

2000 Spring Conference Report

Copyright Law in the Digital Age

Summary by Susan E. Hahn, president OK/ACRL

On Friday, March 10, 2000 the Oklahoma chapters of ACRL and SLA were pleased to host "Copyright Law in the Digital Age" presented by Laura Gasaway. The workshop was held in the Conoco Room in Bizzell Library, University of Oklahoma. Gasaway began her workshop by defining copyright and followed with a brief history of copyright in the United States.

Copyright is the legally secured right to publish and sell the substance and form of a literary, artistic or musical work. Copyright law is meant to protect three competing interests: the "authors," publishers and producers and the public. The first copyright statute in the United States appears in the first U.S. Constitution, article I, section 8 clause 8 which states "The Congress shall have the Power... To promote the Progress of Science and useful art, by securing for limited times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries." The original copyright statute remained unchanged until 1909 when it was expanded to include the new inventions of motion pictures and sound recordings. Since 1909 copyright laws have followed the inventions of new technologies. The next major revision to copyright happened in 1976 following the invention of computers. Although there have been recent amendments to copyright laws we continue to operate under the 1976 revision.

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The full workshop summary may be found in the March 2000 OK-ACRL Newsletter.