

ARTS & LETTERS

because of the industry's insistence on perpetual ownership. For example, both negative and prints of the 1933 version of "*Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (with an Oscar performance by the late Frederic March) were destroyed when a later version was made. Fortunately for film critics, students, and movie buffs, private collectors had already obtained several (illegal) prints.

Collectors, contend industry spokesmen, rent prints, copy them, and return the originals, showing the copies for profit. Ziniewicz argues that Hollywood's policy is monopolistic; copyright laws should not only protect the interest of the owner but also guarantee the future right of the public to benefit from the film industry's artistic endeavors.

*A Boost
for Artists?*

"Legislating Royalties for Artists" by Sylvia Hochfield, in *Art News* (Dec. 1976), P.O. Box 969, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11735.

California, the first state to mandate royalties for artists, is discovering that this gracious gesture is not to everyone's taste. According to Hochfield, contributing editor of *Art News*, many of the intended beneficiaries—painters and sculptors—now have serious reservations about the law; dealers and collectors are united against it.

The law, which went into effect in January 1977, requires that a painter or sculptor receive 5 percent of the purchase price whenever his work is sold at a profit (for more than \$1,000) either by a resident of California or in the state itself. Backing the law's passage last year in the legislature in Sacramento was a coalition of young artists, who looked on the law as a potential subsidy.

Critics of the law, however, contend that it will drive art buyers to out-of-state markets; that it tends to give the greatest benefits to established artists; and that it lacks enforcement provisions. The law's principal benefit, Hochfield suggests, lies in its recognition of the plight of most California artists, who are "desperately in need of some sort of economic assistance."

*Webster's Words
As Ideology*

"Words As Social Control: Noah Webster and the Creation of the *American Dictionary*" by Richard M. Rollins, in *American Quarterly* (Fall 1976), American Studies Association, 4025 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19174.

"It is obvious to my mind, that popular errors proceeding from a misunderstanding of words are among the efficient causes of our political disorders," wrote Noah Webster in 1839. According to Rollins, an Ohio State history professor, the author of the *American Dictionary of the English Language* was a disillusioned revolutionary who