

# The More Things Change, The More They Stay the Same

Ed Arrow

The CCC archives contain copies of CCC newsletters and meeting announcements dating back to the late 1970's. All of the newsletters present the topic for an upcoming meeting. Many of the newsletters also contain summaries of a prior meeting. I read through the newsletters and found that, with the exception of the eventual decline of disco music and the price of a CCC dinner meeting, the issues in our industry haven't changed much in the past 25 years.

**April, 1979** - Donna Summer's recording, "Last Dance" from the motion picture *Thank God It's Friday* had won the Oscar for Best Original Song. The April 24, 1979 meeting took on the topic of "Disco" and promised to answer the following questions: "Where did disco come from? Where is it going? Why do some people still think it's a flash in the pan? Why isn't everybody on the bandwagon?"

**November, 1979** - The meeting topic was "The Role of the Independent Entrepreneur in the Music Business in an Era of Corporate Mediocrity" with guest speaker **Steve Gold**, co-owner of Far Out Music and Far Out Productions.

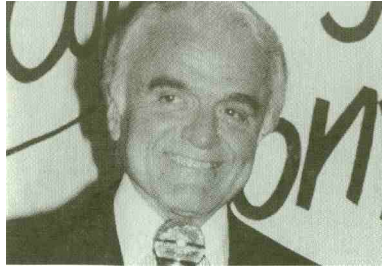
**March, 1980** - The newsletter advised "Because of the high cost of fish, members choosing the Halibut entree will have to pay \$11.00 for their dinner. Otherwise the price for Member and one guest, \$10.00 per person."

**May, 1982** - The topic was "The Unique Services of 'The Home Music Store' - Retail Records Via Satellite." The speaker was **William F. von Meister**, President, CEO of Digital Music Company, "a Washington D.C. based firm which is building a digitally transmitted music network, providing cable TV subscribers with master tape quality music for listening and licensed recording."

**September, 1983** - Democratic Assemblyman **Gray Davis** gave the Legal Update and described a California anti-counterfeiting law which had just been

passed.

**October, 1983** - **Jay Morgenstern**, Exec. VP of Warner Bros. Music noted that "Mechanical income is down tremendously, but all other forms of income are up." Sound familiar?



Jack Valenti

**April, 1984** - The guest speaker was **Jack Valenti**, President of the Motion Picture Association of America. The topic was "Crisis in Copyright." Mr. Valenti warned of two "over arching problems" in the music and film businesses. The first was piracy and second was home copying (in the wake of the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark Betamax decision).

**April 1985** - On the topic of "Computers in the Music and Publishing Business," guest speaker **Robert Kohn** prophesized that "Tomorrow's music distribution technology may create a central data base of songs in program, digital form, being transmitted over wires to your PC and recorded on optical disc (CD). Two years from now the CD will become erasable like any other cassette."

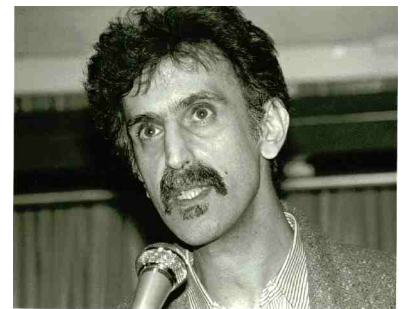
**March, 1987** - **Joe Smith**, CEO of Capitol/EMI Records spoke about "The State of the Music Industry." Said Smith, "Our industry is facing an incredibly rapid technology development without the ability to do very much about it other than watch while much of our music is taken. I believe, although some will disagree, that we've lost forever 20% of our business to home copying."

**May, 1987** - **Ed Murphy**, President of The Harry Fox Agency warned, "We need legislation that will protect us against all techno-

logical changes. There will be other things to come along to put us out of business. So we need a type of legislation that will protect the industry and the quality of music."

**January 1988** - The topic was Personics. Does anyone remember Personics? The Personics system promised to be the answer to the home taping problem as well as a way to reduce record store inventory. The systems would be placed in record stores. A customer could create their own cassette tape containing up to 90 minutes of music choosing from up to 15, 000 songs stored in the Personics system.

**September, 1988** - Speaking on the topic of "Who Owns the Sound?" **Frank Zappa** said of sampling master recordings, "Whoever made that snare drum sound should be hung and the fact that it gets sampled and used over and over again diminishes the quality of our musical experience in this country" He went on to say "The record company executives who hire the A&R men who permit this lunacy to continue are not changing chairs. They want to have this."



Frank Zappa

**February, 1994** - Guest speakers were invited to predict the future as the topic was "The 1994 Music Forecast." **Neil Portnow**, VP West Coast Zomba Music Group addressed the question "Is rap dead?" Portnow responded, "In 1994 we're seeing the development of concerns in the country over issues having to do with censorship, violence which are in certain kinds of rap the nature of what it's all about.... I've learned directly from some of the people on our label,