The iPod has consumed my life like few things before it. (Dylan Jones, *iPod, Therefore I Am: Thinking Inside the White Box*)

A late adopter of new technology, I received an iPod Shuffle, a hot ticket item, as a Christmas present in December 2005. Travelling across the Pacific from Australia to Canada on New Year’s Eve, I listened to one hundred and twenty songs drawn from my musical library. The personal soundtrack to my life included the psychedelic music of Pink Floyd and David Bowie; the agitprop pub rock of Midnight Oil, Hunters & Collectors, and the Cruel Sea; the Antipodean storytelling of singer–songwriters, David Bridie, Paul Kelly and Neil Finn; and the keening of country divas, Kasey Chambers, the Dixie Chicks and KD Lang. I was impressed that the MP3 player allowed me to engage in the ‘space-shifting’ of my musical collection, and the ‘time-shifting’ of Internet broadcasts.

As an intellectual property academic, I was also intrigued by the implications of the iPod for copyright law. Apple Computers encouraged its customers to ‘rip, mix, burn’, yet warned them, ‘Don’t Steal Music.’ The one device could contain copyright works bought from the iTunes music store, copies of vinyl recordings and compact discs from home computers, as well as digital music circulated, without permission, on the Internet and peer to peer networks. It struck me that the ‘white box’ deserved greater critical scrutiny and examination. There was a need to better explain the complex relationship between copyright law, new digital technologies and consumer behaviour.

My interest in copyright law is a longstanding one. It has been fostered by a number of academic mentors and teachers. I owe much to Professor Peter Drahos for kindling my interest in intellectual property at the Australian National University. I am indebted to my old doctoral supervisor, Professor Kathy Bowrey of the University of Technology Sydney for her enthusiasm, guidance and inspiration. I am grateful to Professor Jill McKeough of the University of Technology Sydney for providing sensible advice, calm support and dry wit. I have also been indebted to Professor Brad Sherman from the University of Queensland for his camaraderie and patronage.

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M.R.