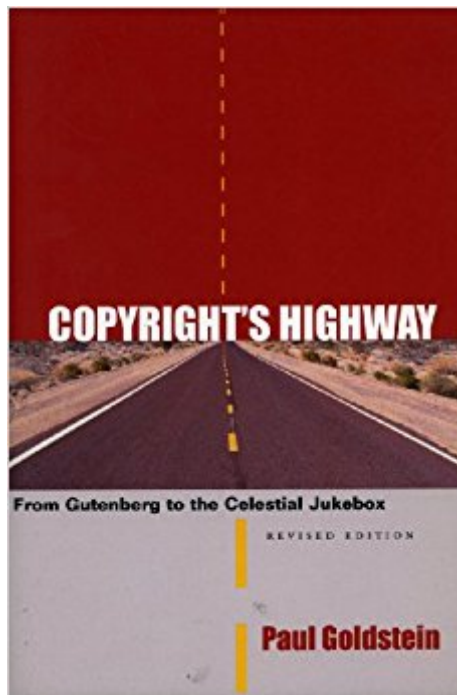




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Copyright's Highway: From Gutenberg To The Celestial Jukebox



Synopsis

From eighteenth-century copyright law, to current-day copyright issues on the internet, to tomorrow's "celestial jukebox" — a digital repository of books, movies, and music available on demand — Paul Goldstein presents a thorough examination of the challenges facing copyright owners and users. One of the nation's leading authorities on intellectual property law, Goldstein offers an engaging, readable, and intelligent analysis of the effect of copyright on American politics, economy, and culture. Goldstein presents and analyzes key legal battles, including Supreme Court decisions on home taping and 2 Live Crew's contested sampling of Roy Orbison's "Pretty Woman." In this revised edition, the author expands the discussion to cover electronic media, including an examination of recent Napster litigation, the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, and the vexed Secure Digital Music Initiative, under which record companies attempted to develop effective encryption standards for their products. Praise for the first edition: "A clever and vibrant book that traces copyright history from the invention of the printing press through current challenges to copyright from new technologies . . . Most compelling [on] multimedia technologies." — Sabra Chartrand, The New York Times "This eminent authority writes with clarity, lucidity and a wry sense of humor about a subject whose complexities can be daunting." — Jonathan Kirsch, Los Angeles Times "A wonderfully American tale of how law, literature, politics and megabucks intersect." — William Petrocelli, San Francisco Chronicle

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Customer Reviews

Goldstein, a Stanford law professor and copyright expert, here makes what can be a dry subject positively sparkle. Writing with humor, color and lucidity, he offers laypeople and professionals alike a swift history of copyright, its philosophies in different nations (a matter of great importance in the current GATT talks with Europe) and zeroes in keenly on the recent controversies surrounding it. There is an account of the 30-year-old, epochal Williams & Wilkins case against government medical libraries for excessive copying of journals that, improbably, has the dash of a courtroom thriller; and a brilliant examination of Congress's reluctance to become involved in the vexed question of private, at-home copying on tape recorders and VCRs. Throughout, Goldstein is careful to make clear the radically different philosophies of intellectual property that often sunder such otherwise sound allies as publishers and librarians: the copyright optimists, seeking to expand its sway, and the pessimists, seeking to limit it. This is essential reading for book people, stimulating and thought-provoking fare for everyone. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Goldstein (law, Stanford) has produced an enlightening and highly readable addition to the copyright forum. Geared toward a more general audience than his *Copyright: Principles, Law and Practice* (Little, Brown, 1989), this new work highlights the evolution of legal and popular thought on copyright, emphasizing how it has shaped copyright law in the United States. He also discusses intriguing issues such as how the concept of fair use evolved; why "private" (i.e., for your own use) copying is currently allowed; how the issue of private copies could change with the introduction of movies (or books or music) on demand, fed via satellite directly to you; and how international concepts of but is of potential interest to anyone who owns a copyright, uses copyrighted material, or is concerned about how copyright laws may change in the future. Recommended for both special and general libraries. Johanna Johnson, Dallas P.L. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Good

Copyright's Highway is not an overview of or introduction to copyright law. Rather it gives clearly written descriptions of the histories of some influential court cases relating to copyright and slanted towards copyright issues on the internet. Despite the title this book is very much slanted to the celestial jukebox and away from Guetenburg - after the second chapter we are in the 20th century. Goldstein presents the history of copyright law in the US through court cases and not laws.

The three cases described in great detail each with a chapter to itself are *Williams and Wilkins vs the United States* in which it was ruled that libraries can make xeroxes of copyrighted material, the *Betamax Decision* and a discussion of a lawsuit in French courts in which Ted Turner was blocked from showing a colorized version of *The Asphalt Jungle* in France. With the exception of the French case, which shows how US copyright law is based on very different principles than in Europe, these are cases that are getting a lot of attention right now as people try to make sense of the internet. Trying to reconcile US copyright with copyright laws elsewhere is a big issue but not as pressing as for example whether I will be arrested for downloading all those mp3s. Many other cases are discussed in less detail. The selection of cases is excellent and it would benefit everyone to understand these cases. The final chapter of *Copyright's Highway* looks to the future and gives various speculations about what will happen with copyright on the internet. Here the idea of the *Celestial Jukebox*, a satellite from which all information in existence can be accessed by people on earth for a price, is described. Other issues include the pending lack of historical data because electronic publications can be modified and restrictions on copying can contribute to there being one source for any document, so older editions are not available for comparison. This chapter ties in the history Goldstein has described with restrictions and freedoms that will affect us in the near future. It may also date this book as time passes. I recommend *Copyright's Highway* to those who want a better understanding of current issues in copyright and how we got where we are in relation to copyright. It is very readable and presents detailed facts in an entertaining way.

My background is economics and finance and not law. Maybe because of that I found this book to be wordy and a little long-winded. The author approaches the subject from a lawyer's perspective. The book could have been better if the author went into less detail on the one or two court cases he highlights and spent some more effort exploring some interesting concepts he introduces. Economic concepts like public good and private good, complementary and substitute goods, monopoly and copyrights, the role of the marketplace, and the intersection of copyright with natural rights were hinted at, but never fully developed. The highlight of the book is his chapter on the two cultures of copyright. Economists and lawyers sometimes fail to give the proper weight to how culture affects outcomes in society. Overall this is an interesting book that could have been better if the author was more pointed in his writing.

This is not intended as a survey of copyright, although it does succeed admirably in introducing nonlawyers to the field and defining the major themes for those already in the field. Its primary

focus, however, is upon several key cases and key issues, which are explored in detail, partly through the eyes of some of the major participants. This is of course a bit dated, and it is, alas, out of print. But if you at all interested in reading an overview from the undisputed master in the field, track down and read this book. Whether you're already into copyright or just wanting to find out about it, you'll come away with an enriched understanding of copyright. -Edward Samuels, author of The Illustrated Story of Copyright

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