

CO Consultation CITB/CITB

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主旨: Don't make me illegal - Updating Hong Kong's Copyright Law Consultation
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Dear Government of Hong Kong,

The extension of copyright from the international (Berne Convention) life plus 50 years to the American life plus 70 years would create great trouble for me. It would take work that I have already done and make it illegal. Please don't retroactively make me a criminal.

My newspaper column has appeared in Ming Pao for several years now. During the summer, I used a story whose copyright expired years ago. I provided an abridged version of *The Little House in the Big Woods*, by Laura Ingalls Wilder. Each year I have provided a different chapter. I have edited and abridged the original public domain story (among many others) myself and used it in my classes. My class version is now being provided to many more students in the form of this summer reading project.

Having copyright expire sometime allows the entire society to become richer for it. If every borrowing from William Shakespeare required royalty payments, the English language and international culture would be much poorer. Having the copyright on my own articles expire 50 years after my death is far more protection than I reasonably need. Having it continue for 70 years after I pass away is ridiculous.

Yours,

John Larrysson