NEXT TIME YOU BUY A CD, REMEMBER TO ASK:

WILL THIS CD REALLY PLAY ON MY EQUIPMENT?

Why? Because the record manufacturers are secretly introducing new slightly modified CDs into the shops. Some of these corrupt CDs won't play on computers, PS2 and DVD machines, and others have lower quality sound and won't last as long as normal CDs. Not only that, but the new CDs make it impossible for people to copy CDs onto their computers and make MP3s.

The new CDs might play fine to start with, but underneath, the sounds have been subtly corrupted. Your CD player has to work much harder to play the music correctly, so after a few scratches, you'll have tracks going wrong MUCH SOONER than with normal CDs. **In truth, these CDs are not as good quality as normal CDs.**

DON'T LET THE MANUFACTURERS GET AWAY WITH THIS. They can only do this if we let them. REFUSE TO BUY A CD that has been altered in this way. They are doing this to try and stop illegal copying, but these CDs cause so many other problems that they should come with big red warning stickers and cost a fraction of the price.

How do I tell? There is no way to tell by looking at the CD itself, but corrupt CDs have already been found in the UK, and the manufacturers plan to release millions of them through all the normal outlets. YOU HAVE TO ASK. If Virgin or HMV or Tower can't give you a straight answer, get a written assurance from them saying that you can have your money back if the CD you're buying turns out to be one of these new subtly corrupted 'copy-protected' CDs.

What can I do? If you have a CD which has gone wrong much sooner than you expected, then please TAKE IT BACK. We need to make it clear to the manufacturers that we are not going to let them charge us good money for sub-standard CDs that are in fact less useful than normal CDs. Eventually they hope that all CDs will be like this, and then they can sell us CD players that will make our lives even harder, stopping us doing all the things we'd like to do with our CDs.

Don't believe us? The BBC and the New Scientist have already featured several articles on this, as have some of the newspapers. For more information, check out this web page: http://uk.eurorights.org/issues/cd/

WHAT THE **** ARE THESE MANUFACTURERS TRYING TO DO?

These actions are part of a very disturbing trend that has started to emerge. It started with region locked DVDs. Next came the DMCA laws in the USA, and the up-coming EUCD laws in Europe, which make it illegal to tell someone else how to play a CD or DVD in a way the manufacturer didn't intend (such as in a different region, or on a computer they don't want you to use). You could go to jail for this. They want to stop the equivalent of multi-region DVD players FOREVER.

In actual fact, a Russian researcher is currently on trial in America for breaking the protection on electronic books. The software he helped to develop allows legitimate owners of eBooks to print them out or put them on another computer. For blind people it is the only way of accessing an eBook.

"But if I bought it, it's mine to do what I want with, isn't it?". Not according to the manufacturers. We are used to buying a CD or a DVD or a book and being able to play it on any CD/DVD player, or to read it on the bus, or lend it to friends, or sell it when we've finished with it. They want to take away all of these rights.

An eBook can't even be used when you upgrade your computer without asking special permission! What would you think if your new CD only worked on one CD player? That's crazy, isn't it? But that's the kind of thing they're trying to do.

WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT THIS PROBLEM?

The first thing is to keep asking questions. As mentioned above, try to get a written assurance from the record shop to say you can have a refund if your new CD turns out to be one of these new subtly modified 'copy-protected' CDs. If you've already bought one of the CDs, and no-one told you clearly that it wasn't a full-quality CD, then you may be entitled to a refund by law. Don't let them get away with it!

If you feel strongly about these issues, please consider writing to your MP to show your concern about the situation with CDs and the up-coming EUCD laws. The EUCD (European Copyright Directive) is not law yet, and there is still a chance that it can be fixed. If you'd like more information, check out this web-site: http://uk.eurorights.org/

NOTE: This leaflet intentionally explains things simply in layman's terms. However, we are not exaggerating!
If you want to check all this for yourself and get to understand the technical issues in depth, please follow the links on the web pages.

NO TO THE **NEW CD!** **NO** TO THE **EUCD!**