

Abstract

This paper constitutes an exploration of the prevailing discord between the competing values of copyright and the freedom of expression and the right to information in Europe. It seeks to analyze the possibility of resolving this discord through the introduction of a public interest exception to the legal framework on copyright in the European Union. In the course of this analysis, it engages in a comparative survey of the developments taking place in the copyright law systems of England, Germany and France *vis a vis* copyright, the freedom of expression and the public interest. Throughout the analysis, reference is made to the fair-use exception in the US as a model for the introduction of a potential public interest exception to copyright in Europe and parallels are drawn between the approaches taken in the US and Europe with regard to copyright and the freedom of expression.

Keywords: Freedom of Expression, Right to Information, Public Interest Exception, the Fair-Use Exception, EC Copyright Directive the Berne Convention, the Three-Step Test.

