

EDITORIAL

Given the lead time required to write the proposition paper for *Prometheus* debate sections, and then for others to respond to the proposition, we have been fortunate that our debates have still been topical when we have gone to press. This issue's debate is no exception. The Digital Economy Act in the UK was but a Bill when the topic was first mooted for *Prometheus* debate; it became an Act during the writing of the debate papers, and is now scheduled for judicial review. We have been fortunate enough to capture opinion during the rise of this legislation, and during what some see as its fall. What we have not been able to do is attract comment from all sides. This is not for want of trying. Those responsible for the Digital Economy Act – politicians, civil servants, lawyers, leaders of the music industry – have been invited to argue their case in the *Prometheus* forum, and have been universally unwilling. Nevertheless, as discussion surrounding the Act continues, we renew our invitation and encourage all parties to submit their comments.

Birgitte Andersen provides our core proposition, inspired by her recent inaugural lecture. She is quite uncompromising: the Digital Economy Act imposes costs on everyone, even those who pushed so hard for the legislation. The music industry is now shackled to a business model from the analogue age, totally inappropriate when so many others see music as a free good that must be acquired before the customer can pay for a whole range of related goods. Bill Dutton is in broad agreement, insisting that, in seeking dreadful punishment for those who infringe its copyright, the music industry damages the economy and the society in which it operates, but most of all the music industry itself. Jason Rutter goes a step or two further in his examination of music industry strategy, which is to criminalise those who download music illegally and then to demonise them by association with even more heinous crimes.

Few respondents to Andersen's paper disagree with her. For Christian Handke, the main damage that will be done by the Digital Economy Act will be to innovation and creativity. Only time (and much data collection) will tell just how expensive the Act has been. Joost Smiers takes a similar line: the giants of the music industry have managed to exclude other firms in the industry which might have looked to innovation to compete. Like Dutton, Smiers describes an oligopoly in cultural freefall, so bent on its own annihilation that it is simply 'stupid'.

Lucy Montgomery makes a valuable comparison with the music industry in China, where piracy has long been notorious. The multinational music industry has been as supportive of piracy suppression through TRIPS (the concerted effort led by the West's largest corporations to harmonise intellectual property protection everywhere), as it has through the Digital Economy Act in the UK. The Chinese experience is that only widespread flouting of the law allows creativity to flourish in the music industry.

Andrew Heaney falls into a slightly different category, if only because it seems to have been he who has been principally responsible for forcing a judicial review of the Digital Economy Act. The High Court decided in mid-November 2010 that TalkTalk and BT had a point when they complained that the Act was both unjustifiable and

illegal, that internet service providers cannot practically supervise their customers, and that it is unreasonable and illegal to cut them off from the internet – the very matters covered in this *Prometheus* debate. The case will be heard in February 2011.

This issue carries two research papers which relate innovation to military matters. Udechukwu Ojiako, Johnnie Johnson, Yue Liu and Max Chipulu look to the way military strategy must accommodate the unlikely. They then relate this to unconventional competition in the civilian world. Lucy Resnyansky goes the other way, arguing that information extraction and modeling tools based on what is known about information in the wider environment will encourage the military's intelligence analysts to see beyond the constraints of IT processing.

Alasdair Marshall and Udechukwu Ojiako provide a paper entirely appropriate to the journal, one that questions the Prometheus myth itself. They present a picture of Prometheus not as daring rebel, but as something of a conservative in his approach to risk. This is not a conventional view, but the authors wish to show that, though it is generally assumed that the more radical the innovation the higher the related risk, there is a distinction between risk and innovation important to corporate strategy. It is quite possible that refusal or neglect to innovate brings risk to the organisation. Ritsuko Ozaki and Mark Dodgson look to the consumption of innovation for their understanding of innovation itself. To be sure, the tradition is to focus almost exclusively on the adoption of innovation, as if buying is the same as using. Hybrid cars provide their example of the advantages of a more comprehensive approach to innovation.

And there we have our Christmas issue for 2010. We have completed a full year since the journal was re-vamped, and not without a good deal of effort from editors, referees, authors, and publishers. I thank them all.

Stuart Macdonald
General Editor