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Books are Us

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Questions & Answers — Copyright Column

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QUESTION: A faculty member has requested seven articles from volume 5, number 1 of a journal published in 2000 which constitutes the entire issue. The library has a current subscription to the journal, but the subscription does not begin until number 2. The library has tried to purchase a replacement issue, but it is not available. May the library request the issue from another library and reproduce it or is the library restricted to one article from the issue as permitted under the Interlibrary Loan Guidelines? Could the library request all seven articles from different lenders and pay royalties on two articles that would exceed the suggestion of five?

ANSWER: Since the library never had volume 5, number 1 in its collection, this is not a replacement issue. Therefore, section 108(c) does not apply and the library may charge the entire issue and add it to its collection.

The ILL Guidelines permit a library to request five items from the journal title during a calendar year, but section 108(d) still applies to the requests from an individual user. It states that a library may reproduce and distribute to a user one article from a journal issue and it also applies to those reproductions requested through ILL. It does not matter whether all five articles under the Guidelines are requested from a single lender or from five separate ones; royalties would be due.

The ILL Guidelines state that the library does not count in its suggestion of five any item for which the requesting entity has “in force or shall have entered an order for a subscription to a periodical.” There is some debate over whether this covers issues prior to initiation of the subscription, but a strong argument can be made that it does. If the current subscription means that any requests for the title are treated as if the library has always owned it, then all seven articles could be requested through ILL for the user.

QUESTION: A music professor owns copies of music performances. He wants to take a variety of cuts from these recordings and put them on CD and give three copies to the library for reserves. Is it permissible for the library to put such items on reserve? If so, does the faculty member have to change the music every semester? Does it matter that he, instead of the library, owns the copies of the original recordings?

ANSWER: The Guidelines on the Education Uses of Music permit music faculty to make such compilations of portions of recorded music for the purpose of aural exercise, but only a single copy. The Guidelines do not require that the cuts be changed every semester. Moreover, it does not matter whether the recordings are owned by the faculty member rather than the library. The compilation made by the faculty member may be retained by him or by the library for subsequent use.

QUESTION: In citing articles from a database, is it necessary to include the name of the database distributor such as EBSCO?

ANSWER: Although this is not really a copyright question, it bears some reflection. Different subject disciplines rely on various style manuals for citation formats. Thus, there is no across the board answer to the question. One must consult the appropriate style manual for the relevant discipline in which the citation is to be used.

QUESTION: If a nurse develops a policy or PowerPoint program for use in the hospital, who owns the copyright, the nurse or the hospital?

ANSWER: It depends on whether what she produces was done within the course of her employment at the hospital. If it is part of her jobs to write policies or develop education or training programs, then it is a work-for-hire. Section 201(b) of the Copyright Act states that if the work is a work-for-hire, the employer is the author and therefore the hospital owns the copyright. It is possible, however, for the hospital to agree beforehand for the nurse to own the copyright. Also, if the work is not produced within the scope of her employment or is done on her own time, she owns the copyright.

QUESTION: What is a public library’s affirmative obligation when a patron charges out a movie on videocassette or DVD and tells the circulation librarian of his intention to use it for a public performance?

ANSWER: Actually, the library has no obligation. Section 108 applies to reproduction and distribution of copyrighted works, and there is an obligation found in subsections (d)(e) not to reproduce articles, chapters, etc., for a patron if the library has notice that the patron is planning to use it for other than fair use purposes. On the other hand, librarians are not required to ask about the use the patron plans to make of the material.

The library may circulate a motion picture on videocassette or DVD under the first sale doctrine found in Section 109(a) of the Act. There is no affirmative duty to refrain from checking out the work to the user even if there is notice that he plans to use it for commercial purposes. Many libraries do label their videos to indicate whether the library has the public performance rights for the video or not. If the patron publicly performs the motion picture without a license, he is liable but not the library.

QUESTION: If a patron asks to scan an entire collection of postcards or photographs for personal use should the library permit her to do so?

ANSWER: What a patron can do for herself is very different from what a library can do for the user. It may well be fair use for the patron to make personal copies of the works, even in digital format while it would be infringing if the library made the copies. The library may want to alert the patron to the fact that there could be copyright problems should she put the works online or use them in a publication, but it is not required to do so.

Books Are Us

by Anne K. Robichaux (Professor Emerita, Medical University of South Carolina) <awk7721@sc-online.net>

Column Editor’s Note: This column covers fictitious accounts of people in our industry—librarians, publishers, vendors, booksellers, etc.—people like us. All contributions, comments, suggestions are welcomed. — AR

In the December 10, 2004 edition of Entertainment Weekly under the header, “Check ‘Em Out! These librarians don’t play to type,” a half-page is devoted to librarians as portrayed in six films and/or TV series. The article notes that Noah Wyle, as the libraries’ librarian/adventurer in the recent TNT film “The Librarian: Quest for the Spear,” adds dimension to the profession in a welcome departure from librarians who are often portrayed as stuffy geeks. Other qualities mentioned: Librarians are Cool! (Party Girl, 1995); Librarians are Classy! (Desk Set, 1957); Librarians Save! (See Shawshank Redemption, 1994); Librarians Kick Ass! (Buffy the Vampire Slayer); and Librarians Are Hot! (Major League, 1989).

But we knew that all along, right? Incidentally, Jan LaBeausse mentioned several of these in her excellent presentations at the 2004 Charleston Conference concerning the librarian’s image as depicted by Hollywood.

I don’t know how many of you saw the continued on page 75
TNT film, but I heard reactions that varied from how silly to how entertaining. Some librarians loved it; others hated it. The film certainly portrayed a variety of "types" including the more stereotypically bespectacled, stern, prim, humorless type (Jane Curtain) in charge of hiring "THE Librarian." Dialogue: "What makes YOU think YOU could be the librarian?" she queried Flynn, the Noah Wyle character. "I’ve read a lot," he replied. She: "Don’t do funny. I don’t do funny."

Both Flynn and the librarian assigned to watch over him certainly do not talk to type. Flynn reminds me of Indiana Jones as portrayed by Harrison Ford. Nicole Noone, the librarian character assigned to watch over him is a sexy, arrogant, machete-wielding vixen who cracks at one point "You brains, me brawn." Other memorable lines: "The Librarian is incredible!" "Maybe I wasn’t as smart as I thought I was." "No one can read this, except a real Librarian!" "Get your own geek!" "Being a librarian is a pretty cool job!" And my personal favorite, spoken by Flynn’s mother (played by Olympia Dukakis) to a group of women sending admiring glances toward Flynn: "He’s only a librarian now, but he’s capable of so much more!"

In the Dodekals Books Holidays - 2004 catalog, my attention was drawn to a title, Sixpence House: Lost in a Town of Books, by Paul Collins (Bloomsbury USA, April 2003, ISBN: 1-582-34284-9). Paul Collins and his family abandoned San Francisco to move to the Welsh countryside, specifically to the cobblestone village of Hay-on-Wye, the "town of Books" that boasts 1,500 inhabitants — and 40 bookstores. Anti-quarian bookstores, to be exact. Hay’s newest residents move into a 16th century apartment over a bookstore, naturally, and proceed to meet the village’s large population of misfits and bibliomanics. In his job as clerk in the world’s largest and most chaotic used-book warren, Collins delights in shifting dusty stacks of books around, looking for such ancient gems as Robinson Crusoe in Words of One Syllable and I Was Hitler’s Maid. As he struggles with the finishing touches on his own first book...Collins applies to be a peer in the House of Lords and attempts to buy sixpence House, a tumble-down pub for sale in the town’s center.

There is further information at Amazon.com about Collins’ work. Publishers Weekly adds that Collins can be droll and witty in his writing, including funny trivia in his book, e.g., how many book lovers know that the same substance used to thicken fast food milk shakes is an essential ingredient in paper resizing? Keir Graff, Booklist (ALA), calls Collins’ travelogue/memoir a book lover’s delight. The narrative is structured around his house-buying attempts and the impending publication of his first book, but the meat of the work lies in his meandering asides and bookstore discoveries.

The December 2, 2004 edition of USA Today printed a section for holiday book recommendations and I want to share what Bob Minzesheimer wrote about a children’s book, Wild About Books, by Judy Sierra (Knopf, August, 2004, ISBN: 0-375-82538-X). This is "a literary adventure told in verse, triggered by the Springfield librarian, Molly McGrew who ‘by mistake drove her bookmobile into the zoo.’ Before long, the entire menagerie, from the moose to the skunks, is learning to read. The pandas demand more books in Chinese. Miss McGrew supplies waterproof books for the otter, who never goes swimming without Harry Potter. Sierra’s tale is a witty introduction to the joys of reading and libraries. It’s enhanced by the illustrations of Marc Brown, best known as the creator of Arthur, the studious, bespectacled aardvark. Quoting from the book jacket of Wild About Books, found on Sierra’s Website (http://www.judy.sierra.net): "In this rollicking rhymed story, Molly McGrew introduces birds and beasts to this new something called reading, finding the perfect book for each animal - tall books for giraffes, small books for crickets, joke books for hyenas. . . . In no time, Molly has them ‘forsaking their niches, their nests, and their nooks,’ going ‘wild, simply wild about wonderful books.’ No mention that Molly is a librarian here, but I think at least one of our grandchildren will be receiving this book for an upcoming birthday!"