SUZY G ILLUSTRATION

July 21, 2015

United States Copyright officers:

My name is Suzy Gerhart, I am an illustrator, an Art Director, a business owner and an educator. I have a MFA in Illustration from the University of Hartford and a BFA in Illustration from Brigham Young University. I have been an illustrator for 22 years and adjunct faculty for 12 years in illustration. I have published a children's book app "Spot's Soup" and illustrated for magazines, corporations, institutions and I am currently working on licensing my work.

Often the images we create we label as "works". I suspect that the term is used because it is work, it is a culmination of the talents, training, education, problem solving and finally taking that synthesis and replicating it in some format. It takes a great amount of time to produce work, to come up with ideas and to bring together ideas from many sources and then to communicate that culmination into a visual form that others can understand. The work I produce represents what I have spent numerous hours in order to build up a business that can support me and my family with. It is my livelihood in all sense of the word, each work is a piece of me.

For years I have been teaching students that in the United States, the work they create from the minute the pencil hits the paper is theirs. While making sure that they formally copyright their work through the US Copyright office is preferred, the laws that protect the works we create are protected even from the initial idea. I teach this, because that is what was taught to me. My faith in this protection was based on the perhaps naive notion that our country is built on the idea that as americans we believe and support everyone's right to earn a living and support themselves and family by doing so. If the right for me to maintain all rights to my works are taken away and is NOT determined by me for whom, when and how much the use of my works are, then those rights as a US citizen seem to be invalid. I recognize that this bill does not mean I will lose all copyright on my work, but allowing even a little variance is opening up the floodgates.

With the constant digital attack to our personal finances and information with all security measures in place, it would seem that proposing a measure such as this would only invite others to continue or begin stripping us of our livelihood even more so. If my work is

compromised and allowed to be used regardless of my input, then I am being stripped of my intellectual rights as well as my craft. In this digital era, my work is what I have to provide for myself and others. The copyrights I hold on my work are the product I use to sell from one business to another and losing the right to use those as such would limit what I can do as a business severely.

Please reconsider what changing the copyright laws would do to so many of us who depend on these laws to protect us and provide us a means to be a productive contributor to our community and country.

I thank you for your time and consideration in reading this.

Suzy Gerhart
Owner
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