

comment_from_Kelly_N_Vaccaro

ATTN.: Julie L. Sigall, Associate Register for Policy & International Affairs
SUBJECT: Orphan works
TYPE: comment
FROM: Kelly N. Vaccaro
Organization:
Title:

Date: Tue, 1 Mar 2005 21:04:10 -0500
Comment:

I currently work as a salesperson in a camera store. Just about every day I have customers come in wanting to copy pictures. In some cases these images are still under copyright. This is fine and I have no issues restricting obviously copyrighted images, especially when the photographer or company has wisely put a stamp on front or back indicating the business and/or contact information. However, often there is no stamp, no information, no way to find that original copyright holder. Often it's a school or family or wedding picture from the 40s. or 50s. or 60s. I can't reproduce it for my customer, because it's still under copyright. They have no way to find the photographer, and often leave my store upset at me over something I can't control.

Many of my friends are photographers and I understand why copyrights are important. But there are many cases, especially with photographs, where businesses shut down, negatives are thrown away, photographers pass away or move, and it is near impossible for someone to use that image (which may be starting to fade, or may be needed for a special occasion, or maybe they just need a copy to send to family). They can't find a way to get a copyright release... and it may still be within 10 or 20 years of the picture being taken, not 75! Lifespans are limited, and the archival period for a photo (disintegrates after 75 years) is the same as the copyright law for them! Please work to find a solution that will allow my customers to copy photos when there is no harm coming to the original photographer. Thank you.

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