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To: Julie L. Sigall
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From: Robert T Doyle

Comment:

Orphan works (and its similar cousin in software, "Abandonware") are a critical component of public works, and indeed a vital addition to the public consciousness. No matter the medium nor the subject of any conceived work should be kept from the public domain simply because there no "absolute" relinquishment of copyright.

The public domain has become a joke in the past few years, with copyrights extending a ridiculous period of time, further eroding the general public's ability to hear/use/consume media in its various forms. Very few works have passed into the public domain since the 1960s, and to disallow the inclusion of Orphan Works in the public domain is a travesty.

Art and business are at their core constantly evolving. New ideas and creative concepts must be brought forth all the time - encouraging competition and the forward advancement of the public awareness. If Orphan Works (and indeed, other copyrighted works) are not allowed into the public consciousness for study and their use in advancement of other ideas, then business and the public consciousness in general will lag behind for years.

Both short-term copyright holdings and Orphan Works are necessary for the advancement of business and art in the long-term. If such ideas take so long to release that they are obsolete, we will never learn from them and enhance our lives today.