June 11, 2003

For Record Companies, Business Rocks! (2 Letters)

To the Editor:

Re "In Fight Over Online Music, Industry Now Offers a Carrot" (front page, June 8):

As a producer and recording artist, I am one of the supposed victims of record company greed that Internet pirates use to justify illegal downloading. The argument generally goes: the labels are exploiting the artists and keeping all the money, and thus we're only hurting the big bad corporations by using KaZaA and Napster.

There seems to be an unusual synchronous national ego trip making all of these kids in college dorm rooms think that they have a profound understanding of the music industry.

Each of my records costs between $100,000 and $150,000 to make. Distribution and marketing costs easily double that figure. I don't have it. The labels do. Sure, I would appreciate a bigger piece of the pie, but that's a matter between me and the labels, and in no way involves the consumer.

Forcing record companies out of business will also put me and many other musicians on the unemployment line.

PAUL SCHWARTZ
Upper Nyack, N.Y., June 8, 2003

To the Editor:

In "In Fight Over Online Music, Industry Now Offers a Carrot" (front page, June 8), you cite music executives who lament the fact that consumers don't seem to understand the economics of the record industry, and who justify the high cost of CD's by talking about how much money "labels spend developing and promoting new artists, the vast majority of whom never sell enough to make back the investment."

In other words, we're supposed to pay for their lousy judgment. Maybe consumers understand the record industry all too well!

TERRY SIMPKINS
Cornwall, Vt., June 8, 2003