Fair Use, Public Licensing and Free Access on Internet

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Internet created a totally different copyright world in which the boundary between lawful and unlawful use is blurred. Particularly, the traditional copyright concepts of reproduction, distribution, and performance as well as fair use are challenged by ever changing internet technologies such as linking, P2P and streaming. For example, transfer of physical copies of copyrighted works was not deemed infringement prior to digital and internet era, but it has been frequently decided otherwise nowadays. Technological measure and Digital Rights Management (DRM) for digital copyright protection have been criticized to have added a layer of restriction to the internet and weakened fair use (Lessig). This presentation discusses how traditional copyright concepts have been challenged and changed by digital and internet technologies, how fair use doctrine should be used to rectify the restriction to internet imposed by technological measures and DRM, and how public licensing schemes such as Creative Commons licenses can facilitate copyright protection on the one hand and free access to copyrighted works on the other hand. Finally, this presentation explore the issue of whether and how public funded research works (whether science or humanity) can be freely accessed over internet, what copyright issues are involved and how national governments are dealing with this problem.