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<https://digitalsocialcontract.net/google-rules-the-history-and-future-of-copyright-under-the-influenc>

Google Rules: The History and Future of Copyright Under the Influence of Google

Joanne E. Gray

Blockbuster lawsuits, artificial intelligence, backroom deals, millions in lobbying dollars and grand Silicon Valley idealism — the story of Google and copyright law is action-packed.

I believe strongly in the value of a vibrant and diverse creative world. For most of my career, I have worked closely with artists, people who create music and art. I see up close the contribution they make to our society — enriching and enlightening.

Copyright has also played a central role in my professional life. Copyright protects art, music, and other creative expression and is important for building a career from a creative practice. But for most of my career, I've felt that there's something amiss with how copyright functions and with how the policy debate typically plays out.

Too much attention is given to established industry players, and the concepts central to the copyright orthodoxy appear divorced from actual creative practice and the interests of actual artists.

Several years ago, it occurred to me that Google might represent a turning point in the history of copyright. Here was a technology giant arguing for changes to copyright laws to support more public access to works and creative freedoms.

Could Google be a corporate white knight?

Or were Hollywood and Rupert Murdoch correct in thinking Google is a parasite set to destroy all possibility for commercial success in the creative industries?

Of course, once I looked into it, I quickly realized both estimations of Google were inaccurate. I discovered that the story of Google and copyright is thorny and complex, with consequences that reach far beyond artists, art, and the media and entertainment industries.

The story of Google and copyright is also about the impact of technological change, the distribution of power in society, and the shape of contemporary democracy.

In this book, I explore and evaluate Google's relationship to copyright law. I examine Google's copyright agenda, its legal, commercial, and political conflicts over copyright, and Google's approach to copyright in practice.

The first part of the book shows how the public interest suffers in a digital copyright policy debate dominated by powerful industry stakeholders. The second part explores Google's contributions to digital copyright politics and the copyright policies that Google enforces across its own platforms. In the concluding chapters of the book, I identify the implications of Google's current position in digital

copyright governance for the public interest and propose pathways for confronting Google's accumulation of economic, political, and social power.

Copyright is central to much of what Google does, and, because Google is a powerful and motivated multinational corporation that is likely to seek to influence copyright law for the foreseeable future, I hope lawmakers and other copyright stakeholders, including the public, will benefit from my analysis and evaluation of Google's activities in this space.

Copyright laws impact us all — copyright is one of the key levers for regulating the social and cultural conditions of our time. Accordingly, I have tried to make this book accessible and engaging to the widest possible audience.

As creators, lawyers, policymakers, educators, entrepreneurs, engineers, internet users, parents, and children, we are all stakeholders in the digital copyright policy debate.

This is an extract from my new book *Google Rules* which is out now via OUP — or request it through your local library.