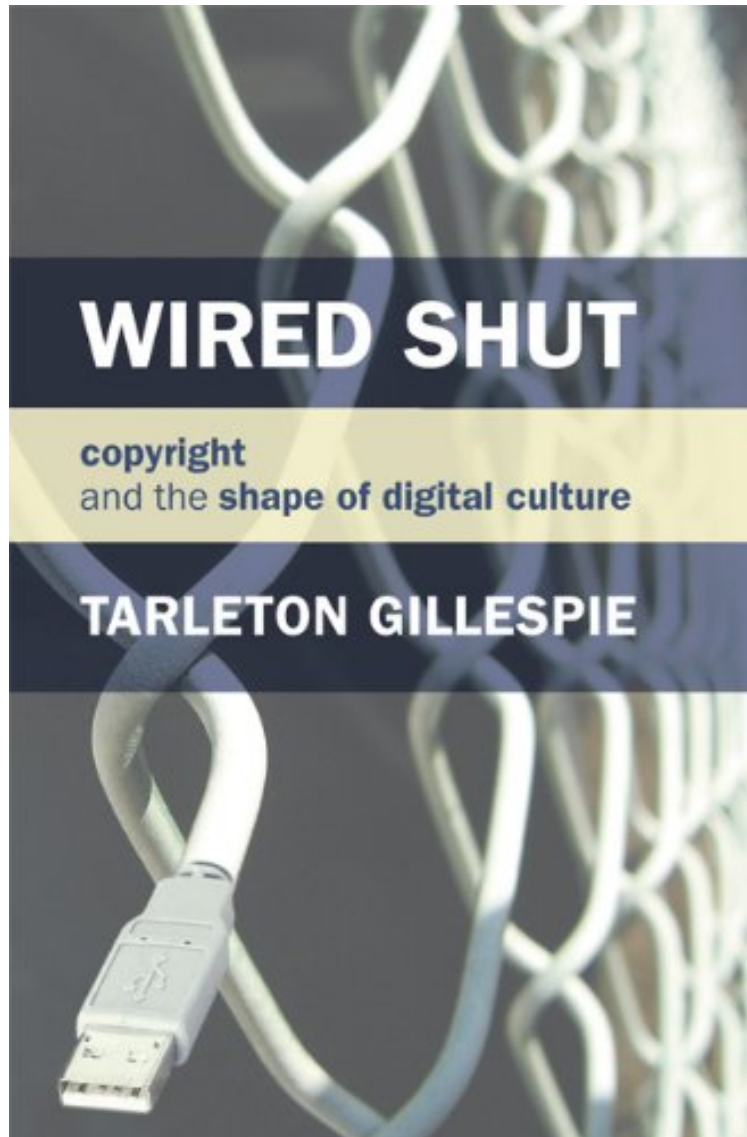


(Mobile ebook) Wired Shut: Copyright and the Shape of Digital Culture (MIT Press)

## Wired Shut: Copyright and the Shape of Digital Culture (MIT Press)

*Tarleton Gillespie*

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**Tarleton Gillespie : Wired Shut: Copyright and the Shape of Digital Culture (MIT Press)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Wired Shut: Copyright and the Shape of Digital Culture (MIT Press):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Berglund Center for Internet Studies Review by Jeffrey BarlowBy Berglund Center for Internet StudiesAt first glance, this work will inevitably be taken as a highly technical discussion

of what may be simultaneously both the most critical and the most boring issue relating to the impact of the Internet: copyright law. However, Dr. Gillespie, an Assistant Professor of Communications at Cornell University, utilizes the topic to markedly enhance the reader's understanding of a wide variety of topics relating to culture in general, and to digital culture in particular. The work is also a very welcome one in that the author convincingly shows that the current debate over digital rights, particularly as reflected in long-running discussions of music and piracy, has been very ably shaped and controlled by but one side in the debate, at least at the public level. After reading *Wired Shut*, any reader is going to be a much wiser consumer of information bearing upon public and legal debates over copyright law, and particularly over the technical fixes, such as digital rights management software and hardware so often said to be the solution to the "problem of piracy." For a full review see *Interface*, Volume 8, Issue 2.1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The LockdownBy doomsdayer520Here Tarleton Gillespie has created the most comprehensive book-length treatment of a topic that is gaining the notice of more and more researchers in intellectual property and technology law. The digital information revolution has made it easier to trade and share cultural items, with the potential to weaken the financial and political grip of the culture industries. While those industries fought back against Napster and similar technologies by claiming that the copyright protections of starving artists were being trashed, here Gillespie shows yet again that in the modern legal and political environment, copyright law has been mutated into a tool for maintaining corporate profitability. Meanwhile, as they complain about unfair public use of digital technology, the culture industries have used that same technology to lock in profits and social controls that are far beyond what copyright law allows. Gillespie tackles this unwieldy yet crucial subject with a strong backdrop of theories of society and technology, as well as intellectual property law. He finds that the corporate lockdown of culture has been achieved not by transparent and reviewable changes in the law and the legislative process, but by technological design that cannot be countered by consumers. Not only is this process undemocratic, it also does not bode well for culture unless creative people choose to remove themselves from market forces (actually anti-market politics) over which they have less and less input. The only real problem with this book is not the strength of the argument, but readability. Some of the different chapters, especially in the middle portions of the book, unnecessarily repeat the main thesis and probably originated as separate research projects (a common occupational hazard for academics); and Gillespie's initially unique coverage of industry standard-building coalitions tends to dissolve into tedious coverage of parliamentary infighting. But with those flaws aside, Gillespie concocts a fascinating argument, utilizing everything from cultural studies to law to scientific philosophy, in bringing together a previously scattershot school of thought into the definitive book-length treatment. [~doomsdayer520~]5 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Into the Analog HoleBy Jeff M. BrownAuthor Tarleton Gillespie examines digital developments in the cultural realm bordered by United States copyright law, the content and technology industries, and the marketplace. In doing so, he makes some salient and occasionally sublime observations that often go unnoticed when thinking about the future of copyright in a digital age, such as:-the role of the federal government in largely adopting the perspective of institutional content providers (including record labels and the major motion picture studios) regarding the need for broader and more rigorous enforcement of copyright restrictions during the mid-1990s;-the extent to which the reliance upon code (developed in secret by private corporate interests) instead of legal provisions (developed in public by popularly-elected representatives) to enforce copyright restrictions threatens to undermine the balance between the interests of creators and users that historically underlies United States copyright law;-the fact that DVD players have no record function is the result of an alignment between legal, technological, institutional and market forces (the major motion picture studios require DVD manufactures to contractually agree to manufacture DVD players with no recording or copying functions as a condition of making motion picture titles available in the DVD format, without which there would be much less demand for DVD players);-the fact that an effective DRM scheme requires alignment between commercial institutions, not just the technology and content sectors, and the failure to achieve such an alignment was the main reason the Secure Digital Music Initiative failed; and-the extent to which end-users of intellectual property in the digital realm increasingly function as active users of tools, rather than passive consumers of culture, and how focusing on the latter characterization was a key strategy employed the Motion Picture Association of America in its lobbying efforts to enact the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. The book suffers a bit from some long passages containing academic material and theorizing. Overall - a good read if you're a copyright geek.

How the shift toward "technical copy protection" in the battle over digital copyright depends on changing political and commercial alignments that are profoundly shaping the future of cultural expression in a digital age. While the public and the media have been distracted by the story of Napster, warnings about the evils of "piracy," and lawsuits by the recording and film industries, the enforcement of copyright law in the digital world has quietly shifted from regulating copying to regulating the design of technology. Lawmakers and commercial interests are pursuing what might be called a technical fix: instead of specifying what can and cannot be done legally with a copyrighted work, this new approach calls for the strategic use of encryption technologies to build standards of copyright directly into digital devices so that some uses are possible and others rendered impossible. In *Wired Shut*, Tarleton Gillespie examines this shift to "technical copy protection" and its profound political, economic, and cultural implications. Gillespie reveals

that the real story is not the technological controls themselves but the political, economic, and cultural arrangements being put in place to make them work. He shows that this approach to digital copyright depends on new kinds of alliances among content and technology industries, legislators, regulators, and the courts, and is changing the relationship between law and technology in the process. The film and music industries, he claims, are deploying copyright in order to funnel digital culture into increasingly commercial patterns that threaten to undermine the democratic potential of a network society. In this broad context, Gillespie examines three recent controversies over digital copyright: the failed effort to develop copy protection for portable music players with the Strategic Digital Music Initiative (SDMI); the encryption system used in DVDs, and the film industry's legal response to the tools that challenged them; and the attempt by the FCC to mandate the "broadcast flag" copy protection system for digital television. In each, he argues that whether or not such technical constraints ever succeed, the political alignments required will profoundly shape the future of cultural expression in a digital age.

Gillespie has boldly attempted a broad and deep analysis of copyright that integrates cultural, historical, legal, social, political, and technological perspectives -- and he succeeds. This is an unusual, excellent, vitally important, and urgently needed book. (Kirsten Foot, Associate Professor in the Department of Communication, University of Washington)A sophisticated accounting of several key developments and the ways in which these developments have impacted our ability to use digital cultural products. Law and Politics Book (Law and Politics Book ) Wired Shut is an important book, essential for those who care about the future of digital technologies and information flows. The societal implications of digital rights management technologies have never been explored this deeply or comprehensively. DRM technologies are neither technological nor economic imperatives, and Gillespie shows that their social costs are avoidable. Bravo! (Pamela Samuelson, Richard M. Sherman Distinguished Professor of Law Information, University of California, Berkeley)About the AuthorTarleton Gillespie is Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication at Cornell University, with affiliations in the Department of Science and Technology Studies and the Information Science program. He is also a Fellow with the Center for Internet and Society at Stanford Law School.