

I have run across a few recent examples as to why the copywriter law should be amended. (1) While in Utah visiting the family of my fiancé for the first time, I saw a large photograph of her on the wall. I wanted a copy of it, so I took it to a local photo shop. We all looked for a studio name and address in front and behind the photograph. None was found, and even though none could be found, the clerk refused to copy it for me. I asked my fiancé where she obtained it and she said that while working at the Hilton Hotel in Santa Fe 25 years ago, an out of state company advertised a studio special in the newspaper. Inasmuch as she assisted them with the room rental for the temporary studio, they took that photo of hers and gave it to her. She could not remember who they were. (2) We have an annual celebration in Santa Fe every year and some Hispanic man is selected to portray the role of the Spaniard who re-settled Santa Fe in 1692. I was honored to be selected in 1981. A studio in Santa Fe was hired by the Fiesta Council to do the photographing of me and the Fiesta Queen. I had this large photograph on my wall and overtime, it became faded by the sun. I went back to the studio to obtain a copy. The studio owner told me that she destroys the negatives after 15 years. So because of this archaic law. I cannot provide my two sons with a copy for my grandchildren to have someday. (3) I have a beautiful photograph of my maternal grandparents. It was taken in a studio around 1890. Do you think I can get it reproduced? No way, I am told.

While I support the photographic industries right to protect their work, I believe some tweaking of the law should take place to protect the photo owners as well to copy what is theirs and the original studio does not exist any longer or the negatives have been destroyed. Please do something about this crazy regulation. Thank you.

Joe. J. Ruiz
Deputy Superintendent of Insurance
Santa Fe, NM