Is there an acquisitions or collection of licensing information resources? A 700-page print book on the subject financials, does the library world need gets were gobbled up by “big deal” Three decades after subscription bud- ies as to be taken wholly for granted. ingrained into the business of librar-ies and first-sale that were so contract, libraries lost doctrines of ownership and complicated library acquisition responsibilities for other academic and professional programs will be able to extrapolate much of the information to their own areas. This is a welcome and much-needed text for academic librarians with collection responsibilities for professional programs.—Cathy Goodwin (cgoodwin@ coastal.edu), Coastal Carolina University, Conway, South Carolina


When the electronic publishing revolution launched with CD-ROM-based abstract and index services (A&I), the license substituted access for ownership and complicated library acquisitions forevmore. With the contract, libraries lost doctrines of fair use and first-sale that were so ingrained into the business of libraries as to be taken wholly for granted. Three decades after subscription budgets were gobbled up by “big deal” financials, does the library world need a 700-page print book on the subject of licensing information resources? Is there an acquisitions or collection development librarian left who is innocent of the complexities of these licenses, which tend at once to make available 24/7 more and more of the world’s fund of intellectual achieve- ment, but at staggering costs and restrictive conditions?

Tomas Lipinski surely does not intend his hefty monograph to be read through over serial settings, by either the innocent or jaded licensing librarian. As director of the school of library and information service at Kent State University, he joins Tracy Mitra-nov (Cornell University) and Kenneth Crews (Columbia University) as one of the great legal authorities in Ameri-can librarianship. Lipinski’s purpose is to provide a sourcebook for licensing librarians to consult as they seek the second opinion of a serious intellectual property (IP) lawyer. His work’s theme is reducible to “contract trumps copy-right law”; he seemingly cannot repeat this enough, but given the widely and wildly variant contexts in which he makes this point, the admonition does not come off as hectoring.

The Librarian’s Legal Companion for Licensing Information Resources and Services has much to recommend. For starters, the title signals Lipinski’s acceptance that the line between databases and software is often arbitrary. Indeed, he makes clear that software has always been licensed, with licensing and copyright existing side-by-side in tension and contradiction from the first stirrings of the information technology ecosystem. For every named mention of a database platform, e.g., Cengage, there is another to a soft-ware colossus like Microsoft. As if to underscore the difficulty in unraveling software’s inevitable entanglement of content, he introduces a third ele-ment, hardware in the form of the e-reader. The Kindle is sold, and under the doctrine of first-sale, libraries may lend them. But Amazon’s software is licensed, restrictively. Books for the Kindle are nontransferable. Can libraries lend Kindles even if they have not set up a complicated arrangement with OverDrive? Lipinski himself is unsure, but anyone who reads his analysis will find it less than exhaustive and illuminating.

Lipinski ventures beyond the right to distribute gadgetry, boldly venturing into the property regime of the web itself. He dissects the multiplicity of terms of use (TOU) and end user license agreements (EULA) proliferating throughout the web generally. Their language binds individuals accessing web-enabled services through any library or institution of higher education, but few patrons read these agreements and fewer understand them. Fortunately, as Lipinski points out, courts have sometimes, perhaps with surprising frequency, sided with plaintiffs claiming “unconscionability” (148), i.e., bullying by contract. His chapter on the open source movement and the develop-ment of the Creative Commons and General Public (GNU) licenses could stand alone as an essay. This is not to suggest there is any false advertizing by Lipinski or his publisher, the American Library Association; this is a legal guide, after all. But the few librarians who will approach this as narrative are likely to make it to the end only if they possess more than a layperson’s grasp of US copyright statute and theory. And even those with that grasp will mostly give up before the end. Three cases in point: first, there is an entire chapter on the formal mechanisms by which a contract is officially executed; anyone who has tried to negotiate a contract hopes to get to that end stage, but by that point all the hard work has been done; the official sealing of the deal is generally straightforward. Second, he places far too much emphasis on arbitration clauses; while compulsory arbitration is a major matter in labor law and product liability, I know of no instance in which a library was forced...
into arbitration with a vendor. Third, he delves into detail about disclaimers and warranties infecting every IT and library contract ever devised, but only reluctantly concedes that these are simply standard and effectively nonnegotiable. But just when Lipinski flirts with nudging his readers’ attention span out of focus, he snaps “the licensor . . . [should warrant] that it has valid title to the content” being offered (496). An experienced library negotiator is not likely to overlook that caution, but the reminder is compelling. If nothing else, all parties to a contract have to be reassured that a third party will not emerge to claim infringement and sue library and publisher alike.

To be sure, Lipinski is not concerned with the non-IP details of licensing. These matters are attended to in other venues, beginning with The Charleston Advisor (www.charleston co.com). A more historically influenced reading of licensing might have led him to focus less on coursepack restrictions, which recent trends in e-reserve concessions by licensors have mostly settled to the benefit of libraries. He does fret a great deal about some specific matters that get librarians equally fretful, but for different reasons. In dissecting Nature Publishing Group’s (NPG) standard license, he objects that the chargeable users clause, which in turn depends on counting the number of “scientific department” students and staff, is rigged to trigger pricing adjustments always favoring NPG (599). True enough. But librarians are as likely to object that in the age of the comprehensive, inter-disciplinary university, the number of folks characterized as scientific department affiliates is so permeable as to be meaningless, and wish for some simple metric such as institutional enrolled FTE to be substituted. And there are some interesting omissions. He is silent on consortial licensing, which includes potentially tricky recitals and can complicate archiving provisions. While he resists offering a model license on the reasonable grounds that cases vary so greatly (635), such a claim undermines the purpose of his project, which is to bring all those variants into greater and uniform clarity. Even accounting for his distrust of model licenses and apparent indifference to consortia, surely the library-rights friendly license suggested by the NorthEast Research Libraries (NERL) is worth examination. And why not mention the Shared E-Resource Understanding (SERU) project of the National Information Standards Organizations (NISO), which intriguingly if quixotically seeks to return to old-fashioned sale and copyright regimes?

Lipinski’s tome offers many practical features. He concludes most chapters with useful “learning examples” in which license terms—sometimes in the nature of apples to apples, sometimes apples to oranges—are juxtaposed and analyzed. An exhaustive glossary of licensing terms serves as more of an encyclopedia than dictionary, and despite his aversion to model licenses he does propose “twenty key clauses” (635–644) that will reward repeated consultation.

Perhaps because of the density of legal English and its estimable sweep, Lipinski’s bottom-line is somewhat elusive. Reserved though he is about expressing bias toward his subject, there is no doubt he stands with libraries at every turn: “Restrictions on uses that under the copyright law would be lawful should not be prohibited; obligations which are impossible or nearly impossible to perform or which require monitoring or enforcing restrictions upon users should not be required” (673).

Those are prosaic words about an occasionally turgid topic, but with them Lipinski stakes out the advocacy position librarians ought to adopt in meeting their obligations to distribute and preserve original works of human understanding.—Scott Silverman (silverbanscottth@gmail.com), Dresden, Maine


This concise volume is part of the Chandos Information Professional Series, which aims to provide both readable and practical coverage of subjects of interest to librarians. It is not, as its title may suggest, a how-to guide for managing electronic resources, but rather a broad overview of how electronic resource management has evolved in a specific type of library over the last two decades with some learned speculation about what the future might hold. Or, as Elguindi and Schmidt neatly phrase it in their preface, “How have academic librarians and librarians changed to respond to electronic resources, and where might they be going?” (xvii–xviii). The book’s six chapters cover a variety of important topics related to managing electronic resources, including: staffing and workflows, electronic resource management systems (ERMS), discovery tools, and e-books. Most chapters also contain useful case studies detailing local issues associated with electronic resource management at institutions such as Indiana State University, the University of Notre Dame, and Boston College.

Chapters 1, “Emerging Technical Services Models in the Context of the Past,” and 2, “Electronic Resource Management: Staffing and Workflow,” are the strongest pieces in the book. Each does a nice job of succinctly contextualizing current academic library approaches to e-resource management. In the first chapter, Elguindi and Schmidt identify two waves of