Images, Copyright,& the Public Domain in the 19th Cent (Winterthur,29-30 Mar 18)

Winterthur Museum, Garden, and Library, Paris VII Diderot, Mar 29–30, 2018
Deadline: Feb 1, 2017

Marie-Stephanie Delamaire

Call for Papers: “Images, Copyright, and the Public Domain in the Long Nineteenth Century”

Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library: March 29-30, 2018.

In partnership with LARCA (Laboratoire de recherches sur les cultures anglophones), Université Paris Diderot

A combination of technological, cultural, and economic factors during the “long” nineteenth century made images more readily available in a wider range of media than ever before. These transformations raised new questions about the ownership and use of images.

Working in the new field of lithography, artists produced portraits, topographical landscapes, caricatures, everyday scenes, and representations of events done "on the spot,” which publishers distributed quickly and relatively cheaply. Thanks to changes in printing techniques and the commercial strategies of publishers, engraved images became more common in books, magazines, and newspapers. The development of photography led to the production and circulation of images in the form of daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, tintypes, cartes-de-visite, and stereographs. The quest to reproduce photographic images in print inspired numerous photomechanical processes that raised questions about the status of the image and its creator. Meanwhile, increasingly sophisticated printed reproductions of visual works raised new questions about what constituted “authorship” under copyright law; about how to balance the interests of artists, distributors, and collectors; and about how to protect the privacy of individuals whose images were being reproduced and displayed in public. As images and the techniques used to produce them spread across national borders, the question of colonial and international copyright became increasingly important.

This project aims to bring together scholars from a range of disciplines and fields (printing history, art history, law, literature, visual culture, book history, etc.) to explore the cultural and legal consequences of the proliferation of images in the long 19th century. Our geographic focus will be on Great Britain and the United States in connection with the wider world, not only their colonies and territories, but also their commercial and artistic links with other countries. Contributions that consider the transnational circulation of images, or provide a comparative perspective on copyright, are most welcome, as are case studies that reveal the local factors that shaped attitudes and practices related to the circulation of images. In referring to the “long 19th century,” we want to encourage specialists of earlier and later periods to help us elucidate the broader history

of imaging and printing techniques and the legal and cultural norms that surrounded them.

As the first stage in the project, we invite interested scholars to propose papers for a conference to be held at Winterthur Museum, Delaware, March 29-30, 2018. Following the conference, authors will be invited to revise papers for possible publication in a special issue of a journal on this topic. In the spring of 2019, a follow-up workshop for contributors will be held at Université Paris Diderot, with the goal of finalizing the joint publication and discussing further research opportunities in this field.

The following list is in no way exhaustive, but reveals some potential lines of inquiry:

· To what extent did changes in imaging and printing techniques affect the status of images as understood by those who made them and those who viewed them?

· What norms did artists, architects, photographers, engravers and others establish to govern the circulation and reproduction of their works?

· How were copyright and/or patent law understood by the people who produced, distributed, and viewed images of various kinds?

· Was there a sense of a “public domain” in the realm of visual culture, and if so how was this articulated?

· How did attitudes toward the authorship and attribution of images evolve during this period?

· What were the perceived boundaries between legitimate and illegitimate copying, and how did these vary across media?

· In cases where the law was silent or ambiguous, what cultural practices and commercial strategies were developed, either to promote the ownership of images or to contest it?

Submission instructions:

Please send an abstract (one page) of your proposed contribution and a short CV (two pages) to imagecopy19@gmail.com by February 1, 2017. We will notify accepted participants by June 1, 2017.

Questions may be addressed to imagecopy19@gmail.com.

Co-conveners: Stephanie Delamaire (Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library: www.winterthur.org) and Will Slauter (LARCA, Univ. Paris Diderot, http://www.univ-paris-diderot.fr/EtudesAnglophones/pg.php?bc=CHVR&page=LesAxesduLARCA&g=sm)

Reference:

CFP: Images, Copyright,& the Public Domain in the 19th Cent (Winterthur,29-30 Mar 18). In: ArtHist.net, Oct 25, 2016 (accessed Nov 13, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/14042>.