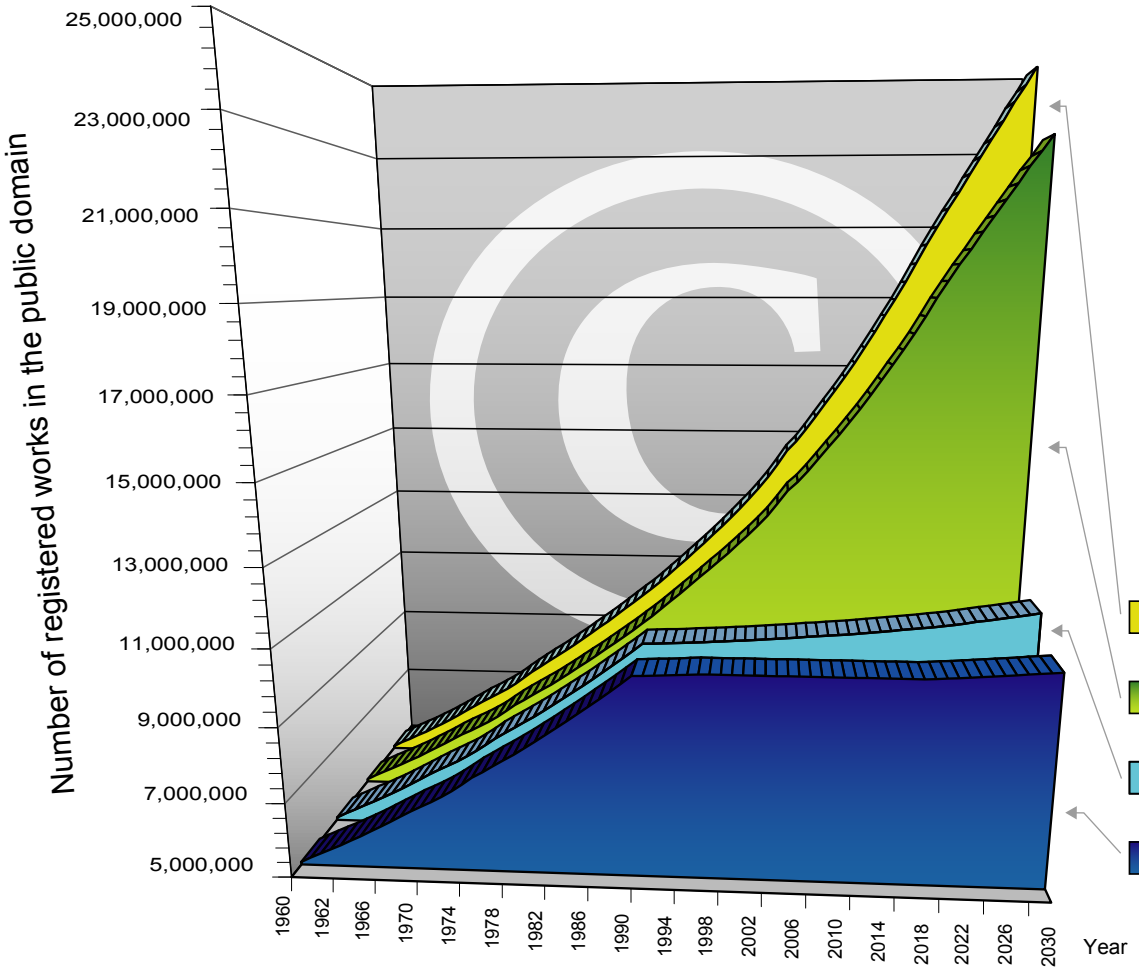
Copyright Reform: the Stagnation of the Public Domain



Crucial dates in the recent history of copyright law:

1963 - 1978
Copyright terms extended from 28 year, renewable for an additional 28 years, to 28 years renewable for an additional 47 years (75 years total)

1976
All new works given a single copyright term lasting either: 1) the life of the author plus 50 years, or 2) 75 years if owned by corporations

1992
Copyright renewal retroactively eliminated for all works created after 1963

1998
Copyright Term Extension Act (Sonny Bono Act) extends all copyright terms by 20 years

Works that would be in the public domain if copyright laws of 1923 (earliest year Sonny Bono Act covers) were still in effect

Works that would be in the public domain if copyright laws of 1978 and 1998 had retained renewal requirement

Works that would be in the public domain if *Eldred vs. Ashcroft* challenge to Sonny Bono Act of 1998 had been successful

Works that are in the public domain under current legislation

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