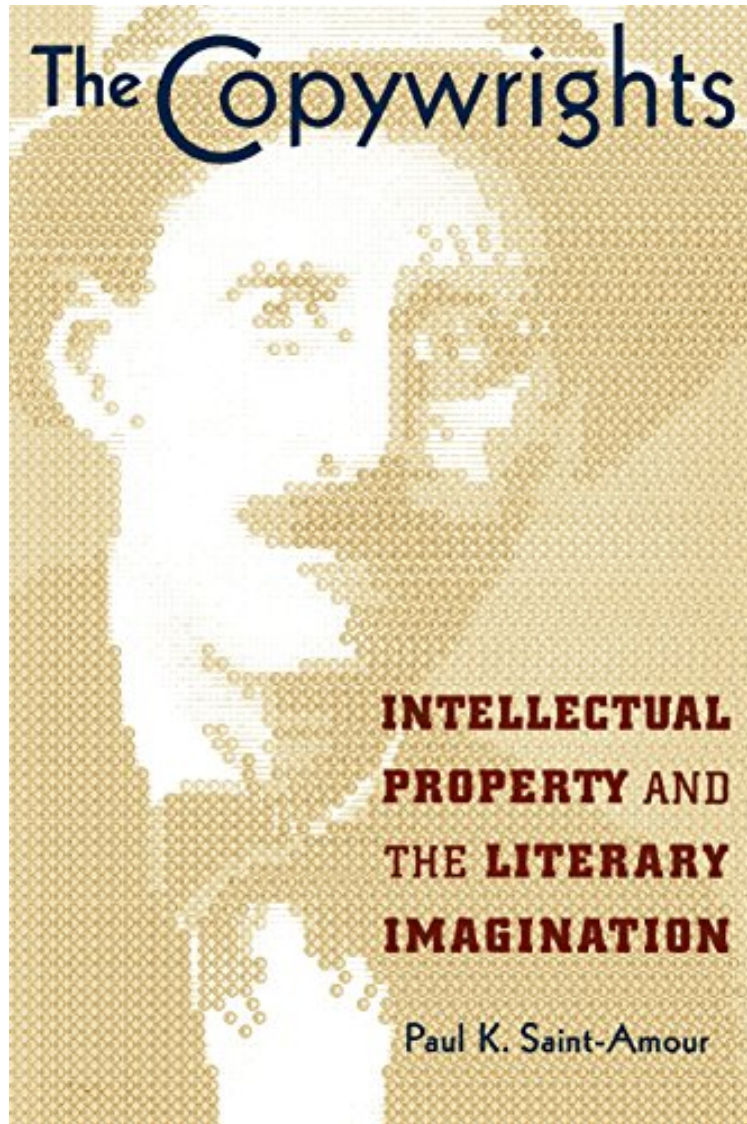


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The Copywrights: Intellectual Property and the Literary Imagination

Paul K. Saint-Amour

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Paul K. Saint-Amour : The Copywrights: Intellectual Property and the Literary Imagination before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Copywrights: Intellectual Property and the Literary Imagination:

10 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Original, provocative and readableBy A CustomerThis is an exciting and brilliantly conceived work that ties together literary criticism and legal theory with great assurance.

Indispensable for scholars of James Joyce in particular, but should be of interest to anybody thinking about the status of law and literature in the twentieth century. 0 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Not recommended. By 25Hour
Though this book has some interesting ideas, it is written with so much wordy fluff included that it is well-nigh unreadable. To say the least, it badly needs editing-- I'd say about 60-70% of the words could be axed from any given page without losing any information. (This operation would, at very least, improve clarity immeasurably.) Allow me to present a representative sample from the introduction of the text: "...As a result, we will have to visit various categories and questions attaching to copyright more than once in order to trace their relation to one another. In addition, copyright's morphology has continued to change over time, and in a relation of tangled and agonized reciprocity with the discourses that comprise it. We will have to attend to copyright's historical contingencies and trajectories even as we attempt to track its structural involutions, its double lust for quarantine and collapse." Huh. 'Double lust,' indeed. Would not buy again.

They borrow from published works without attribution. They remake literary creation in the image of consumption. They celebrate the art of scissors and paste. Who are these outlaws? Postmodern culture-jammers or file-sharing teens? No, they are the Copywrights Victorian and modernist writers, among them Oscar Wilde and James Joyce, whose work wrestled with the intellectual property laws of their day. In a highly readable and thought-provoking book that places today's copyright wars in historical context, Paul K. Saint-Amour asks: Would their art have survived the copyright laws of the new millennium? Revisiting major works by Wilde and Joyce as well as centos assembled by anonymous writers from existing poems, Saint-Amour sees the period 1830-1930 as a time when imaginative literature became aware of its own status as intellectual property and began to register that awareness in its subjects, plots, and formal architecture. The authors of these self-reflexive literary texts were more conscious than their precursors of the role played by consumption in both the composition and the consecration of literature. The texts in question became, in turn, part of what Saint-Amour characterizes as a "counterdiscourse" to extensive monopoly copyright, a vocal minority that insisted on a broadly conceived public domain not only as indispensable to free expression and fresh creation but as a good in itself. Recent events such as the court battle over the Copyright Term Extension Act (CTEA), which extends copyright terms by 20 years, the patenting of the human genome and of genetically altered seed lines, and high-stakes controversies over literary parody have increased public awareness of intellectual property law. In *The Copywrights*, Saint-Amour challenges the notion that copyright's function ends with the provision of private incentives to creation and innovation. The cases he examines lead him to argue that copyright performs a range of political, emotional, and even sacred functions that are too often ignored and that what seems to have emerged as copyright's primary function—the creation of private property incentives—must not be an end in itself.

"Paul Saint-Amour's new book is a rich consideration of Western intellectual property law's relation to creative works and how several literary works are self-consciously engaged with contested copyright ideas. . . . Saint-Amour works to combine his interests in western intellectual property laws, and the directions those laws might have gone and might still go, with his interest in 'the literary property metadiscourse of late modernity.' The combination fruitfully registers the dangerous effects of increased copyright protections on creative freedoms, a danger Saint-Amour laments." Lisa Samuels, *Symploke*
"Paul K. Saint-Amour's superb book is a sustained meditation on . . . the shaping pressures exerted by intellectual-property regimes upon the modern literary imagination. . . . We know that our cultural lifeblood is something we might as well call fair use—not a doctrine codified by lawmakers and construed by judges, but the homely good sense that can spread calm and tolerance in a crowded world of born imitators. Paul Saint-Amour's book helps us to become better citizens of our imitative culture." Robert Spoo, *James Joyce Literary Supplement*, Spring 2005
"This is a first-rate book on an important topic. Paul K. Saint-Amour negotiates among a number of competing and not always congruent discourses: law, literary theory, history, and poetics. *The Copywrights* makes a very strong case that we should be concerned about the danger posed to intellectual liberty, freedom of speech, and creativity by laws that maximize copyright protection." Mark Osteen, *Loyola College*
About the Author Paul K. Saint-Amour is Assistant Professor of English at Pomona College. He has been a Fellow at the Stanford Humanities Center and the Society for the Humanities at Cornell University.