

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910792071803321
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Titolo	The fight over digital rights : the politics of copyright and technology / / Bill D. Herman [[electronic resource]]
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cambridge : , : Cambridge University Press, , 2013
ISBN	1-107-23511-1 1-107-32677-X 1-107-45958-3 1-139-05994-7 1-107-33246-X 1-107-33487-X 1-107-33653-8 1-107-33321-0 1-299-25746-1
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (xix, 243 pages) : digital, PDF file(s)
Disciplina	346.7304/82
Soggetti	Copyright and electronic data processing - United States Copyright - United States - Electronic information resources Fair use (Copyright) - United States Copyright infringement - United States Information networks - Law and legislation - United States Censorship - United States
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Title from publisher's bibliographic system (viewed on 05 Oct 2015).
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Lightning in a bottle -- The Audio Home Recording Act, 1987-1992 -- The Digital Millennium Copyright Act -- A digital rights management interlude : 1999-2002 -- Digital Millennium Copyright Act reform and the broadcast flag -- Communicating in congress -- Communicating in print -- The copyright and digital rights management debate online -- Comparing the online and offline digital rights -- The digital rights management debate withers, 2007-2010 -- New strategies and a historic uprising -- The future of digital rights--and digital fights.

In the political fight over copyright, Internet advocacy has reshaped the playing field. This was shown in the 2012 'SOPA blackout', when the largest online protest in history stopped two copyright bills in their tracks. This protest was the culmination of an intellectual and political evolution more than a decade in the making. This book examines the debate over digital copyright, from the late 1980s through early 2012, and the new tools of political communication involved in the advocacy around the issue. Drawing on methods from legal studies, political science and communications, it explores the rise of a coalition seeking more limited copyright, as well as how these early-adopting, technology-savvy policy advocates used online communication to shock the world. It compares key bills, congressional debates, and offline and online media coverage using quantitative and qualitative methods to create a rigorous study for researchers that is also accessible to a general audience.
