

bakker-Willem-20050509193003

To: Julie L. Sigall
Associate Register for Policy & International Affairs

Date: 05/09/2005

From: Willem bakker

Comment:

Your office asked for comments on the "orphan works" problem. I have a serious and persistent interest in this issue. I am an instructor and researcher in philosophy, and both those career interests lead me to orphaned works.

As a researcher, I would like to call attention to orphaned works from defunct journals and publishers. Even at this early point in my career, I would like to publish or reproduce several works. I anticipate finding even more as I continue my research. These works have the potential to benefit the philosophical project of ethics and political philosophy in the US.

As a teacher, I would like to reproduce some orphaned works as teaching aids for my students. There are 20th Century works that speak to students in a way that contemporary, academic philosophy sometimes cannot. I cannot regularly reproduce those works because there is no apparent authority to give permission. I have been forced to choose between stretching the boundaries of "fair use" and adopting a second-best text.

It is in the interests of the US and US citizens to institute rules that allow for the wide use of orphaned works, especially if the concept of "orphaned work" is clearly and fairly defined.