

QuestionCopyright.org (C-2945514) • CA Form 3500

7d: *A statement describing the specific purposes for which the organization was formed. A general nonprofit purpose statement will not be acceptable, and do not quote the articles of incorporation or bylaws.*

QuestionCopyright.org's mission is to promote public understanding of the history and effects of copyright, and to encourage the development of alternatives to information monopolies.

Today, the Internet offers methods of collaboration, attribution, distribution and production that were impossible under the technological limitations of earlier times. The success of the open source movement is an example of what can happen when these new methods are allowed to flourish. However, current public perceptions of copyright are a barrier to the rise of open source methods in areas outside software. Our mission is to remove this barrier, by disseminating information about copyright's effects on both the public and on artists, and by offering artists and other information producers practical alternatives to copyright restrictions.

Copyright reform is now undergoing a renaissance, driven partly by the growth of the Internet and partly by the reaction of the copyright industry to that growth, a reaction which has resulted in unprecedentedly strong copyright restrictions being enforced by both technical and legislative means. In response, various organizations (e.g., Creative Commons, the Electronic Frontier Foundation, *et al*) have taken the approach of attempting to restore "balance" to the debate, arguing that there is a natural tension between the needs of information creators and the needs of the public, that copyright should seek to find the best balance between these competing needs, and that the problem is mainly that current policies have swung too far against the needs of the public. Unfortunately, even these mild reform efforts are greatly hampered by certain widespread public beliefs:

- that copyright originated with writers and artists demanding control over their work (it is actually descended sixteenth-century English censorship and printing regulations);
- that artists depend on copyright to earn a living (most do not);
- that copyright is a way of protecting attribution (it is largely unrelated to attribution).

QuestionCopyright.org disseminates information about the historical origins and present-day effects of copyright; explores – through research, analysis, and advocacy – the possibilities of a world in which people are free to share information with one another; and demonstrates concretely how the Internet demands new ways of understanding of the dynamics of information distribution. Our goal is to give artists and the public tools for questioning the fundamental assumption that copyright is necessary (or even helpful) for creative production, and to offer a framework for analyzing both copyright and other systems of distribution in terms of their appropriateness for particular technological circumstances. Copyright is frequently debated as a moral issue rather than a policy issue; we attempt to return it the realm of policy, so that it may be compared impartially with other possible systems, without interference from prejudicial assumptions about the relationship between copyright and creativity.