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## Book Review

Earl, A. 2010. Book Review of Secker, J. 2010. *Copyright and e-learning: a guide for practitioners*. London: Facet. *Journal of information literacy*, 4(2), p 105

<http://ojs.lboro.ac.uk/ojs/index.php/JIL/article/view/BR-V4-I2-2010-6>

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Chan, L. et al 2002. *Budapest Open Access Initiative*. New York: Open Society Institute. Available at: <http://www.soros.org/openaccess/read.shtml> [Retrieved 22 January 2007].

**Secker, J. 2010. Copyright and e-learning: a guide for practitioners. London: Facet. xix, 204pp. ISBN 978-1-8560-4665-7 £44.95. Pbk.**

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This book is written in plain English and does not expect its reader to have any prior knowledge of copyright. It opens with a clear description of what copyright is and why it is important, and also covers popular misconceptions surrounding it (for example, the terms 'fair dealing' (US) and 'fair use' (UK) are not synonymous). This is exactly the kind of introduction I had hoped for as my knowledge of the subject matter is limited.

Each chapter contains subheadings that make sections easy to digest, which is useful given that this is a convoluted and often misunderstood subject. Information professionals have been left to decipher and interpret how copyright law applies to an environment of emerging technologies and an increasing tendency for organisations to deliver educational resources via mobile media. The author describes clearly and succinctly the various approaches applied in this area, and gives clear and helpful examples through a number of case studies. These help to provide much-needed context and showcase practical examples of how the issues faced by information professionals in the E-Learning environment have been approached and resolved.

One less successful aspect of the book early on is the introduction of how copyright differs around the globe. The book primarily focuses on UK law (often comparing with US law), which is entirely understandable as those at the 'coal face' of working with copyright law in the UK will need a clear understanding of the two. However, the book also covers copyright in other countries such as Australia and New Zealand and, instead of these being covered in a separate chapter they are all detailed in sequence within the opening chapter. If the reader is someone who is already well acquainted with UK copyright law then this would likely pose no problem at all; however, as a copyright novice I found it to be off-putting, as it was difficult to balance retaining what I felt I 'needed' to know with what was 'superfluous' for my needs.

However, one area in which the book excels is in providing links to resources. Each chapter is supplemented with a reference list, and there is extensive signposting to further resources throughout. It also includes an explanation of how copyright applies to popular sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Flickr. This is one of the most useful elements of the book and is essential reading for anyone who uses these sites, professionally or otherwise. The one possible drawback of such an approach is highlighted by reflecting on the book's currency. In the ever-changing environment of the World Wide Web, it is difficult to know how long these resources will remain relevant, and even whether the case studies will reflect the nature of the challenges being faced in two or three years' time. However, this will always remain an issue for books of this nature and a potentially short life-span does not necessarily detract from the current value of the book.

Overall this book is well written – it is fluent, well-paced, accessible and user-friendly. It offers an excellent introduction to those who are unfamiliar with copyright law and its nuances, but would also provide a useful refresher to those who would like to reacquaint themselves with the basics in an e-learning context. It is unlikely to answer the more difficult questions that copyright can sometimes raise, but does offer a solid foundation from which to draw possible solutions, and it would be a useful addition to the arsenal of resources for anyone working in the copyright and e-learning arena.