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Book Review

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BOOK REVIEW

Intellectual Property and Information Rights for Librarians

By John Schlipp

2019 | ABC-CLIO | 317 pages, softcover | ISBN-13: 978-1-44087-070-5 | \$65 print

John Schlipp, an intellectual property librarian and professor of library science, would like librarians to know more about intellectual property. Copyright and fair use get lots of attention in the professional literature, but he sees a need for librarians to have a broader conceptual and practical knowledge of all types of intellectual property so that they can better support, serve, and educate library users. His book, *Intellectual Property and Information Rights for Librarians*, has clearly stated objectives: to inform readers about the connection between intellectual property, information rights, and information literacy; to educate and provide solutions to intellectual property issues that arise in different types of libraries; and to advocate for continued education on these topics for both librarians and library users. The bulk of the book focuses on the second goal; the other two goals are not explored in detail. The strength of the book lies in its analysis of intellectual property issues in libraries and practical tools for librarians. *Intellectual Property and Information Rights for Librarians* is not an exhaustive discussion of intellectual property. Rather, it describes library practices that are impacted by intellectual property law (such as interlibrary loan, 3D printing, database subscriptions) and library users' needs that may require interpretation of intellectual property law, like patent searching, small business research, and high school garage bands.

The first section of the book, "General Information," summarizes different types of intellectual property: copyright and fair use, trademarks, patents, and trade secrets. These summaries trace the history of those types from foundations in the U.S. Constitution or a Congressional Act through current case law. Whenever possible, Schlipp illustrates the histories with examples from libraries. The legal history of copyright and fair use is illustrated by HathiTrust, Google Books, and interlibrary loan, to name a few. In the case of patents and patent searching, Schlipp describes situations librarians might encounter: cosplay and fan culture events at libraries, entrepreneurial research, academic or industry inventors'



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patent research, for example. Together, these chapters create a conceptual understanding of intellectual property as well as describe a timeline of legal developments.

The second section, “Specific Information: Information Access and Delivery,” builds on the conceptual understanding developed in the first section by discussing specific intellectual property issues that occur in four different types of libraries: academic, public, school, and special. The chapter on academic libraries has the most specific, practical information, explaining how the TEACH Act, Section 108 of the U.S. Copyright Law, the CONTU Rule of 5, and other laws and legal opinions affect practices like ILL, database subscription, distance education, patents, and scholarship. The other chapters do not address as many specific issues. Aside from a discussion of makerspaces and local business research, the chapter on public libraries mainly discusses advocacy for open access to information and freedom of speech and the press. Like academic libraries, public libraries encounter issues related to copyright and fair use for subscription databases—ebook, audiobook, genealogical information, and more. While it might seem repetitive given the time devoted to database subscriptions for academic libraries, it would be helpful to have these issues spelled out for public librarians, particularly since the layout of this section, with chapters divided by type of library, guides readers to single chapters. Despite this minor omission, librarians in public, school, or special libraries will find useful discussions of intellectual property issues unique to them, including information access, high school artistic performances, fair use at a for-profit institution, and copyright for religious institutions.

The intellectual property issues discussed in the second section are mainly issues of copyright and fair use, and as a result copyright and fair use take up a large part of this book despite Schlipp’s inclusion of specific chapters on other types of intellectual property. Nevertheless, throughout the book Schlipp demonstrates that all types of libraries—academic, school, public, and special—encounter a range of intellectual property and information rights issues on a regular basis. *Intellectual Property and Information Rights for Librarians* contains both conceptual and practical knowledge of those issues and provides librarians with a good foundation for daily library practice.

BIOGRAPHY

Kathy A. Watts is Access Services Librarian and Assistant Professor at Whitworth University in Spokane, Washington. She oversees scholarly communication, digital scholarship, and digital special collections, and provides instruction on intellectual property issues related to the digital scholarship of students and faculty.