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Date: 03/14/2005

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Comment:

"Hey Kid" is a childrens bedtime story published in the 70s. This was a favorite childhood book of mine.

I read it so many times almost 30 years later I can recite it, verbatim word for word from memory.

I'm older now, and I tried to buy a copy for my daughter when she was learning to read, only to learn it was out of print.

Contacted dozens of libraries, nobody had it - amazon offered to dig up a copy for \$100 - I paid them, and they didn't. Contacted the publisher, they didn't respond.

This was a *terrific* book - to me, it was as important as Twas the night before xmas, The cat in the Hat, and Where the Wild Things Are.

I was *extremely* upset to learn this book was out of print, I really strongly felt something needed to be done. I thought about re-writing it (from memory) and then having one of my friends who is a graphic artist do up some art for it and distribute it as a free e-book. After a bit of research I decided against it due to DMCA and other legislation I figured it wasn't worth the hassle. Never was able to locate the publisher - did a title search.

Instead I decided to recite it to my daughter from memory - but of course, since my daughter only heard it, and never read it, she doesn't remember it, and of course, it didn't help her learn to read like it did for me. It lost a lot of the impact without the pictures too.

Now it's easily past her reading age level, but I feel she was really deprived of something which I cherished in my youth. And I suppose it will die with me, or disappear when I get alzheimers. A real shame, easily one of the best childhood books I ever read - I just hope i'm around long enough to recite it to my grandkids, if i'm fortunate enough to have them.

That is assuming that future copyright laws won't make publically reciting something that was copyrighted once upon a time illegal unless you have the copyright holders permission.

Seriously, the either american intellectual property system is heading the wrong direction - this is one small opportunity you guys have to fix it. So please take this opportunity to act responsibly.

That having been said, the economy is moving faster than ever these days. Products come to market in days instead of months.

I personally believe trademarks and copyrights on *all* software, artwork, literature, etc. should be limited to 5 years after the last date of sale/production.

In computers after 7 years it's obsolete anyway - and it encourages manufacturers to

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work with game console emulator companies and whatnot to ensure that the consumer always has access to those materials - either from them, or from somebody else who is willing to take the time to find a way to replicate the product and make it available for sale.

Do you realize that used Nintendo NES'es sell on eBay for MORE than they did new? I've personally bought three and been ripped off 3 times -- it's quite frustrating. So far i've spent about \$600 -- all because I wanted to show my daughter some games that simply aren't available in any other format. I respect copyrights, i'm not a pirate, i'd be happy to pay, just tell me where to send the money.

I believe very strongly the current copyright system encourages companies to sit on copyrights just "in case" they might want to do something in the future. I believe strongly that Copyright (as it was envisioned by our founding fathers) was supposed to be a "use it or lose it" sort of protection - only they didn't have an easily accessible global information network where people could check to see if something was available for sale - so instead they just set a reasonable expiration date, which was slowly increased, and increased, and .. you know the rest.

I agree that Disney should be able to protect Mickey Mouse (Trademark), and supporting cartoons (Steamboat Willy, etc.) -- but what about Underdog? and some of the great cartoons that came out in the 70 & 80's? What about Gem - the girl rockstar, and others?

The US Copyright Office could/should maintain a database of email addresses where a copyright holder for a particular number can be contacted. When asked the copyright holder must be able to supply a geographic location and/or website where the item is stocked and can be purchased. They can charge what they want, but they must sell at least 1 every 7 years. (There would need to be provisions from companies "skirting" the rules by charging outrageous fees).

Failure to do so - would cause the copyright countdown to start. Within 5 years, it becomes public domain. This affords the copyright holder *ample* time to remedy the situation and ensures that at least once every generation the materials that were available to the previous generation. Obviously the idea needs a bit of polish -- but something that insures that the products are commercially available, or they are deemed "orphaned" and become public domain is a great idea!

As a society how can we know where we're going, if we can't see where we've been?