

Beaders' Ethics

When, if ever, is it acceptable to sell or teach another person's designs?

That's a question we hear frequently at *Bead&Button*, and it tells us that many of our readers care about the ethical and legal issues involved when it comes to the money-making aspects of beading. Unfortunately, we also have firsthand experience with beading's darker side – the dishonest few who cause heartache and financial harm by cashing in on another person's original work. And when unethical people profit from ideas that don't belong to them, it hurts us all.

Maybe it was inevitable that as beading became more popular, people would look for shortcuts to exploit the growing number of lucrative opportunities, and maybe there is nothing one editor or one editorial can do to change that. So, it's gratifying to know that my concerns about the ethics of beading are shared by the editors of other beading magazines, including Cathy Jakicic of *BeadStyle*, Marlene Blessing of *Beadwork*, Pamela Hawkins of *BeadUnique*, and Leslie Rogalski of *Step by Step Beads*. They will also be covering this topic in upcoming issues of their publications.

To address the question presented at the start of this editorial, *Bead&Button*'s position on copying designs is as follows:

1. It is unethical to copy an artist's work to sell without the artist's permission.
2. It is unethical to copy any work that has appeared in a magazine, book, or website and represent it in any venue as an original design.
3. It is unethical to teach a beading project that has appeared in a magazine, book, or website without the artist's permission.
4. It is unethical to teach a beading project learned in another teacher's class without the teacher's permission.

If you agree, please help disseminate this message by including a copy of these statements with your class materials, your kits, and the pieces you sell. You can download a copyright-free version at beadandbutton.com.

Mindy Brooks
Editor, *Bead&Button*
editor@beadandbutton.com