

Gavin Baker is a third year political science major and president of the University of Florida Free Culture chapter.

Q: What does Florida Free Culture do to promote Creative Commons licensing?

A: In the spring, we'll be holding an art show, where all the pieces are held under a Creative Commons license. People will be able to go to the show and look at various works. If they like something, they can go online and download it onto their computers. Depending on the type of license they may also be allowed to remix the work.

Q: How do artists benefit from Creative Commons licenses?

A: Starting artists benefit from CC licenses through exposure. Not only is the CC license still a novelty that attracts people, but a free download often means more people will see it, hear, or read it.

Popular artists such as the Beastie Boys, Cursive, Linkin Park (side project) and Pearl Jam have licensed work under CC instead of a full copyright. Pearl Jam had a remix contest: people could download a song and use audio editing to change it, then submit it for the contest. In this way artists can get free remixes of their songs, but they also get to see what other people think of their work, how it's interpreted.

Q: Why are you personally interested in Creative Commons licenses?

A: Creative Commons is personally exciting because they represent a nuanced view of copyright, particularly in the 21st century when everyone has access to the Internet. Technology puts everyone on equal footing. How is the law going to respond? To encourage or discourage creativity? There is more to copyright than all or none, there is a middle ground and CC recognizes that.

Q: What is this "middle ground" and how does Creative Commons recognize that?

A: CC recognizes that both creators and users have a stake in the copyright system. There needs to be a balance between the two. Many creators are also users. They need to pay attention to how they treat each other, because they have a symbiotic relationship. They need to treat each other with respect, and think about intellectual property.

Q: Why do you think technology companies such as Microsoft support Creative Commons?

A: Tech companies support CC because it makes their products more valuable. They are in the business of making computers useful, and so the more things you can do on a computer the more they benefit.