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Types of Works and Copyright Duration in the United States

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Print Publication Year: 2007 Published Online: 2009

Publisher: Oxford University Press

ISBN: eISBN:

DOI: 10.1093/jama/9780195176339.022.187

Item type: section

The length of copyright protection in the United States depends on several factors: when the work was created (key dates are before or after January 1, 1978), the number of authors, and the type of work (eg, work made for hire or owned by the federal government). See the Table for examples of types of works, conditions, and terms of copyright protection. To be protected by copyright law, a work must be original. For works created by a single author, copyright belongs to that author from the instant of its creation and for 70 years after the author's death.(§302) Copyright