

The Librarian's Copyright Companion, 2nd Edition, by James S. Heller, Paul Hellyer, & Benjamin J. Keele

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The Librarian's Copyright Companion (2nd ed.)

James S. Heller, Paul Hellyer, Benjamin J. Keele

2012 | William S. Hein & Co., Inc. | 324 pages, softcover | ISBN: 978-0837738727 | U.S. \$49.00

If anyone working in a library needs a useful guide on the complex world of U.S. copyright law, this updated edition of *The Librarian's Copyright Companion* is an excellent work to have. Describing owners' rights under copyright and the many exceptions to the rules can sometimes feel meaningless, at best. At worst, it can be overwhelming. These authors do a fine job of contextualizing the many rules and exceptions for library operations. The chapters are comprehensive yet easy to understand and expertly use examples to illustrate complicated concepts. The list of online resources, as well as the appendices, make the book a worthwhile purchase.

Heller, et al., begin by defining what copyright is, describing what works are eligible for copyright protection, and explaining how long copyright protection lasts (including discussing the public domain). The issue of copyfraud—illegitimate assertion of copyrights—is also covered.

Although the primary focus is on U.S. law, the authors do address international copyright information such as the Berne Convention and the Universal Copyright Convention. Within the international context, the book also touches on moral rights and how these differ in U.S. copyright law compared to some European copyright laws, as well as explaining how the U.S. Visual Artists Rights Act approximates the moral and integrity rights found in other countries.

The authors' discussion of liability for copyright infringement and the difference between statutory and actual damages is very useful, as is the related discussion about the importance of creating and enforcing copyright policies.

The chapter on fair use gives an excellent, brief history that explains the move from being solely defined by the judiciary for most of the 19th and 20th centuries to becoming part of the law in 1976. The authors also provide good definitions of the four factors and how they have been applied in different cases. I like the bottom-line reminder that fair use balances authors' rights with the rights of users.

Beyond fair use, many of the other copyright exceptions are covered in detail, including those for libraries and archives and teachers. In particular, Chapter 8 helps the reader think through the complicated copyright questions surrounding videos and DVDs. The authors give exceptional guidelines on what constitutes a public performance within a library and also help reinforce the fact that there is not yet an industry-wide solution to streaming rights and permissions.

Finally, don't miss the new chapter on library publishing, which discusses the difference between library as publisher and library as re-publisher. Nuanced treatments of copyright issues need to be considered depending on which activity the library engages in and this section provides practical guidance for readers.

Overall, the second edition of *The Librarian's Copyright Companion* is a great addition to the personal collection of anyone working in libraries as well as to any general library collection.

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