

Dear Mr. Gowers,

I have been following with interest the current issues regarding copyright extension in the UK and Europe. I would like to weigh in on the side of those who would like to see the current copyright laws remain as they are now.

I recently read that 70% of the recordings made before 1965 have never been released on CD. Much, if not all, of that 70% is still of interest to many people. I find it interesting that while the recordings of Frank Sinatra and Ella Fitzgerald and Vera Lynn and Doris Day and Glenn Miller and Edith Piaf, among hundreds of others, were passing into public domain no one at the record companies seemed particularly concerned, if at all. But now that the Elvis Presley catalogue will begin to pass into public domain there is a hue and cry being heard all the way to the top levels of government. I also find it interesting that the powers-that-be obviously thought the 50 year limit worked quite well, up until this milestone.

I purchase many CDs of recordings over 50 years old. Some are from US labels, but a good number are from UK and European labels. Most of the material on these CDs would probably have remained locked in the vaults of the record companies forever if not for the small independent labels that have a love for this music that the major labels obviously do not. The majors are not interested in re-releasing recordings that are not going to sell in enormous numbers. If a small, independent is willing to spend the time, money, and effort to re-release the 50+-year-old recordings of a performer whose works will most likely never be re-released by the majors, why deny old and new fans of that performer the chance to enjoy their music? Often the majors are not interested in licensing the material, even when it is material that they have no interest in anymore.

If this copyright law goes into effect, the amount of pre-1965 recordings that fans and historians will have access to would probably be much less than the 30% that is available now. Why deny the public the chance to hear so much of the wonderful music that would otherwise be locked away forever? There are other musicians besides Elvis Presley and the Beatles.

If the copyright term is extended, I think it should

pertain only to new creations. The sound recordings that are already out of copyright should remain so, and the recordings that are currently in copyright should be covered by the 50 year term in effect when they were recorded.

Best Regards,
David Colp