

Gervais-Ben-20050314083021

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

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From: Ben Gervais  
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Comment:

My company has had numerous difficulties clearing copyrighted works for potential film-adaptations. The perception that film companies all have lots of money is false, and it is too costly for us to find some of these authors/publishers if they indeed still exist. The threat of litigation, should we go ahead and adapt/shoot these stories/works is a risk. Because of the possibility of these authors or publishers suddenly 'coming out of the woodwork' the risk is too great.

As a result of this, a great many stories worth re-telling on film go untold. I'd be very pleased to see the implementation of an 'orphaned works' clause / law in the US, where much of this material exists. This would allow people from all around the world to enjoy a vast, rich, cultural resource. It would also set an important precedent for other countries to follow in regards to the same.