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Copyright Literacy and the Role of Librarians as Educators and Advocates: an International Symposium

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Copyright Literacy and the Role of Librarians as Educators and Advocates: an International Symposium

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Abstract

The paper is inspired by the opening panel of the International Federation of Library Associations' (IFLA) World Library and Information Congress off-site meeting held in Poland in August 2017 on models for copyright education. The panel was made up of researchers from the United Kingdom, Sweden, Turkey, Romania, and Norway and reflected on findings from a multinational study on levels of copyright literacy of librarians and those in the cultural heritage sector (Todorova et al., 2017). The members of the panel considered the rationale for copyright education, why it might be viewed as part of wider information literacy initiatives, and the specific challenges and opportunities that it presents. The paper recognizes the value in national library associations and international organizations such as IFLA and Electronic Information for Libraries (EIFL) taking a lead in promoting copyright education initiatives to strengthen their advocacy role. The paper also argues for a more critical and universal approach to copyright education so that this work is extended beyond the library sector.

Keywords: Copyright literacy, education, advocacy, copyright education

Copyright Literacy and the Role of Librarians as Educators and Advocates: An International Symposium

This paper was inspired by the opening panel discussion at the International Federation of Library Associations' (IFLA) World Library and Information Congress (WLIC) off-site meeting entitled "Models for Copyright Education in Information Literacy Programs," held in Wroclaw, Poland, in August 2017.¹ The panel was led by members of the international copyright literacy research team from the United Kingdom, Sweden, Turkey, Romania, and Norway. They reflected on the findings from a multinational survey of levels of copyright literacy of librarians and other professionals in the cultural heritage sector that was carried out from 2012–2016. The speakers discussed the specific challenges and opportunities for copyright education in their respective countries as well as subsequent developments since they had undertaken the survey. The survey findings have been published elsewhere (Todorova et al., 2017); therefore this paper focuses on the underlying rationale for copyright education, why it might be viewed as part of wider information literacy initiatives by and for librarians and information professionals, and the specific challenges and opportunities that it presents. The paper highlights why national library associations and international organizations such as IFLA and Electronic Information for Libraries (EIFL) should be encouraged to take a leading role to coordinate copyright education and to strengthen their advocacy role. The paper also argues for both a critical and a universal approach to copyright education.

Three members of the panel wrote this paper to share their experiences and reflect on some of the key questions that were raised during the panel. It explores developments in copyright education in a number of countries, but focuses specifically on two countries (the United Kingdom and Sweden) in depth. The findings from the multinational research into copyright literacy provided an opportunity to consider the need for copyright education more broadly and in an international context. The findings also provided a benchmark from which developments and improvements in copyright literacy can be measured. An important aspect of the survey findings was the need to cover copyright as part of information professionals' continuing professional development (CPD). Consequently, one of the valuable outcomes of undertaking the survey has been to establish an international "community of practice" (Lave & Wenger, 1991) that can continue to carry out research as well as share tacit knowledge and experience. Through this ongoing collaboration the community highlights good practice and suggests appropriate models for copyright education around the world. They can also emphasize how copyright education plays a vital role

¹ See <https://uwm.edu/informationstudies/research/partnerships/models-for-copyright-education/> for the session's webpage.

in complementing the advocacy work of international organizations. However, the authors recognize that sustaining and developing an international community of practice is a challenge, one where working in collaboration with the international organizations might offer many advantages.

Setting the Scene: The Copyright Literacy Survey

The copyright literacy survey was first launched in Bulgaria in 2012. The researchers identified the growing need for librarians and those working in the cultural heritage sector to have a good understanding of a wide range of copyright matters. This knowledge ensures that library services such as interlending, document supply, and digitization are legally compliant. However, copyright is an increasingly important part of the education, advice, and support that libraries provide for their users to enable them to effectively use copyright-protected material.

After its launch in 2012 the multinational survey was extended to a further 13 countries, and a high-level comparison of the findings was published (Todorova et al., 2017). In summary, the results suggest that across all the countries the current level of copyright knowledge among librarians is far from satisfactory and that additional efforts to embed copyright education are needed in both formal library and information science (LIS) qualifications and CPD. There were some key differences across countries, with the highest levels of knowledge about copyright from countries with institutional copyright policies and training programs (such as the United Kingdom, United States, France, Finland, and Norway). Overwhelmingly, those who completed the survey (92.9%, $n = 1,790$) believed that knowledge of a wide range of issues associated with copyright, including how to teach others, should be included in the curriculum for LIS students in preparation for their careers. The international team is currently conducting a copyright literacy survey of LIS students to understand how prepared they feel to deal with copyright issues, and further data will be available later in 2019.

Definition of Copyright Literacy and the Role of Librarians as Copyright Educators

The term *copyright literacy* was first used in 2012 by Professor Tania Todorova, who devised the Bulgarian study (Todorova et al., 2014). She likened the term to *information literacy*, broadly defining it as “knowledge about copyright.” Since this date, and as the survey spread to other countries, researchers have attempted to provide a more nuanced definition of the term—most notably in the United Kingdom. In writing about the survey and the broader context of copyright education, Secker and Morrison (2016, p. 211) defined it as “acquiring and demonstrating the

appropriate knowledge, skills and behaviours to enable the ethical creation and use of copyright material.”

They recognized that copyright literacy was not simply about accumulating knowledge about copyright but also included practicing associated skills and behaviors to enable that material to be used effectively. They also recognized that librarians and copyright specialists play a key role as educators, facilitators, and exemplars to others. In the phenomenographic study of UK librarians’ experience of copyright, Morrison and Secker (2017) recognized the “dual nature” of copyright literacy, where librarians develop their own understanding of copyright as well as teaching and supporting others. Librarians are in many ways uniquely placed to take on this role, as they understand how digital content is acquired and how access is granted through license agreements. In some instances they are legally obliged to educate users about the terms of license agreements. For example, many librarians in the United Kingdom have responsibility for the management of licensing agreements for collective management organizations (CMOs) such as the Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA). A systemic failure to educate users about the terms of the CLA Higher Education Licence (Copyright Licensing Agency, 2016) could be seen as a breach of contract. Therefore, it is unsurprising that the concept of copyright literacy is gaining considerable traction, and librarians can provide considerable insights. This can be seen in IFLA’s statement on the need for copyright education and copyright literacy issued a year after the panel discussion took place (IFLA, 2018).

During the panel discussion, four broad reasons why librarians need to take on a role as copyright educators were suggested, including the following:

- Developments in technology mean that copying or “sharing” information provided by libraries is extremely easy. However, access to much digital content is regulated by license contracts that many library users may be unaware of.
- Recent international copyright reforms around the world have reflected both the creative industries’ attempts to combat piracy and illegal copying as well as libraries’ and educational institutions’ efforts to ensure appropriate limitations and exceptions to copyright law are in place. This balance between public and private interests as reflected in the law is constantly shifting and needs to be considered in context when people encounter copyright issues.
- Just as with other forms of information, copyright advice and commentary reflects the interests and views of the people or organizations that created it. In addition, a great deal of online copyright information reflects US law,² so will not be directly relevant to many people and organizations throughout the rest of the world. Librarians are therefore key partners in helping people find trusted sources of information on copyright law.

² At least in the English-speaking world.

- The evolving professional identity of librarians, leading to new roles providing support for researchers and delivering teaching in all aspects of information literacy, means that they are no longer acting merely as custodians or gatekeepers of library collections.

These points were subsequently recognized in the IFLA statement, which called on governments, national library associations, library educators, and individual librarians to recognize their role in promoting copyright literacy. IFLA warned that without copyright literacy the “lack of knowledge may result in mis-application of the law, and lead either to infringement, or overly restrictive limits on what users can do” (IFLA, 2018).

Copyright Literacy: Experiences from Norway, Turkey, and Romania

Colleagues from Turkey, Norway, and Romania contributed to the panel discussion, reflecting on developments in their respective countries since the copyright literacy survey had been undertaken. These efforts are briefly considered because they highlight some of the ways specific countries sought to address the concern about levels of copyright knowledge in the profession. For example, in Turkey the survey led to efforts being made to embed copyright literacy into the curricula of LIS students, to prepare the future generation of professionals to deal with copyright issues.

Meanwhile, in Romania a number of projects are underway to increase the copyright knowledge and awareness of librarians and those in the cultural heritage sector. An online platform called Kosson (www.kosson.ro/) has been established to aggregate knowledge on open licenses for memory institutions. There have also been debates in the Romanian parliament about European copyright reforms and discussions about the impact of open licenses in the Ministry of Education.

Finally, the survey found Norwegian librarians to be moderately familiar with national copyright laws but less familiar with international copyright laws. They were also less familiar with licensing organizations such as Kopinor and wanted to develop their relationships with these organizations. During the panel, ongoing efforts to work with the national library association and with LIS educators to address these issues were reported.

Copyright Literacy: Experiences from the United Kingdom

Since 2014 when the copyright literacy survey was undertaken in the United Kingdom (Morrison & Secker, 2015), the value of and need for copyright literacy has increasingly been recognized by the library profession.

In the United Kingdom, Morrison and Secker have been leading efforts to foster and support a community of interested professionals through a range of initiatives. They engaged with the professional body the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) to explore the potential gaps in professional development with regards to copyright, including contacting providers of LIS programs. This exercise identified that while copyright was covered in a number of LIS courses and featured as part of CPD events, it was not approached consistently. This aligned with the findings of the survey, which identified the importance of learning about copyright in the context of real-world challenges. This undertaking also suggested that something more substantive than a one-day training course but less intensive than a formal legal qualification such as a postgraduate diploma in copyright law would meet the sector's development needs. Work is underway to develop a curriculum and delivery model, which is described later in this paper.

Morrison and Secker have also created a dedicated website and blog (copyrightliteracy.org) and a Twitter account (@UKCopyrightLit) with a clear identity and brand. These channels both have significant followings and regularly post news items and opinion pieces from the blog team and their guests on issues related to copyright education. The blog also features a number of educational resources created by the UK copyright literacy team, including games such as Copyright the Card Game and The Publishing Trap, both of which were demonstrated at the IFLA conference in 2017. In addition, the website acts as a focus for disseminating research from the international copyright literacy community of practice, and the team hosted the first international copyright education event, called Icepops (International Copyright Literacy Event with Playful Opportunities for Practitioners and Scholars), in April 2018.

Ongoing research forms an important part of Morrison and Secker's strategy to promote copyright literacy in the United Kingdom, allowing further evidence to be gathered about the library profession's needs and the needs of library users. For example, in December 2017 they published a summary report following a survey of copyright specialists in UK libraries (Hatch, Morrison, & Secker, 2017) and in 2018 Morrison completed a masters dissertation on perceptions of educational copyright exceptions in UK universities (Morrison, 2018b). Both studies sought to understand more about what copyright specialists (who, for the most part, work in libraries) do, where they sit in their organization, and what training and support they provide and might need themselves. The team continues to speak at a wide range of conferences and training events and both individuals play key roles on a national higher education

copyright committee³ that works to negotiate licenses for the sector, primarily through CMOs.

Copyright Literacy: Experiences from Sweden

Although Sweden did not take part in the international copyright literacy survey, the author's perception is that copyright knowledge and copyright confidence among academic librarians in Sweden is generally low. This is largely because Swedish academic libraries have not historically dealt with issues related to the use and licensing of printed or digital texts. Without any previous experience of handling copyright issues in either print or digital format, it is difficult for librarians to address the challenges associated with copyright education.

There is a growing culture of sharing and openness in the higher education sector. This is encouraged by Swedish universities, many of which have open access policies, and by research funders such as the Swedish Research Council. However, copyright issues can become complicated when researchers are about to publish their research and have queries about publishing contracts and agreements. Librarians are in a key position to help their users navigate the academic system and culture (Nilsson, 2016). Swedish research librarians are concerned about their role, the complexity of copyright issues, and the relationship they have with the university's legal team. Consequently, in many universities it is unclear if librarians are responsible for answering copyright questions, and many librarians try to avoid answering these type of queries.

One suggestion to move things forward in Sweden is to develop a national copyright literacy strategy. An important part of the strategy will be to define librarians' role. This will involve considering their skills and abilities as well as the ongoing requirements for copyright education. It will also involve consideration of issues such as whether all copyright questions require detailed legal knowledge and what the purpose of copyright education is. Copyright is a gray area, but if librarians avoid dealing with it, as they appear to in Sweden, they will never understand the nature of it.

One way of demystifying copyright and making librarians aware of their new responsibility is through networking and the role of communities. An important move forward was made when the Swedish Library Association formed an expert network for copyright in 2015. Since then the number of members has grown along with the interest in different aspects of copyright. The expert network meets on a regular basis and discusses different aspects of copyright such as Creative Commons, EU

³The Universities UK and GuildHE Copyright Negotiating and Advisory Committee (CNAC)
<http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/Pages/copyright-working-group.aspx>.

legislation, and images. Current professionals need ongoing opportunities to hone new skills as part of their professional development. The expert network supports other members of the network, but training needs to be more widely available and not only for the dedicated copyright officers. There is also an urgent need to integrate copyright in LIS education programs. This has been recognized by the Library Association, which is engaged in developing professional skills and LIS education by cooperating with Swedish schools of library and information science.

Other types of organizations interested in intellectual property issues may also be able to provide copyright training. For example, the Swedish Patent and Registration Office (PRV), the authority for intellectual property in Sweden, has been working collaboratively with several Swedish universities. Organizations like PRV have helped academic libraries explain the importance of copyright education. The expert network together with the Library Association has collaborated with the PRV to create strong networks and improve skills. In October 2018, the PRV arranged a seminar in Stockholm on copyright and related rights, which resulted in several new contacts being forged between the PRV and academic librarians.

Librarians will need to develop their knowledge and find ways to incorporate copyright into library services. This is likely to be a gradual process, starting with informing library users about copyright and licenses then developing their knowledge and building relationships. Many Swedish libraries now provide basic copyright information on their websites or produce copyright guides, but they currently seldom offer formal training.

Interdepartmental cooperation is an important way to foster a greater understanding of copyright. Librarians need to find new tools to collaborate with students, teachers, researchers, and, of course, their fellow library colleagues. Meanwhile, in many academic libraries there are subject librarians who typically have good relationships with teachers and researchers (Nilsson, 2015). These collaborations all offer opportunities for embedding copyright literacy into courses for both staff and students.

Within Sweden, the librarian's role can be strengthened through the development of strong networks in the library community. Librarians have begun discussions with LIS educators about how copyright can become part of the curriculum. However, integrating copyright literacy across the entirety of library services is a complex process, one that Sweden has just taken its first steps toward.

Critical and Universal Copyright Literacy

This paper has highlighted the need to address copyright literacy in the library profession and now continues on to a consideration of which approaches and models

might best achieve this aim. In the United Kingdom the definition of copyright literacy has been expanded following further research to explore librarians' experiences of copyright in their professional lives (Morrison & Secker, 2017). As part of this research, the authors introduced the concept of *critical copyright literacy*, drawing on developments in the field of information literacy, which in turn is being shaped by approaches from critical pedagogy. They observed that librarians can no longer be seen as “neutral” in their approach to education but instead should be advocates for change of societal and academic norms and practices (Smith, 2016). Put simply, if copyright education simply explains the “rules” to library users—whether they are academic staff, students, or members of the public—is it truly serving the purpose of education? Copyright is not about right and wrong answers, and all copyright queries will be different and involve a consideration of both an individual's and an organization's approach to risk.

As mentioned earlier, Morrison and Secker are currently in the process of developing a copyright literacy curriculum and at the WLIC presented a framework for this based on the five areas in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Five areas for the development of a critical copyright literacy framework

The five areas in the framework and their relationship to the critical approach are described in more detail by Secker (2017). In summary, a critical copyright literacy approach would involve a consideration of the following:

1) History and philosophy: The underlying history and ideologies are important to discuss because this will help librarians recognize there are many narratives about why copyright exists and what its future purpose is.

2) Boundaries and balance: This would cover the subject matter of copyright, subsistence of protection, exclusive rights, exceptions, and the concept of the public domain. It effectively relates the technical workings of the copyright legislation, exploring how the philosophy of copyright has been put into practice through the process of lawmaking. It is also important to consider how balance is achieved in the system, how copyright is experienced, by whom and what power relationships exist between various groups.

3) Licensing: This explores the types of permissions models available to creators and users of copyright material as well as the practices that grow up around them. It involves consideration of collective licensing, website terms and conditions, educational resource licensing, negotiated licenses, and open licenses.

4) Communication and sharing: This focuses on what individuals and organizations want to communicate and how they do it. For example, universities and academics are currently considering the most equitable and sustainable way to communicate the outputs of research. Cultural heritage institutions want to digitize and make their collections available online. Creators and entrepreneurs want to get exposure and capture community interest in their work without giving up the opportunity to get rewarded for their efforts. From the individual's perspective, this means making an ethical and meaningful contribution to online communities in a way that respects and encourages creativity.

5) Consequences and risk: This would cover what happens when things go wrong and the actions individuals and organizations might take to avoid unwanted consequences. This aspect of the curriculum would involve developing a nuanced and contextual attitude to the opportunities and risks associated with copyright.

The proposed critical model for copyright education is not simply a curriculum of all the topics that librarians need to understand. Copyright will continue to evolve, meaning that the way people are taught about copyright needs to equip them with a framework for tackling new copyright challenges in the future as technology and the law develops. Consequently, librarians need to recognize that copyright is going to remain a part of their work and an area where they continually need to keep up to date. They will also need to become comfortable with some of the uncertainties associated with copyright, and recognize that copyright is not always about right and

wrong. Morrison and Secker (2017) suggested that some librarians experienced copyright as complex and constantly shifting, which was one of the reasons why it created such anxiety and uncertainty about the possibility of “getting it wrong.” However, if copyright education also helps librarians develop an understanding that there will always be an element of uncertainty, then through collaboration and building communities of practice copyright can become something manageable.

Although critical copyright literacy provides opportunities for librarians to consider the power dynamics inherent in the dissemination of creative works, there is a risk that it will have only a limited application if this is not translated into wider civic engagement. Morrison (2017) described *universal copyright literacy* as an approach that would allow copyright literacy to transcend its origins as a library-related phenomenon. This is the idea that everyone requires some level of knowledge about copyright in today’s society, given the way licensing and contracts shape our lives. Licenses govern how people get access to much digital content—whether on our e-readers, computers, televisions, or smartphones—and what they can subsequently do with that content. Licenses increasingly control the ways in which individuals can use the consumer goods that they rely on to support their daily lives; for example, wearable technology and artificial intelligence–enhanced personal assistants (all powered by copyright-protected software). Universal copyright literacy will help people make informed choices about the content that they buy and own as well as the content that they are increasingly renting or leasing through a licensing agreement.

Taking a universal approach also helps support the open dialogue between rights holders and other stakeholders by avoiding the binary or “us versus them” approaches that can restrict creative solutions to copyright-related problems. It may also act as a complement to any potentially pejorative implications of employing a critical approach, which some may see as a mandate to criticize copyright law itself. Universal copyright literacy involves information seekers becoming aware of the aspects of copyright law that are relevant to them, even if they have neither the motivation nor the time to consider copyright particularly deeply. It could therefore support a truly critical approach among those who may not initially be incentivized to engage with this fundamentally important issue.

Discussion

In order to consider the relevance of the arguments outlined above, it is worth returning to some of the questions that were posed at the end of the panel discussion. The overall conclusion was that more copyright education was needed for the LIS sector and beyond, but there were a number of issues that presented themselves as clear challenges. These included the following:

- How might the library sector bridge the gap between the political and practical aspects of copyright education?
- In light of the changing business models and consumer expectations, how can librarians conduct an open and constructive dialogue with creators, rights holders, and funders?
- What sort of models do we want for copyright education, and can we shift these to become more critical in approach?

Bridging the Gap

The panel considered the extent to which librarians need to stay up to date with local, national, and international developments in copyright law in order to effectively fulfill their roles.

At the time of the panel in August 2017, there were some efforts to develop copyright education programs. However, organizations such as IFLA, EIFL, and the European Bureau of Library Information and Documentation Associations (EBLIDA)⁴ tend to focus on advocacy work, such as providing an important lobbying role at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). The copyright literacy survey suggested that this work was often disconnected from the work of librarians and information professionals who provide copyright education. For example, levels of knowledge among librarians about the work of IFLA in relation to copyright advocacy was generally low (less than 24% of survey respondents were familiar with IFLA's role in copyright advocacy according to Todorova et al., 2017).

The formal statement from IFLA on copyright education and copyright literacy is an important step in making the link between advocacy and day-to-day library work. However, additional efforts need to be made to bridge the gap, to coordinate the individual challenges and efforts of copyright specialists, and to share internationally good practice in relation to copyright education.

Conducting a Dialogue

Copyright is increasingly a source of tension between stakeholders. There seems little doubt that scholarly communication models will evolve in light of open access initiatives, and there is a need to ensure that fair and sustainable funding models that balance copyright exceptions with licenses are in place. However, outside the world of academic publishing, entrepreneurial investment is likely to remain an important component in the production of creative works. Even in the world of

⁴ This advocacy work includes engaging with international organizations and policymakers, most notably the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

scholarly publishing it is likely that publishers will continue to play an important role in facilitating access to this content and adding value. Attempts to discuss copyright can lead to polarization, entrenched positions, and little actually helpful dialogue between rights holders, licensing bodies, and librarians and other copyright users. Neutral, safe spaces must be created to allow meaningful dialogue to occur.

Models for Copyright Education

Both critical copyright literacy and universal copyright literacy have already been discussed in this paper. The authors recognize that copyright education must go beyond simply explaining rules about the law if it is to truly benefit library users including academic staff, students, and the wider public. Viewing copyright as a part of information literacy and scholarly communication activities allows librarians to understand copyright in a more holistic way as well as how they can provide different types of support. However, when considering the role of copyright education as part of information literacy it is important to acknowledge that librarians cannot be and should not try to portray themselves as neutral in the process. The critical approach involves placing copyright education into a wider context and highlighting that copyright issues are inherently linked to access to information and how people ethically use information. These issues are a fundamental part of the information literacy teaching that librarians already do. Teaching copyright in this broader context also ensures that copyright education is recognized as something central to the lives of everyone and something that impacts how people access and use information.

Continuing the Copyright Literacy Conversation

The IFLA one-day event provided an excellent opportunity to start the global conversation about copyright literacy, and the creation of the statement on copyright education and copyright literacy is an important step. It is suggested that future conversations might focus on four key strands:

- Communities
- Engagement
- Research
- Education

Each is detailed below.

Communities

Many attendees at the one-day event were encouraged and inspired by experiencing being a part of an international copyright literacy community. They in turn are connected to wider communities of practice and communities of colleagues and library users, all of whom are impacted by copyright law. Experiences from the United Kingdom demonstrate the power that can be harnessed through identifying and focusing energy on the concept of copyright literacy and supporting copyright-specific communities of practice (Ritchie, 2017). However, it is important to question which communities are engaged in the conversation, which are not, and why.

The nature of copyright law and the necessity of taking risk-managed decisions can make consideration and communication of contentious issues difficult. Morrison and Secker (2017) identified that many librarians fear copyright because of the legal, financial, and reputational penalties that may occur. In addition to this, their research shows that those in wealthier countries are more likely to have higher levels of copyright knowledge. As identified by EIFL (2017) in their copyright and libraries' program, librarians in less wealthy countries not only have less access to copyright education than their fellow professionals in the Global North but also they can be subject to more severe penalties if they are found to be involved in copyright infringement. As the copyright literacy community grows and builds confidence, it should always consider who is involved in the conversation to ensure it is as inclusive as possible in the interests of a truly universal and critical approach.

Engagement

Despite the imperative to take a universal approach to copyright literacy, it will likely always have its roots in the library world. As with information literacy, copyright literacy's application is fundamental to anyone looking to find and make sense of information. And as with information literacy it is important for librarians and information professionals to engage effectively with other groups in order to avoid being too insular. For example, the experience from the United Kingdom has shown the value of having librarians and information professionals involved in the groups that negotiate copyright licenses that affect libraries and educational establishments. This is in contrast to other countries, such as Sweden and Norway, where these negotiations are undertaken by lawyers who do not see the impact of these licenses first hand.

It is also important for the development of copyright laws around the world to have an engaged information profession whose members are able to advocate for legal reform. This is not just in the interests of their own institutions but in the wider interests of society and innovation. The gap between the practical experiences of librarians dealing with copyright and the political activities of specialist advocates

could potentially be closed by a renewed focus on critical copyright literacy education within the profession.

Considering how to support engagement between the communities affected by copyright issues could also help support the open and constructive dialogue between stakeholders. A creative solution such as *Cooking for Copyright in Australia* (Freedom of Access to Information and Resources, 2015) proved the value of communicating in terms that allow messages about copyright to resonate among libraries, rights holders, and users of library services.

Research

The concept of copyright literacy was coined as part of a multinational research project. It is essential that further developments in the field of copyright literacy continue to be fully evidence-based, particularly given the challenges previously identified in finding accurate information. Many countries have subsequently taken part in a survey of copyright literacy of LIS students; however, it is important that additional qualitative research is also undertaken. For example, further research with academics could explore the ways in which “copyright culture” works in harmony or tension with “scholarly culture” as identified by Gadd (2017).

Education

In addition to considering whether copyright was included in LIS programs, a number of speakers at the symposium presented their approaches to teaching copyright, for example: flipped classroom video methods (Benson 2017), national educational campaigns (Coates, 2017), and games-based learning (Morrison 2018a). This reflected the unique position librarians have to provide accessible and comprehensive copyright education for those without access to legal counsel. As previously mentioned, education initiatives support both universal access to information and critical approaches that seek to challenge the status quo and find new solutions to today’s problems. However, the extent to which this is already taking place is not clear. It is therefore recommended that IFLA conduct further research into copyright education and the role that library associations might play in supporting this.

Copyright remains a difficult subject to teach. Morrison and Secker (2017) identified that it is complex and that people want certainty. However, those who work with copyright law know only too well that true certainty is not possible to attain and that risk management is an essential component of copyright literacy. Given the requirement to make value judgments, the way that copyright is taught will often

reflect the values of those teaching it. This in turn is likely to influence those who are being taught. It is therefore important to strive to adopt critical pedagogies that recognize that no education is truly neutral. Furthermore, ongoing discussions about copyright education should be as critical of the content that is created as they are of the systems they seek to critique.

Conclusion

There are likely to be many challenges in the future for librarians in their role as copyright users, educators, and, arguably, exemplars of good practice. However, the multinational survey on copyright literacy has provided an opportunity for an ongoing collaboration in research and sharing good practice. It also provided a benchmark from which to measure improvements and developments in the profession internationally. Librarians in many countries around the world feel that they lack knowledge about copyright, but perhaps more importantly they lack confidence about their role as copyright educators. Through sharing their experiences as part of copyright communities of practice, both within their own countries and internationally, they can create a stronger voice for the profession. IFLA and national library associations play an important role in lobbying for copyright reform, but they can also help build and support copyright educators as well as share their knowledge, experience, and good practice. The IFLA “Statement on Copyright Education and Copyright Literacy” is an excellent first step toward achieving this, but this work needs to continue.

One of the strengths of the IFLA one-day conference in August 2017 was the opportunity to share good practice from around the world. During the day, no clear model for copyright education emerged, although both universal and critical copyright literacy may offer ways forward. Hopefully this conversation can be continued by building inclusive copyright literacy communities of practice, engaging with groups outside those communities, undertaking further research, and using the most creative and effective ways of providing and evaluating copyright education.

Copyright education in support of true copyright literacy is as much about the approach to learning as it is about the content. Librarians need to develop their knowledge of copyright, but presenting them with a detailed curriculum covering just the “technical” aspects of copyright law is unhelpful. They need to understand how copyright affects the work they do and the services they offer. Copyright literacy needs to be embedded in LIS qualifications to prepare new professionals for their role, but it also needs to be part of continuing professional development for all library staff. This is because copyright is an area where the law will continue to evolve and adapt in response to changes in technology, culture, and the economy. Fear or avoidance are

not good long-term strategies for addressing the challenges associated with copyright law. Librarians will therefore need to become comfortable with a level of uncertainty about what the law might say, what is possible, and what is the “right advice” to give. They will need to continue to manage this uncertainty through working with their colleagues and through the support of their communities.

No one expects librarians to become lawyers, but librarians do play an important role as copyright educators. Learning more about copyright and then teaching staff, students, and library users about the complexities of the law and licensing in an accessible and empowering way is both an exciting and valuable opportunity for the library profession. Libraries are ultimately about improving access to knowledge and information. As the debate over the best way to incentivize creativity while ensuring access to information continues, and content providers look to maintain their current business models, librarians need a robust understanding of the exceptions that exist for education and research. By incorporating the universal and the critical as well as and focusing on communities, engagement, research, and education, copyright literacy can provide librarians with valuable opportunities to both educate their users and advocate for greater openness on all sides.

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