

Case Study Practice

Apply the guidelines and techniques of ethical analysis to the following case studies. Prepare a summary (no more than two pages) of your analysis. *Do not* try to argue or justify a position, rather try to follow the approach and the questions in the handout on ethical issues and case studies.

HAND IN YOUR WORK FOR PROBLEMS 1-3 AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS, 1/23/01
HAND IN YOUR WORK FOR PROBLEM 4 AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS, 1/30/01

Problem 1. Textbook, Scenario 1.4, page 3.

Problem 2. Textbook, Scenario 3.3, page 55.

Problem 3. GRAPHICS APPROPRIATION CASE Copyright (C) 1996 by Spenser Aden

Joe wants to create a home page for himself. He knows that when he looks at a page using a web-browser, all the graphics files are downloaded and stored on his machine in the browser cache. He scans the cache and appropriates some graphics from other sites for his own home page. When Joe puts his page up, he gets a nasty letter from Jane, who writes: "How DARE you steal the graphics from my Web page?! I worked for 3 days to get that to work, and you just took it for your own use. What gives you the RIGHT to take my work?"

1. Did Joe steal anything?
2. Does Jane have any ethical grounds to stand on?
3. What if Joe takes artwork from a commercial site rather than an individual's site?
4. What if Joe takes artwork *for* a profit-making commercial site?

Problem 4. UCITA (Challenge problem)

This study involves actual debate over proposed national legislation. UCITA is the Uniform Computer Information Transactions Act. It is a proposed extension of the Uniform Commercial Code to cover intangibles such as software and information systems. Almost all of the professional organizations concerned with Computer Ethics are deeply involved with this debate.

Your task is an ethical analysis of this proposed legislation. Do not over-extend by trying to understand the entire legal picture. Do answer the ethical analysis questions. You should find your own information about UCITA over the net (teamwork is good). A good place to start is the google search engine, looking for "UCITA 2000". The sites below represent several computer professional organizations.

www.arl.org/ucita.html
www.ucitaonline.com
www.4cite.org
linuxtoday.com/stories/15948.html
www.badsoftware.com
www.ieeeusa.org/forum/POSITIONS/ucita.html
www.cpsr.org/program/UCITA/ucita-fact.html
www2.wsba.org/sections/biz/lcc/report/2000/ucita.htm
www-cs.etsu.edu/seeri/WhitePaper.htm