“Intellectual property is the oil of the 21st Century” - Mark Getty

The Internet has fundamentally changed the ways in which Western people access, utilize and distribute information. This shift has spurred arguments about the nature of intellectual property, which, in turn, reconfigure notions of the need for individual privacy and the very nature of economic production. This section of Interpretation and Argument will explore the debates surrounding cybereulture while attempting to formulate critical comprehension and approaches to the questions: Can and should the current system of copyright protection reliably and justly promote innovation in the arts without infringing on basic notions of privacy and anonymity, even on globally linked networks? How does authorship and ownership change in this climate? And, perhaps ultimately, do the technological advances of the digital age help foster a pragmatic space for progressive thinking or the most advanced, well-financed and ubiquitous example of the conflicts in contemporary society? Students will engage these questions in order to learn the techniques and strategies of academic research and argumentation culminating with staking out their own position concerning the future of the Internet and its possible need for reform.

**Texts**

**Required Books (available in campus bookstore)**


**Required Essays (available through Blackboard: https://blackboard.andrew.cmu.edu)**

<http://culturemachine.net/index.php/cm/article/view/346/359>
Retrieved 14 May 2009


**Recommended Texts:**

A good college dictionary. Don’t forget that as a CMU student you have digital access to the Oxford English Dictionary, the pinnacle of all lexicons in English. While not as easy to navigate as some other online dictionaries, it is generally respected as the final word on words. (http://www.oed.com) for on campus access.

A note on Wikipedia: Though a tremendously useful and exciting reference source, Wikipedia is not acceptable as a credible academic source. Use it to get a basic understanding of vocabulary or context that is foreign to you, but always take the information you find with a grain of salt. The links and sources found in the entries can often be more useful than the entries themselves. So I whole-heartedly encourage using Wikipedia, for some things. Please refrain, however, from citing this, or any other, online encyclopedia.
Overview and Major Assignments

The course employs fiction, advertisements, documentaries, academic and popular essays to develop students’ critical reading and writing practices. The major writing assignments are organized in a cumulative sequence of three essays:

1. **Argument Summary**, in which students are expected to explain, in their own words, another writer’s argument about a problem.
2. **Issue Analysis**, in which students synthesize and analyze—or “tie together”--a number of distinct sources into one coherent description of a problem.
3. **Contribution**, in which students enter into a specific debate, choosing and arguing for their position. This paper may draw from additional sources outside our class readings. Students will also prepare and give a brief oral presentation on their chosen contribution topic.

Class Participation and Lateness

You must do the assigned homework and come prepared to participate in class. You are expected to contribute to general class discussions, to contribute to small group discussions, to seek feedback from other class members on work in progress, and to provide thoughtful feedback to other class members on their work. I expect all students to be prepared for class everyday; being prepared means paying close attention to scheduled assignments, doing the homework, and *bringing relevant materials with you to class.*

**Arrive on time.** You will not receive an A in this class if you do not arrive on time. Lateness not only disrupts the class but also demonstrates disrespect for your peers and for your instructor. For every two days you are late to class, you will be marked for one absence. If you are more than 15 minutes late to class, you will be marked absent for that day.

Attendance

Since this is a small discussion class, attendance is mandatory. You are allowed **four** absences without penalty—following your fourth absence, your grade in the class will begin to drop by a **half-a-letter grade** per absence. Plan ahead if you think you might miss class for religious holidays or for other scheduled events. Just because you inform me of an absence beforehand does not mean that it does not count towards your total.

If you have extenuating circumstances that could affect your attendance throughout the semester (such as illness or a family emergency), it is your responsibility to notify me about your situation and obtain authoritative documentation to excuse your absences (usually from the Dean, your adviser, or doctor). If you miss more than the allotted days due to your situation, we will discuss whether it’s prudent for you to continue in the course.

If you miss a class meeting, you are responsible to contact your peers for materials and information you’ve missed. Thus, it is your responsibility to keep on top of the homework. Do not email me asking whether or not there was a daily assignment. Missing a class is no excuse for not completing the homework. Likewise, I expect you to have read the assigned readings and to be ready to discuss them, even if you were absent the class before. This is a discussion class, so consider your readings
just as important as any written homework you have. I call on people in class discussion, and it’s embarrassing (for you and for me) to have to announce to the class that you haven’t done the reading.

Finally, you are responsible for keeping track of your own absences. A sign-in sheet will be used daily and absences will be thus recorded. Please be conscientious of your class participation – make sure you get the sign-in sheet, and please don’t expect me to keep a running tally of your absences!

Using Sources Properly

In this course, we will talk about the differences between plagiarism and the misuse of sources. There is a difference, and so the consequences for each are not the same. We will discuss how to use sources appropriately; and if you have any questions, always feel free to ask me. It’s been my experience that those writers who plagiarize are those who feel overwhelmed by the assignment and out of desperation, use someone else’s work to stand in for their own. If you get so frustrated with an assignment that you feel like your only option is to plagiarize, come see me. My role as a teacher is to help students, not to punish them—please use me as a resource to help you write, brainstorm or work out your essays.

Academic Integrity

At Carnegie Mellon, we trust in the excellence of our students and in the integrity of our academic programs. We also trust that your good ideas become better when you test them against the ideas of others. So for this course, feel free to discuss your ideas about the major writing assignments with other students. Collaborating on question/answer homework assignments or open-book quizzes, however, is not acceptable; these types of assignments are designed for me, your instructor, to monitor how you are handling specific parts of the course materials. Blatantly taking someone else’s words, ideas or concepts, and using them without citing your source is plagiarism. So is using another student’s essay, or part of his or her essay, as your own. In the world of writing (academic writing especially), this is a serious crime, and is treated as such. Anyone who uses non-documented material from another source, including online sources, will receive a failing grade for the entire course and will be referred to the Dean’s office for possible further disciplinary action.

Deadlines

All written assignments must be submitted on the due date, and missing the class when the assignment is due doesn’t mean your assignment isn’t late. Turning in an assignment on time is part of doing the assignment, and late work will be graded down, regardless of how well it’s executed.

Lateness penalties are as follows:

• Rough drafts and Peer Reviews. For every day – that is, every day of the week, and not every class period – that a rough draft your final draft will lose two points. If you do not hand in a peer review or a rough draft, I will not grade a final draft. Your grade will be a zero.
• Final drafts. For every day that a final draft is late, you will lose five points.
• Daily assignments. All late assignments may receive a maximum of half-credit, regardless of how late they are.
Using Recording Equipment in Class
If you need to tape or record classroom activities, you may do so for personal use or for all students presently enrolled in the class. However, you may not further copy, distribute, publish or otherwise use for any other purpose without my express written consent.

Cell Phones, Laptops, and Other Related Technologies
How students interact with portable technology devices can very much harm the dynamics of the classroom. Therefore, I expect you to turn off your cell phone before coming to class. There is to be no text messaging during class. All laptops must remain closed unless you have made prior arrangements with me and have demonstrated that using a laptop is necessary for your learning.

Learning Disability
If you have a learning disability that could impair your progress in this course, please contact Equal Opportunity Services on campus (http://hr.web.cmu.edu/dsrg/students.htm). We can arrange to accommodate your learning style based on EOS recommendations. Please notify me at the semester's beginning of your learning needs--do not wait until the semester becomes overwhelming to acknowledge the problem.

General Guidelines on Submitting Assignments
• Please note that to receive a passing grade, you must hand in the three major papers and do the presentation at the end of the semester.
• All papers, including daily assignments, must be typed, double-spaced, with 1” margins.  (Note: The default spacing in MS Word is 1.25”)
• The three main papers must be submitted BOTH in electronic and paper forms.  It is not acceptable to submit assignments only in their electronic formats.
• Include page numbers on all assignments longer than one page.
• Staple all assignments longer than one page. I will deduct five points from the final grade for failure to demonstrate this common courtesy and rudimentary organization skill.
• Carefully edit and proofread all texts to eliminate problems in grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
• Spell-check your documents. A hint in this regard: typos typically occur in the last minutes when you are making final revisions to a text. Be sure, therefore, to always do a final spell check on at least the section of the document in which you have been making changes. Just because there are no spelling errors found by the spell check does not mean that your paper is error-free; often the spell check “fixes” errors by replacing a similar correctly spelled word. Closely re-reading every word you submit to me is the only fail-proof way to spell-check your papers.
• Any time you cite an essay, film, or book in your main essays, you will need to include a Works Cited section of your essay that provides complete and accurate bibliographic information of the material mentioned in your essay. If you’re not sure how to cite sources, please consult the Citation Guidelines in this course packet.

Documents that do not meet these and other assignment-specific requirements will not be graded. They will be returned to you and when resubmitted will be treated as late submissions. Pay attention to these details for handing in your final drafts. Superficial errors do not signify poor thinking; but they can indicate, for some readers, a lack of precision and a nonchalance toward the task. When you
write papers for your courses within your major, your professors will expect high quality, readable prose. Use this class as a stepping stone toward that end. You'll have to plan your writing process to make time for proofreading—printing a just-written paper 10 minutes before class time will probably not yield terrific results.

On-Campus Writing Resources
International students and non-native English speakers are encouraged to take advantage of Carnegie Mellon's Intercultural Communications Center to receive help in preparing assignments. ICC web address: http://www.cmu.edu/icc/index.shtml

All students are welcome and encouraged to take advantage of the peer tutoring service provided through the office of Academic Development. Academic Development web address: http://www.cmu.edu/academic-development/

Communications
You can reach me via e-mail, office phone, or a note in my mailbox in the Baker 245 Faculty Office. The best way to reach me, of course, is through email – I check it frequently and, while I cannot guarantee an immediate reply, it is certainly the fastest way to reach me.

If you have questions about the policies of this class, review the syllabus first, and then come to see me.

This syllabus is not a binding contract. I reserve the right to make any alterations, additions, or subtractions I see fit.

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http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/us

Grading Policy and Scale

General rating scale for short assignments

A Superior work that goes beyond the assignment requirements. The assignment criteria has been met with creativity and insight. Ideas are well planned and articulated with convincing detail, and audience has been taken into consideration. Any errors in mechanics are not noticeable.

B Really strong work with all assignment tasks met. There’s evidence of great effort and thought in this assignment, although there may be a minor problem with the argument’s development or overall organizational structure. Minor editing problems at most.
Note: The differences between a B and an A concern issues of originality, excellence, thoroughness, and attention to detail. Although B grades may include comments on sentence level editing, doing this type of editing would not be sufficient to raise a B to an A.

C Acceptable in its representation of the task and in some ways above average, but the work is lacking elements that would boost it above the ordinary. There may be a glaring conceptual or execution problem. Details may be somewhat limited, and concepts may be ambiguously defined. (Note: this is the median grade in the university system)

D Below average work. These assignments do not move beyond broad generalizations and do little to explain core ideas. The central focus may not be well articulated, and the prose may seem to ramble. These papers may not represent the task as it has been explained in class.

R Work is not of acceptable quality and does not meet the task requirements.

Lateness and Grades for Rough Drafts
I do not assign formal grades for the rough drafts of the 3 major assignments. However, for each day that a rough draft is late, the final draft loses 2 points for the final grade. In other words, if a rough draft were 2 days late, the final grade would be docked 4 points. (Please note that this point deduction is for the calculation of the grade and not for the raw score.)

Late homework assignments will only be accepted in case of absence. You are responsible to submit all late work upon your return to class. If you miss a quiz, it’s up to you to arrange for the make up. You must make up quizzes within one week after your absence. Otherwise, the grade is a zero.

Assessing your class participation
Since 76-101 is a discussion course, it’s necessary that you participate in class. Participation which includes both classroom involvement and physically being in class makes up roughly 10% of your total grade. Your in-class participation grade falls to my discretion and can nudge a borderline grade higher or lower. When you contribute to class discussion, be sure that your comments are helpful ones and not tangential to the current threads of conversation. You should be ready to participate in general class discussion at least once a week, and you should always be prepared to generate thoughtful input in small-group discussions and peer review work. Be sure to be supportive of your peers’ ideas, even when you disagree with them. Disagreement is constructive, very constructive, but when you raise disagreement within class discussion, be sure to do so respectfully by articulating your grounds for disagreeing with an idea rather than with your peers. Of course, all discussion should refrain from language and tone that could be considered inappropriate or offensive.

Course Schedule

Monday, August 24: Introductions, course overview. Read course policies together.
Wednesday, August 26:  
**Doctorow: “Internet ©rapshoot.”**

**Due:** Doctorow response. Prepare a one-page, typed response to Doctorow’s essay. What sort of an argument is he trying to make? Who might he be critiquing or responding to in this argument? Who is his audience? Discuss what’s at stake for the course through the issues surrounding “intellectual property.” Introduce the vocabulary of claim, evidence, and warrant for analyzing logic behind arguments.

Friday, August 28:

**Graff, They Say, I Say Preface, Introduction and Chapter 1**
Discuss Doctorow’s ideas and his argumentative tactics. Introduce class vocabulary of claim, ground, and warrant for analyzing the logic of argumentation.

Monday, August 31:

**Streeter: “The Moment of Wired”**

**Due:** Doctorow response assignment: drafts and revisions.

Short quiz on Streeter.

What is the genre of Streeter’s argument? Do we recognize his article as argumentation as we have come to know it? What large distinction is he making to track tendencies in digital culture?

Wednesday, September 2:

**Due: Class Wiki Entry.**

Continue discussing Streeter.

How does Streeter develop an argument into a historical overview of the early nineties? How does his narrative of how computers shape culture resonate in our understanding of the problems of piracy and the promise of free software? Introduce the issue/problem/solution heuristic.

Friday, September 4:

**Lessig: “Us, Now.”**

Short in-class graded writing assignment about free culture’s relation to the common sense notion of copyright and the commons. Why is Lessig such an important figure in the “copyfight” movement? How does Lessig define the problem of a less than free culture? What is his solution? What is his investment in this solution? What assumptions is he making about his audience and the importance of his solution?

Monday, September 7:

**NO CLASS.** Enjoy Labor Day.

Wednesday, September 9:

Continue discussing “Us, Now.” What kind of claims is Lessig making about the state of culture? How can Creative Commons licensing ease the tensions brought to bore in both Doctorow and Streeter’s essays? Can the dichotomy of “All rights reserved” versus
“no rights reserved” realistically be solved by CC licensing? How does this dichotomy help us understand Streeter’s dichotomy and digital culture more generally?

Friday, September 11: Read: Argument Summary Assignment sheet.
Introduce the Argument Summary Assignment. Field questions about the assignment.

Monday, September 14: Andersson; “For the Good of the Net.”
Discuss “The For the Good of the Net.” Focus on discussions of audience and implications. How radical is Andersson’s solution to the problems of IP? How is his inclusion of evidence similar and different than our previous authors? Is his audience primarily academic, popular, or somewhere in the middle?

Wednesday, September 16: Graff: Chapters 2 and 3 of They Say, I Say.
Continue discussing Mason. What claims does he make? What warrants these claims? Is his solution on par with Lessig and Doctorow? Or, do they conflict despite citing both authors favorably? Can these possible inconsistencies be explained on the level of evidence, assumptions, solutions or something else?

Friday, September 18: Due: Write a one-page working argument for the first assignment. Writing workshop. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of various approaches in class.

Discuss the proper use of quotes and paraphrases. Discuss the Works Cited page. How do Benkler’s claims relate to citation in the humanities? Could his model of collaboration work in this class? What is a dialogue within argumentation? Discuss differences between “applied” and “pure” research.

Wednesday, September 23: Due: First draft of the Argument Summary Assignment; bring Two copies to class.
In-class peer review session.

Friday, September 25: No class due to mandatory conferences.

Why is Helprin so pissed off? What does he have to lose? Why does he write like he does? What do you make of his direct attack of Lessig/Creative Commons? Brainstorm ways to compromise the two arguments without relying on judgment.

Wednesday, September 30:  
**Due:** Identify at least 3 similarities between Benkler, Andersson, Streeter, and Lessig. These can be ideas, assumptions or argumentative positions. Continue Benkler discussion. Focus on common solutions between Benkler and the other authors read thus far.

Friday, October 2:  
**Elkin-Koren: “Exploring Creative Commons: A Skeptical View of a Worthy Pursuit.”** Just how negative is Elkin-Koren’s appraisal? What alternative(s) does she suggest? Does she add more to the problem than she solves? How would she respond to Helprin’s attack? Discuss the dialogue between Lessig and Elkin-Koren and explore their motivations, assumptions, and audiences. Group distillation project.

Monday, October 5:  
**Due:** Edit of Class Wiki.

**Wednesday, October 7:**  
**Due:** Final draft of the Argument Summary assignment.

Friday, October 9:  
Group work on trying to outline the central points of the composite “anti-Creative Commons argument.”

Monday, October 12:  
**Mason: “The Tao of Pirates” and the Issue Analysis assignment sheet.** Discuss the response options presented. Do they cover the responses we have been producing in class thus far? Discuss the Issue Analysis assignment. Field student questions about the assignment. Introduce the idea of a “good analysis question.”

Wednesday, October 14:  
**Graff: Chapters 4 and 8 of They Say, I Say. Read and Doctorow: “Printcrime.”**

Friday, October 16:  
**Mid-Semester Break; no class; read.**

Monday, October 19:  
**Due:** Draft a working analysis question to bring to class. Workshop the analysis questions at the board

**Read, Galloway and Thacker: The Exploit.** Attempt to place Galloway and Thacker within a discipline we have explored so far. Why are they so pessimistic about all the solutions to the copyright problem we have discussed so far? How is their version of critical intervention unique? Does their theoretical approach grant us any new avenues of inquiry? Or at least, do they close any off? Introduce
the idea of mapping/treeing information. Have the students start their own synthesis trees based on their questions.

Wednesday, October 21: **Due:** Finish your maps and bring them to class. Workshop maps in class. How are you putting your authors “in conversation” with one another?

Friday, October 23: **Gillespie:** *Wired Shut.* How does Gillespie attempt to solve the debate? How does his academic style differ from the other authors we’ve read? Who is his intended audience?

Monday, October 26: **Due:** first draft of the Issue Analysis Assignment; bring two copies to class.

Friday, October 30: **Extra credit:** wear your Halloween costume to class; **Extra-extra credit:** come dressed as a pirate.

Monday, November 2: **Gibson, Agrippa.** What kind of questions does this poem raise about digital authorship? How do we understand the Internet as an archive? Watch the visualization of the original poem experience on YouTube.

**Due:** Write a two page response that 1) finds three perspectives advanced in the documentary: 2) Align these perspective with an author or authors’ arguments from class. 3) Argue for/against the perspectives using the authors’ evidence. (A good place to start would be Andersson’s perspective on the Pirate Bay, Mason’s discussion of the Pirate Party and Lessig’s discussion of Creative Commons.)

Wednesday, November 4: Politics and the Pirate Party: TBA…

Friday, November 6: **Due:** Final draft of Argument Synthesis assignment.

Introduce the Contribution assignment. Field student questions. Survey the interrelations of the arguments we’ve seen so far in order to prepare to contribute using a reading of Gibson as our model.

Monday, November 9: **Due:** Identify a working topic for your contribution assignment. On a maximum of one double-spaced typed page Identify the problem,
issue, gap, or idea from class on which you will focus. In addition, briefly (one or two sentences, each) summarize how each source from class deals with this focus.

Research Methods day. Possibly with special guest, Humanities Librarian Ethan Pullman.

Wednesday, November 11: **Sanchez: “750,000 Lost Jobs? The Dodgy Digits Behind the War on Piracy.”**

Friday, November 13: **Due: Summaries of possible outside sources.**

Monday, November 16: Presentation Group A

Wednesday, November 18: **Due: First draft of Contribution essay.**

In-class peer review.

Friday, November 20: Presentation Group B

Monday, November 23: Presentation Group C

November 25-29: **NO CLASS; Thanksgiving.**

Monday, November 30: Presentation Group D

Wednesday, December 2: Presentation Group E

Friday, December 4: **Due: Final draft of Contribution essay**

Course wrap-up, University Course Assessment (UCA’s).
Argument Summary Assignment
Steal this Course
76-101: Interpretation and Argument

The Assignment
Summarize the argument of Andersson, “For the Good of the Net: The Pirate Bay as Strategic Sovereign.” This is not a high school book report; an academic summary is really an argument analysis—it is the first step toward entering an academic conversation because it requires us to rearticulate another author’s point of view.

What *summarize* means for this class is picking out what is most important in the argument and explaining it in your own words, articulating the significance of your chosen elements to the argument itself. The key to this assignment is not trying to account for every point Andersson makes, but rather to focus on isolating the key claims of his argument and they address its larger purpose. Andersson’s article is long; there is no way to repeat every point, but look for clues the author gives you to dismantle the architecture of the argument.

Your assignment is to explain what is at stake in Andersson’s argument, or what he is ultimately arguing about piracy and intellectual property. There are several ways to read Andersson, but not an infinite amount—so be careful and thoughtful about your analysis of his argument.

The Procedure
*Generating ideas.*

- **What is the argument?** First, you must select the most important parts of his argument. You can do this by identifying the issue Andersson addresses, the problem he defines, and how he resolves that problem. Your thesis statement should explain Andersson’s "bottom line” argument and then should indicate why Andersson feels this perspective is important. What did Andersson choose to focus on to make his argument?

- **How does Andersson make his argument?** Second, you must analyze and explain these crucial parts in such a way as to demonstrate how each part fits together in the larger framework of the argument. It’s not enough to merely repeat what the author says, changing the words slightly. Your task is to explain how Andersson establishes and defines the issue, problem, and solution in his argument—using the claim/evidence/warrant vocabulary can help you get at this “how” question by examining evidence and the assumptions that build Andersson’s argument.

*Supporting your argument.*

It is important to provide textual evidence from the article to support your argument. Use direct quotes and paraphrases to support what you think Andersson’s major claims are. Remember to be selective about what evidence you use and always ask yourself, “Is this integral to Andersson’s main point?” In this sense, you should also be careful not to let your supporting material take over your argument and subsume your own explanation of his essay—if you were to do this, you may as well hand in a copy of the text you’re summarizing. And remember... you have only 3-4 pages to make your argument summary.
NOTE: Be sure to consult the citation guide.

Considering your audience.
Of course, for this essay, your immediate audience is your instructor. However, assume your hypothetical audience is composed of people interested in the ramifications of piracy who have either not read the text, might need help to understand it, or perhaps have a different view of the argument than you do. Writing to an imagined audience of your peers at Carnegie Mellon is a good place to start.

Common Misconceptions
It might be useful for you to know some of the popular misconceptions or pitfalls some students have had in the past with this assignment.

- **Thinking the argument summary is not an argument of your own interpretation.** You interpret Andersson by selectively presenting his argument to your audience. You also express your opinion when you explain how Andersson’s argument hangs together logically. Believe it or not, every student will *not* represent Andersson in the same way.

- **Writing an argument summary about intellectual property or piracy rather than about Andersson on intellectual property and piracy.** In other words, your bottom-line claim in this summary should not be about piracy but about what Andersson *argues* about piracy.

- **Organizing the argument summary chronologically, according to the organizational structure in Andersson’s article.** Since part of your task is to select the most important claims in Andersson’s argument, it’s imperative to realize that you will order those claims according to importance rather than chronology. Look for ways Andersson summarizes his own argument for insight on how you might accomplish a similar task.

Important Dates and Details

- **Rough Draft Due:** Wednesday, September 23rd at the beginning of class (Please bring two copies of your essay to class.)

- **Final Draft Due:** Wednesday, October 7th at the beginning of class (Please turn in your rough draft with my comments, your peer’s review, and the final.)

- The Argument Summary should be 3-4 pages, typed, double spaced. It should include a Works Cited page (even though there is only one author, Mason, you need to get in the habit of including the page).

- As the syllabus states, you must hand in your drafts (both rough and final) in both electronic and paper form.
Write a paper that explores an issue raised by the essays we’ve read so far (such as the relationship between piracy and intellectual property, solutions to the problem of copyright and ownership/authorship of digital culture.

**The ultimate goal of the paper is to explore a particular question related to piracy through explaining the possible approaches to the question, and to do this in such a way that you can discover something new about the larger issue.** This “something new” could

- refer to a point that has been overlooked by other writers
- present a way of bringing opponents closer together
- introduce a new development that might cause parties to rethink their positions

The perspective you offer on the debate will naturally reflect your own opinion, but the main purpose of this paper is not to argue your own opinion but to persuade others about the source of a controversy. Ideally, the Issue Analysis paper should function as a point of entry for the Contribution paper.

**The Procedure**

1) You will first need to write a research question that will allow you to explore an issue raised by the essays we have been reading. That is, if you are focusing on the relationship between licensing and copyright (for instance), your first priority is to work out what issues are at stake in this topic, and what questions come up around it that your essay will attempt to work out, and answer.

2) An effective way to begin integrating perspectives in answer to your question is to choose a paradigm case—a case that, for you, sums up or epitomizes the issue. For example, you could look at a specific case concerning file-sharing or even Carnegie Mellon’s policy towards file-sharing on their network. Describing this case in the beginning of your paper can be very effective in grabbing your reader’s attention, and referring to it throughout your paper can strengthen your evaluation of positions on the issue. The skillful representation of the paradigm case should permit you entrance into the field of argument you have chosen.

3) Develop a thesis sentence for your introduction that explains why, in your opinion, the positions on your chosen issue (the issue as a whole, not your paradigm case) are unresolved. The thesis is not a judgment of the correctness of either side but an argument why this issue is important enough to merit outside academic attention and why the issue stimulates debate. If you cannot answer why your reader should see a conflict within your issue, you will have trouble succeeding in arguing anything further in the assignment.

4) You’ll need to explain the 2-3 major approaches to handling the problem. Your job isn’t only to explain these major approaches, but to explain why these approaches are pitted in debate with one another and what is ultimately at stake. Examining the debate in the context of your paradigm case is a good way to do this.

5) You need to explain the positions within each approach. For example, where would critics of copyright differ within the “all rights reserved” versus “no rights reserved” issue? What is at stake with disagreements with the specifics of the problem? By explaining these minor
divergences you are not merely telling your reader that these positions exist. Rather, you are explaining why these positions diverge.

6) Finally, you will need to analyze the “map” of the issue that you just created for common assumptions, ideas, or relationships that play out among your groups. Explore this trend (or gap) as it changes from group to group. Identify the importance of this analysis for the understanding of how the arguments about piracy work. This is your “something new”.

NOTE: Do not be surprised if you find that you must reshape your question(s) as you begin to work through the different arguments you’ve read. Likewise, expect to spend time re-reading material as you think through this project. Most good questions evolve over time as you work with the readings, and you’ll want to do a lot of re-reading for this assignment.

Important Dates and Details

- Rough Draft Due: Monday, October 26th at the beginning of class (Please bring two copies of your essay to class.)
- Final Draft Due: Friday, November 7th at the beginning of class (Please turn in your rough draft with my comments, your peer’s review, and the final.)
- The Issue Analysis should be 4-5 pages, typed, double spaced. It should include a Works Cited page (even though all of the authors are from the course readings), and you should use quotes from the texts.
- As the syllabus states, you must hand in your drafts (both rough and final) in both electronic and paper form.
The Assignment
You now know enough about piracy, intellectual property and copyright to join the conversation and write your own argument. From your own work in this course, you must argue for your own position that responds to a question you have constructed.

Imagine every author that we have read so far—and perhaps one or two authors that you find on your own—standing in judgment of your position. It is your job to find allies for your position and to silence your position’s critics. The position that you wish to argue is your decision. The number of sources that you will draw upon is likewise your decision (the minimum is six).

Assignment Options
You have two different options for writing your contribution essay.

1. **Case Study Analysis and Evaluation.** You may choose a particular case to test and evaluate the different perspectives that you have synthesized about the course issue. You could use *Agrippa* to interrogate how Gibson represents the issues surrounding IP's circulation. You could also use a lawsuit, news story, file-sharing/piracy protection software or any other kind of depiction of the issues of the class that you find in contemporary culture.

2. **Discovery.** You may choose to write an argument for a perspective that you think is missing from the authors we have read so far this semester. This kind of contribution essay demands that you locate gaps in reasoning through your own synthesis and analysis of the readings we have done so far this semester.

(Note: This option should not be devoid of outside information that can work as evidence to buttress your specific take on the issues.

Structuring Your Argument

**Mapping the issue**
- Locate your opinions in terms of the debates on this issue. Pick a side to this debate, and let your readers know why you have done so.
- Picking a side requires that you include the most important critiques of this position, so be sure to include them in your argument. And if there are critical points that you think are valid, then say so, and suggest reforms for your position.

**Identifying and confronting opposing viewpoints**
- You should think of structuring your argument around the most compelling points against your position. Texts that oppose your point of view can be very helpful in establishing how and why your position is the better one. But remember—when you introduce rival hypotheses, you will have to be careful to take your reader through the steps in your logic.
- You are not straying from the paper’s focus when you confront opposing points of view in your argument. Don’t forget—if you can think of a good, obvious objection to your argument,
chances are a reader can think of it as well. Confronting counter arguments can persuade readers (1) that your view makes sense or (2) that your argument considers this critique and can acknowledge where its points have merit.

Your Audience
Persuasiveness is a key criterion for this assignment. Direct this paper toward a culturally western, academic audience that is interested in piracy as the course has defined the term. Basic ideas about digital culture and piracy will be familiar to your readers, but they may not have read the authors you’ve included in your essay or have expert understanding of the vocabulary of the course (i.e. copyright, patent, or even peer-to-peer file-sharing). Hence, some background, context, and explanation will be necessary for your reader to understand the significance of the question you’re exploring.

Text Features
For a paper of this length, it is helpful to include text features that help the reader comprehend your argument. Your job as a writer is to make your ideas clear to your reader. One way you can make your argument easy to read is to prepare a “capsule” of it in the form of an abstract. The abstract can give readers a “big picture” view of the text, which can help direct the reading process.

Another way to help your reader navigate your text is to “chunk” your essay into meaningful sections that are separated and defined by subheadings. For 76-101, your subheadings will be most effective when they forecast the main claim of the section. Consult the digital version of Thought, the Carnegie Mellon undergraduate research journal, for examples of research articles that have both abstracts and subheadings.

Abstracts and subheadings are text features that force writers to really focus on their work. The more precise a writer makes an abstract and subheadings, the more the writer is pushed to refine and ultimately “know” his or her argument.

Important Dates and Details

- **Rough Draft Due:** Wednesday, November 18th at the beginning of class (Please bring two copies of your essay to class.)

- **Final Draft Due:** Friday, December 4th at the beginning of class (Please turn in your rough draft with my comments, your peer’s review, and the final.)

- The Contribution Essay should be 6-9 pages, typed, double spaced. It should include a Works Cited page.

- For this paper, you are not required to use sources outside of the course materials. But if you would like to, please let me know your plans early in your writing process—I need to approve any reading you bring to the essay that has not been assigned in the course.

- As the syllabus states, you must hand in your drafts (both rough and final) in both electronic and paper form.