



Without Copyrights: Piracy, Publishing, and the Public Domain (Hardback)

By Robert Spoo

Oxford University Press Inc, United States, 2013. Hardback. Condition: New. Language: English . Brand New Book. This tells the story of how the notoriously protectionist American copyright law impacted transatlantic modernism by encouraging the piracy of works published abroad. From its inception in 1790, U.S. copyright law withheld protection from foreign authors, creating an aggressive public domain that claimed works just as soon as they were published abroad. When Congress finally extended protection to foreign works, legal technicalities caused many authors to continue to lose their copyrights. The American public domain made vast numbers of foreign works freely available to American publishers. In order to avert ruinous competition for these unprotected resources, publishers evolved trade courtesy, whereby the first house to announce plans to issue a foreign work acquired informal rights in the work—a kind of makeshift copyright grounded on unwritten norms and elaborate professional etiquette. Courtesy was a form of order without law that safeguarded publishers interests, punished deviants from the code, and remunerated foreign authors for the exploitation of their works. Drawing on previously undiscovered archives, this book reveals the convergence of law, piracy, and courtesy in the dissemination of transatlantic modernism in the United States. The...



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