

Rankine-Jeff-20050314103011

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

Date: 03/14/2005

From: Jeff Rankine

Comment:

Allowing orphaned works to enter the public domain is the only sensible way of having these works survive. Since the advent of the printing press we have never had copyrights of such length and with such a volume of works. In the past a quick entry into the public domain allowed works to survive. Now popular works are kept alive by having interested parties continue to sell them. This works fine for popular well known works, but for lesser works they are quickly lost to obscurity with no one interested in (or possibly able to) present them. By allowing orphaned works to slide into the public domain we maintain the balance of copyright between the public interest and artist incentives.