

05-CV-8136

Dear Sir,

I can see two things deeply wrong with the Book Right Registry.

Copyright protection has a finite duration. Beyond that period, its content belongs to the public, as common heritage of our respective civilizations. Since all books eventually lose their copyright protection, our common heritage should increase with time. If Google Books and the US publishing industry have the Book Rights Registry approved, Google will succeed in stealing part of our most valuable common heritage and turn it into private property. Google or its commercial successors can, in principle, rip us off, just like Microsoft did with its DOS and Windows OS standards.

Google is not known for the accuracy of its data bank. If it becomes the sole distributor of books and allows misinformation such as misspelling and wrong use of foreign scripts, it can and will perpetuate mistakes through its digitization. In spite of its billions in assets, Google does not have the intellectual wealth to perform the task of a standard setter.

Digitization is good. Google has the freedom to do whatever it wants. But it has no right to impose a new principle of law on us, especially one that goes against the spirit and letter of the principle of common heritage of mankind.

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