

April 23 Is World Copyright Day

By **Alexander Baron** - Apr 23, 2015



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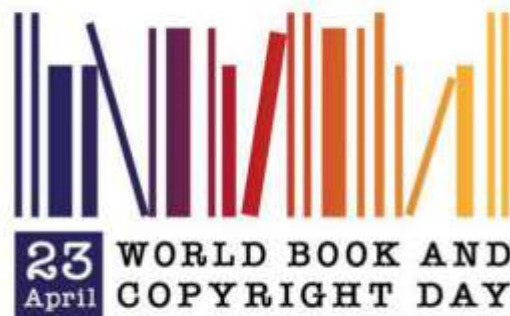
The **International Federation of Journalists** has designated April 23 **World Copyright Day**, and has called for a Twitterstorm in support of it. The big question is will anybody bother turning up?

As might be suspected, their main grievance is people – especially publishers – *stealing* their work and making money off it elsewhere. Not only that, they want contracts, why should any journalist work without a contract?

This is a typical victim narrative, and one with which anybody who writes for a living will empathise, but what is the IFJ not telling you?

The reality is that copyright is dead although only the very few will admit it. As soon as a book, a film, an article, a limerick...finds its way into cyberspace there is no practical way of curbing its distribution. In the real world we have a war on drugs that has led to the

criminalisation of countless millions of otherwise harmless men and women worldwide because the authorities refuse to face up to the real problem: prohibition.



World Book and Copyright Day (Unesco)

The analogy is not perfect, but the distribution of unauthorised substances in the virtual world – ie other people’s work – raises the same issues, namely how can it be prevented without Draconian measures that destroy the freedoms of us all? Obviously it cannot.

The other thing the IFJ is not telling you is that its members may whine and wail about people stealing their copyright but they have no compunction about doing the same thing themselves. You think not? Do you use YouTube? Do you check the copyright of every clip you watch there or on other video sites? Do you check the copyright of every photograph you see, of every article you read, to ensure that it has been reproduced with permission? How can you, and what would you do if it had not?

There is a real solution to the problem of copyright, that is to recognise it for what it is: a) insoluble and b) a creation of real wealth whose distribution warrants a tangible reward. And here is **the solution** to both those problems, replacing the current banking system with the Internet. Now it is in your hands.