

June 2019

Review of "Rights and Reproductions: The Handbook for Cultural Institutions" (2nd ed.)

Georgia Westbrook
Syracuse University, grw1996@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://online.vraweb.org/vrab>

Recommended Citation

Westbrook, Georgia (2019) "Review of "Rights and Reproductions: The Handbook for Cultural Institutions" (2nd ed.)," *VRA Bulletin*: Vol. 46: Iss. 1, Article 7.
Available at: <https://online.vraweb.org/vrab/vol46/iss1/7>

This Reviews is brought to you for free and open access by VRA Online. It has been accepted for inclusion in VRA Bulletin by an authorized editor of VRA Online.

Review of "Rights and Reproductions: The Handbook for Cultural Institutions" (2nd ed.)

Abstract

The second edition of *Rights and Reproductions: The Handbook for Cultural Institutions* provides an updated look at intellectual property, related laws, and appropriate use for cultural institutions. The authors provide a robust and clear explanation of relevant issues and serves a wide range of users employing the text as a reference work.

Keywords

cultural institutions, intellectual property rights, reproductions

Author Bio & Acknowledgements

Georgia Westbrook is an MSLIS student at Syracuse University. She holds a BA in art history from Binghamton University.

Young, Anne M. *Rights and Reproductions: The Handbook for Cultural Institutions*. 2nd ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019.

Series: American Alliance of Museums

Number of pages: 404

ISBN: 978-1-5381-1266-3 (paperback)

Price: \$62.00 (paperback)

The second edition of *Rights and Reproductions: The Handbook for Cultural Institutions* provides information about intellectual property for professionals working in libraries, archives, museums, and other cultural institutions. The first edition of this title was published in 2015, and the newer edition provides updates based on the evolution in the titular field over the past four years. The book is organized into chapters that provide a scaffolding approach to understand the issues of rights and reproductions, but which may also be consulted on a chapter-by-chapter basis with no loss in clarity.

The chapters of the book include: Intellectual Property, Institutional Intellectual Property Policies, Rights Issues for the Collection, Institutional Uses, Leveraging Content with Distribution Partners, External Uses, and New Frontiers in Fair Use and Open Access. These chapters are in addition to a preface, which provides clarifying notes. The book includes a list of figures, a list of videos included in the eBook version, a glossary, a bibliography, and an index. It also includes three appendices, which cover International Treaties, Federal Legal Materials, and Court Decisions; Document and Contract Templates; and References and Resources.

The information provided by *Rights and Reproduction* was updated to reflect changes in the field and laws since its original publication, so the coverage is up-to-date. The book provides a complete look at the role and place of intellectual property in cultural institutions, from policies and internal use, to distribution, external use, and future issues. The appendices in the book provide additional relevant materials for study, adaptation, and implementation, adding to the depth of its content. While academic in tone, the writing is not inaccessible, and any jargon used is defined in the glossary provided at the end of the book. The authors seemed to have worked hard to limit legalese and instead focus on couching the information in terms familiar to those familiar with, or working in, cultural institutions. In the preface there is even an acknowledgement of the unique place rights and reproduction specialists hold:

“While rights and reproductions specialists are usually not trained in the law, they typically bring to the rights clearance process something that even seasoned IP lawyers often lack: firsthand knowledge of their institution’s collections and culture and an appreciation for the ethical policies and professional principles that govern the operations of cultural institutions.” (xviii)

This mix of experiences and roles in dealing with intellectual property in cultural institutions is the major challenge for the book and its authors, but that challenge is effectively met through its writing style and content.

Anne M. Young is the editor of the book and is well-qualified to serve that role. She is currently the manager of rights & reproductions at the Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields. The book includes contributions from experts in intellectual property, and their qualifications are included in an “about the contributors” section. Those contributors include Kenneth D. Crews, an attorney specializing in copyright who has written several resources for information professionals; Naomi Leibowitz, associate director for Creative Strategy and Operations at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum; and Deborah Wythe, the former head of Digital Collections and Services at the Brooklyn Museum, among many others. The book was evaluated by a legal review panel which includes several private attorneys and counsel for many major museums.

Rights and Reproductions is laid out as a reference text, with some images and offset text boxes interspersed in larger blocks of text. It is an appropriate text for students studying cultural institutions and law, and for those working in cultural institutions, both specifically in rights and reproduction management and in other areas. As a field of increasing importance, rights management in cultural institutions will benefit from this well-written text.