

The Darknet - “Age of Peer Production”

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Abstract

We are in the midst of a digital revolution. In this “Age of Peer Production” armies of amateur participants demand the freedom to rip, remix and share their own digital culture. Aided by the newest iteration of file sharing networks, digital media users now have the option to retreat underground, by using secure, private, and anonymous file sharing networks, to share freely and breathe new life into digital media. These underground networks, collectively termed “The Darknet” will grow in scope, resilience and effectiveness in direct proportion to increasing digital restrictions the public finds untenable. The Darknet has been called the public’s great equalizing force in the digital millennium, because it will serve as “a counterbalancing force and bulwark to defend digital liberties” against forces lobbying for stronger copyrights and increased technological controls. This article proposes a digital use exception to existing copyright law to provide adequate compensation to authors while promoting technological innovation, and the creation and dissemination of new works. Although seemingly counterintuitive, content producers, publishers, and distributors wishing to profit from their creations must relinquish their control over digital media in order to survive the Darknet era.

Keywords: digital revolution, file sharing, networks, darknet, digital liberties, copyright, software

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