

Our staff has had difficulty with this several times. All cases in question involve either photographs or films. Often researchers contact us with inquiries regarding if the College owns the copyright to specific films or works that they would like to use. Typically we don't own the copyright but we try to assist them in finding out who does. This has been very time consuming and typically fruitless. In one particular case I remember a museum wanted to use part of a film made by a former faculty member. We found records that the faculty member and his wife were dead. We spent a good deal of time trying to locate surviving family members without luck. I even started calling a few alumna who had worked closely with the faculty member. We never found any information and the museum never used the piece. I remember this case especially because all the research we did turn up and the people we talked to seemed to indicate that the faculty member in question would have very much wanted this film in the exhibit. I also remember a conference call with two other major research institutions trying to figure out who the owner was of a dance film. No one could figure it out. We typically receive one call a year about that film from documentary makers wanting to incorporate that film but I doubt it will ever see the light of day because no one is comfortable with the ambiguity of ownership. I am very glad that this matter is being considered - thank you.

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