

Hello, I saw your call for comments about Orphan Works.

I would love to teach what is now called Old-Time radio. Film and television are routinely taught in academic departments, but I know of no course that incorporates radio drama. Between 1930 and 1950, radio was the medium of choice for news and entertainment, and the inability to teach radio drama in courses that study the period is crippling.

Currently, radio dramas are freely available from numerous collectors who sell them at very low cost with the disclaimer that these are orphan works. So far as I know, no one has ever stepped forward to claim the rights to the few recordings that exist of the mainly ephemeral dramas of the 1930s and 1950s.

I have considered asking students to order Old-Time Radio collections from collectors but the fact that the legal status of these recordings is gray keeps me from doing so. I'd like a policy which gives the old-time radio community all the permission they would need to keep these recordings circulating, and also to make them available to students.

Jon Miller

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