

Sir:

I worked in the record business for many years and am still involved if only on the periphery.

It is hard to disagree with the aims of the "Extend The Term", though it does seem that it is the music media and a few headline grabbing artists who are making most of the running.

Classic and ground-breaking recordings from the "rock 'n' roll" era are now falling in the public domain - some of Elvis Presley's material has already done so and the same is true for Bill Haley and others. It is this realisation that seems to have prompted this campaign.

But extending the copyright is unlikely to mean much for most artists who were recording prior to 1956.

My complaint is that the major record companies have ignored much of their early back catalogue for many, many years.

After the War many major companies entered the record business, among them MGM, Mercury, Pye, and Philips as well as a plethora of independent labels, mostly in the United States, many of which are now owned by British and European companies, but rarely do they make use of these recordings and I doubt whether an extension of the copyright term will make much difference.

Alongside the "Extend the Term" campaign, I would like to see a second thrust....."Use it or lose it". Ownership of the copyright in any recordings made 50 years ago and held by record companies should be returned to the artists involved if the current owners are unwilling to either use it themselves or license it to third parties. Only then, I suspect, will individual artists, or their estates, be able to really say "Extend The Term" will have been of any value to them.

Thankyou for your time,

Yours faithfully,

Austin Powell