

Responses to Questionnaire re:
RIAA Copyright Settlement Letters

1) As accurate as you can remember, when did you receive your last settlement letter?

March-April 2008

April 2008

July-August 2008

April 2008

April 2008

July 2007

August 2007

October 2007

September 2007

May 2007

2007

November 2007

July 2007

End of last semester

September 2007

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2) Did you seek your own attorney, and if so, did they recommend that you settle?

Part I

(a) Consulted attorney.

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(b) Sought advice elsewhere. Please specify.

Internet

Sister

(c) Did not consult anyone.

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Part II

(a) Consultant recommended paying the settlement.

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(b) Consultant recommended not paying the settlement.

None

(c) Consultant made a different recommendation. Please specify.

While they recommended paying because of how late I consulted an attorney aside from my time issue the attorney stated that it is necessary to fight companies like the RIAA who seem to be targeting minorities or students of low-income brackets who they know cannot afford a lawyer but may afford paying a settlement.

(d) N/A

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3) Did you ultimately decide to settle by paying the settlement fine?

(a) Paid settlement fine in full.

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(b) Did not pay any portion of the settlement fine.

None

(c) Other. Please specify.

1 - Paid 6 payments over 6 months

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4) Was a lawsuit ever subsequently brought against you by the agency?

(a) Yes

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(b) No

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(c) Other. Please specify.

None

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5) Have you ever had any copyright dealings in the past? (Takedown notice, Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA), Subpoena, Other settlement letters, etc.)?

(a) Yes

1 – Takedown notice, DMCA

(b) No

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(c) Other. Please specify

None

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6) Do you have any other useful information you are willing to share with us?

I'm a Cornell staffer who (at the time) used Cornell EZRemote for all home internet access. One of my kids, unbeknownst to me, had installed a music sharing program on the home computer, and since access to EZRemote is under my netid, I was contacted for the copyright violation. A mistake with a \$3000 price tag. Ouch! Lesson learned (I hope.) A violation happened and I agreed to responsibility for what happens under my netid, so it's just tough luck for me. Fine paid, lesson learned by kids about law, responsibility and forgiveness, and time to move on.

This was a bad experience. I got caught with 785 songs and they charge \$750 per song that they catch you with. Thus, if I did not settle they were going to file a lawsuit for around 1/2 million dollars. I was not actively using lime wire when they caught me (I have been buying my music from itunes) but they still found the program on my computer. I had to settle for \$3,000.

It was quite upsetting and stressful to get this notice, and interrupts with schoolwork and other activities in life, so it's just better not to share files with bittorrent or limewire. If you get sued, I would recommend just paying it if you have the money and then just forget about it. Otherwise, I would hope the school could do something about it and refuse to give up the IP addresses of students to the RIAA. I heard some students will use public computers to download files.

Yes, receiving a letter from the RIAA such as this is extremely stressful for a student and Cornell should do a better job at protecting its students than telling them to go find an attorney. Many schools now partner with Napster and provide students with a subscription to download before they even come to campus. Or alternatively, if schools do not want this, Cornell should find a way to block students from accessing download sites.

The settlement letter referred to file sharing activities from a year before the receiving of the letter.

I felt like I was being made an example of by the RIAA. Most of my summer job money was used to pay for the settlement. I was really angry, especially since it was with a program, Ares, that I used hardly once during the entire year, which is not even widely used to maybe download 1 or 2 songs. Their suing people did effectively nothing to stop the spread of file-sharing across US college campuses.

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They will charge you money regardless of anything. I had to pay an absorbent fee over a virus in my computer that was downloading and sharing files that I wouldn't usually .

The RIAA has a nice website where you can put your credit card number and the amount of money (usually around \$5000) you are supposed to pay. I paid \$4000 (\$800 per song). I shared 5 songs of U2.

The issue with my own personal story is that I believe that Cornell's policy of giving up the students information is quite unfair and to be honest has made me feel as if this University claims of putting its students first is not true. In my case I was charged for music that was on limewire which I believed was deleted since 2007. In fact I went to Cornell's CIT so that they could search my computer and when anyone went to add/remove programs the individual could not find limewire, but when he searched further into my system he found different limewire somehow still on my computer. I am a regular student with no computer expertise so any regular computer person knows that when you remove a program from your add/remove file it is supposed to be totally removed (this was also told to me by the CIT professional), but for some reason a sort of file from my previous limewire was still found on my computer. To further prove my innocence the CIT professional checked the dates of multiple songs and found that they were all downloaded in 2007 so why would the RIAA penalize me for a January 2008 incident involving file sharing. When I explained this to the University though they saw that I was not at fault for what occurred (how could I know parts of limewire was still on my computer) I was told Cornell could not help, but rather this is between me and the RIAA.

It really saddens me that an institution that values protecting their students does nothing of that sort, but rather allows corrupt corporations like the RIAA go after students with only evidence of IP addresses that to be honest are not the most substantial methods of identifying an individual. The fact that Cornell would invade their own students privacy and provide a company with their students information not only was astonishing, but for the first time shamed me for being a Cornell student. Never have I received enough training or information from Cornell about piracy laws and never have I heard from Cornell about their "relationship" or practices with the RIAA until after being given the settlement letter. I by myself after being accused had to research and call tons of lawyers and research institutes, even professors at Harvard were more helpful than my own institution! I hope I don't sound rude but it really does hurt to know that while your school is willing to provide your private information to the RIAA they are not even willing to make it mandatory to get copyright training or at least some sort of counseling as to how to deal with the RIAA. While Cornell is obviously late in now understanding that piracy and settlement issues clearly effect a good number of their own students it is still nice to know Cornell is doing something.

Hopefully my survey helps the institution to rethink its policies pertaining to RIAA requests and then bring forth an educational program mandatory for all students their freshman year and transfers. In addition a program needs to be in place where students can seek counseling from lawyers, professors, or someone who understands copyright laws and the RIAA as to what to do.

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I was on limewire for a total of maybe 6 minutes, but in that time lots of people downloaded from me. I guess I was unaware of that fact. The word should be spread that limewire does a lot of things invisibly.
