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I have been a professional artist since 1989. Copyright law has never been an abstract legal issue for me as it is the basis on which my business and family rests. I graduated from art school in 1989 and eventually paid back my student loans with the help of my copyrights.

My rights of copy are not only important for me, they are important for my clients as well. When I design a logo for a small business, they expect to be able to use what they have purchased for as long as they deem necessary. Can you imagine a world where a small business hires an artist for logo design and pays for it only to be told at a later date they can no longer use the logo they purchased because a large online clearing house digitized the image and claims orphan rights on something someone else has paid for?

When I paint a picture and sell the original, the owner has only purchased the original art. If I were not allowed to keep my copyright on what I created, then I would need to significantly increase the price of the original work of art which would then become so ludicrously high it would overinflate the art market and would never sell.

My copyrights allow me to earn residual income which helps to provide my family with that extra loaf of bread or gallon of milk. Maybe even that emergency supply of diapers. Declaring all of my previous works as orphaned works would be devastating to me, my family, and my business. It would also affect my community, my tribe, and my state.

How would it feel to you if the paycheck you earn each week were taken away from you because Walmart claims the hours you put in the previous week were orphaned and part of public domain and they were going to take the hours away from you by taking all of your paycheck? How would it feel if they told you they have a legal right to take what you worked for because you were not spending enough in their store and they were doing this in order to appease their shareholders so the corporation could then meet their predicted quarterly growth?

Corporations are not people, they are businesses that have done exceedingly well with growth and competition. People start off as babies, grow into children, then teens and eventually adulthood and become elders and eventually die. GE was started by Thomas Edison. AT&T was started by Alexander Graham Bell. Both Edison and Bell lived out their lives and have travelled on to meet their maker yet their companies still live on as corporations ruled by greed and CEO bonuses.

Corporations need to understand that as long as they are still in business, then they are doing well and as long as they are doing well then they can continue to do business in an ethical and moral way without

having to steal from others and claiming rights for something they have never had a right to claim in the first place.

Society has laws for a reason. We all know it is wrong to steal. Before there were laws, anarchy was the law of the land. Survival of the fittest and right by might ruled over all. Society created laws to help protect the little guy because the biggest and strongest person is not always the right person. We as a society have the moral obligation to put a stop to the old adage of he who has the gold makes all the rules.

Do the right thing.