

Name: Robert Worne

Class of works: I am writing in support of Class #2 (DVD Region Coding):  
Audiovisual works stored on Digital Versatile Disks ("DVDs") that are not  
available in Region 1 DVD format and access to which is prevented by  
technological measures.

Summary:

Disc name: Fukuro no shiro (1999) AKA:Owl's Castle Catalog No: PCBG-114 DVD  
Release 5/17/2000 Theatrically released in winter of 1999, the film became a  
huge hit in Japan. It's a ninja action drama based on the Naoki Award winning  
novel.

Ichigensan (1999) AKA: The First-timers Catalog No: PIBD-1001 DVD Release  
7/26/2000 The 1999 Japanese film on DVD. A romantic drama about 'I' - a  
Swiss student in Japan and a blind Japanese woman. Cast: Edward Atterton,  
Honami Suzuki, Yoshiko Tanaka, et al. Special features: Interviews with the  
main actors (5 mins.), theatrical trailer(s). Written, directed, and edited by  
Isao Morimoto.

Tokyo biyori (1997) Catalog No: KIBF-42 DVD Release 4/19/2000 A sentimental  
love story, starring Miho Nakayama and Naoto Takenaka. It's become an  
exceptional long-run hit. 'Tokyo Biyori' is the 3rd movie directed by Naoto  
Takenaka. Ryuichi Sakamoto arranged the scores, conducted the orchestra,  
played the piano, and arranged the theme song. Bonus features: Trailers and TV  
spots.(Planned) Vista.  
Dolby digital.

Fukuro no shiro (1999) AKA Owl's Castle; Ichigensan (1999) AKA The First-  
timers; and Tokyo biyori (1997) are three examples of films not available on  
videotape or DVD in the US. They are not anime or porn, but art-house foreign  
films. The first two might have had some exposure in "art theaters" in the US,  
but none was released on video or DVD in the US.

There is no way to watch these films at all legally in the US without  
defeating region encoding or buying duplicate hardware overseas and importing  
it. User restrictions on RPC-2 DVD players in computers allow the user to  
change regions up to 4 times before permanently locking to a region on the 4th  
change. If the DVD player locks to a region that is little used, such as  
region 2 (I have 10 Region-2 DVDs and well over 350 Region-1 DVDs) it makes  
that player useless for watching US-produced DVDs. The only legal recourse is  
to purchase another player, since defeating the RPC-2 by chang! ing it into  
RPC-1 via firmware "upgrade" might be construed as "bypassing" the copyright  
controls."

Even if it (firmware update) were performed, the operating system (Windows  
2000, OS X, etc.) has another layer of protection that prevents changing of  
regions multiple times with the same restrictions mentioned above. This  
bizarre restriction disallows use of culturally valuable material that is  
unavailable in the US. Everyone loses in this case: the consumer who buys a  
near-useless disc, or who has to purchase duplicate equipment and the  
publisher (or copyright holder), who loses a potential sale.