



## **Tell the U.S. Copyright Office by May 21 that you oppose "orphan works" laws that might allow others to use your work without your permission!**

It's time for NWU members and other writers to barrage the U.S. Copyright Office once again. It was very helpful when we did it in 2012, so we need to do it again. The idea of an "orphan works" law just won't die. An orphan works law or an expanded definition of "fair use" would let anyone who claims they can't identify or find whoever they think holds the rights to your copyrighted work have the right to use, copy, or even publish your work for free without your permission.

Here are a couple of scenarios about orphan works: You published an article or poem in a magazine long out of print. If a library has a copy in its collection, but can't find the magazine publisher (out of business?), they could call it an "orphan," scan it, and publish it on the Web. Say, your book has been out of print for years, so you self-publish your own e-book. If someone can't find the publisher of the original book, they could call it an "orphan" and issue their own edition without your knowledge or permission, which would compete with your e-book and deprive you of income. Or a story posted on your blog could be plagiarized on another Web site without your knowledge, permission, or payment.

So much for your ability to resell or republish your backlist work!

You can help NWU prevent a disastrous so-called "orphan works" law by submitting comments to the Copyright Office by **May 21**. Fill out the form at **[www.copyright.gov/orphan/comment-submission/](http://www.copyright.gov/orphan/comment-submission/)** and attach a file of your letter. The link to the NWU sample letter is provided at **[www.nwubook.org/orphan-reply-comments.doc](http://www.nwubook.org/orphan-reply-comments.doc)**. You can use our sample letter, but it will be much more effective if you tell your own story. Examples of how you are earning money from stories, articles, Web content, books, or excerpts whose original editions are listed in bibliographies and library catalogs as "out of print" will be extremely helpful.

Please spread the word to NWU members and other writers. This is our final opportunity to be heard before the Copyright Office makes its recommendations about "orphan works" to Congress.

Thank you for making NWU's advocacy much stronger.