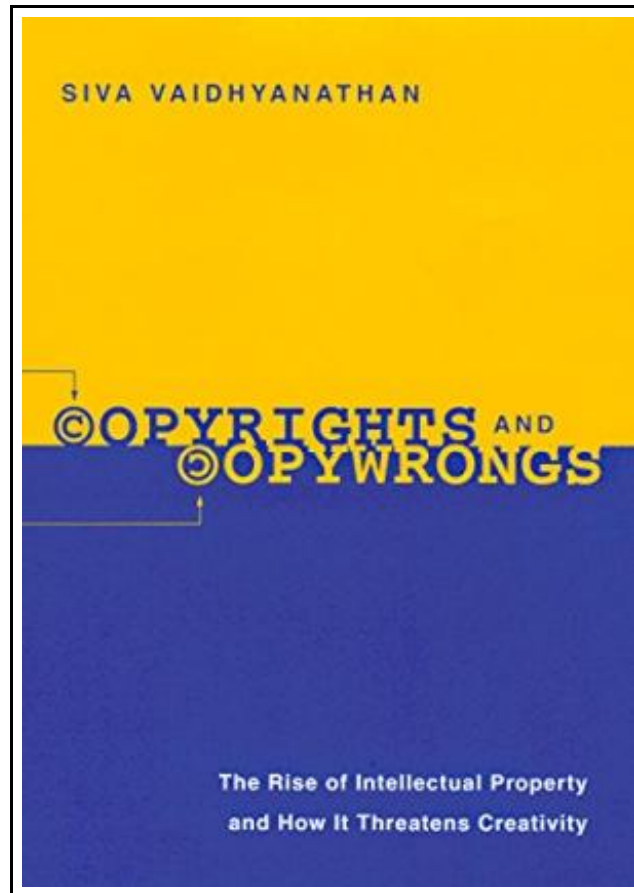


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Reviews

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(Jessy Collier)

COPYRIGHTS AND COPYWRONGS: THE RISE OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND HOW IT THREATENS CREATIVITY (PAPERBACK)



New York University Press, United States, 2003. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Reissue. 226 x 150 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. Copyright reflects far more than economic interests. Embedded within conflicts over royalties and infringement are cultural values--about race, class, access, ownership, free speech, and democracy--which influence how rights are determined and enforced. Questions of legitimacy--of what constitutes intellectual property or fair use, and of how to locate a precise moment of cultural creation--have become enormously complicated in recent years, as advances in technology have exponentially increased the speed of cultural reproduction and dissemination. In *Copyrights and Copywrongs*, Siva Vaidhyanathan tracks the history of American copyright law through the 20th century, from Mark Twain's vehement exhortations for thick copyright protection, to recent lawsuits regarding sampling in rap music and the digital moment, exemplified by the rise of Napster and MP3 technology. He argues persuasively that in its current punitive, highly restrictive form, American copyright law hinders cultural production, thereby contributing to the poverty of civic culture. In addition to choking cultural expression, recent copyright law, Vaidhyanathan argues, effectively sanctions biases against cultural traditions which differ from the Anglo-European model. In African-based cultures, borrowing from and building upon earlier cultural expressions is not considered a legal trespass, but a tribute. Rap and hip hop artists who practice such borrowing by sampling and mixing, however, have been sued for copyright violation and forced to pay substantial monetary damages. Similarly, the oral transmission of culture, which has a centuries-old tradition within African American culture, is complicated by current copyright laws. How, for example, can ownership of music, lyrics, or stories which have been passed down through generations be determined? Upon close examination, strict legal guidelines prove insensitive to the diverse forms of cultural expression prevalent in the United States, and reveal...



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