DARK HORSE BOOKS™
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July 21, 2015

U.S. Copyright Office

re: Orphan Works

To whom it may concern,

I am an artist, writer, and editor with a professional career of over forty years, and I am gravely concerned over the pending Orphan Works provisions in the proposed changes to the Copyright Act.

No one has the right to exploit an author's work without that artist's poermission, whether or not the author can be located or whether the author is even alive. The current standard is simple and straightforward: if you didn't create the work, it does not beloing to you, and you cannot explot it without permission and compensation. Orphan Works legislation is a solution for a non-existant problem. There should be no onus placed on authors to prove ownership of their work when someone else wishes to exploit it. This places unnecessary barriers and burdens on authors for the commercial benefit of those who did not create the work. That is an unconscionable shift in the status quo, not unlike changing presumption of innocence to presumption of guilt.

The standard should not be "If you didn't protect it, it's not yours." The standard should be "If you didn't *create* it, it's not yours." No one has the right to rob my house because I didn't lock my door, and neither should anyone have the right to exploit my work because I didn't formally register it.

The propsed Orphan Works provisions legalize theft and should not be implemented.

Sincerely,

Chris Warner
Senior Editor, Dark Horse Books