To Whom It May Concern:

I would like comment on the upcoming US Copyright Act in regards to visual works. I am an artist myself (online comics and character design) and have been for over fifteen years. I have made a little money from my work over the years, but, for the moment, I consider myself a hobbyist with the intent of making money on a more regular basis sometime in the future.

My concern with the new act is that it appears to take away the money and credit people make and earn for the hard work they put into their art. Creating art is not an instant process, nor is it particularly easy. It is more than just slapping an image on a piece of paper and saying ‘done!”.

My own art process involves researching various topics that the comic touches, writing a script, coming up with thumbnails, and then translating the thumbnail to a full page. After that comes shading in the scenery and characters, inking the words and boarders and generally cleaning the image. The process can take a few hours. These are hours I cannot get back. For someone to take not only my finished work, but the hard hours I put into that work without giving me some form of credit or payment is insulting and simply wrong. This would be as if a child wrote a book report only to have another child take it and claim all the credit and get the grade. It simply is not the way such things should be done.

From the moment you are finished creating something, it is yours and no one should have the right to take that away from you, and they certainly do not have to the right to make money off of your hard work while you get nothing. Nor should we be forced to give up our work, especially if there is no contract between parties saying as such.

Just because we artists do not physically work as hard as others does not mean our work has any less credibility. We plan just as hard, we go through trial and error to see what works and what does not, we put time and energy into getting to the finished project. We deserve the credit for what we do, rather it is a hobby we share online or a paid commission.

If you would like to use someone’s work in a way that will make money for you, you should ask for permission and do what you can to accommodate the one whose work you are asking to use. I believe this would be a far easier method then clogging the courts with case after case of infringement hearings. When it comes to reform, I believe the most important point is protecting those who have created the work, not make it easier for that work to be stolen.

Sincerely,

MJH