

COPYRIGHT and COMPOSITION: Thinking Historically, Situating Disciplinarily

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5:00 pm, Common Room



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Article I, Section 8, Clause 8 of the United States Constitution provides *exclusive* rights to authors and inventors so that they might control the intellectual property they produce. This language was obviously written in the late 1700s--before contemporary practices of branding and advertising, prior to globalization and the international spread of corporations, and long before the explosion of digital tools and networks. Understanding how intellectual property is defined and enacted now, in a context of contemporary multimodal composition and digital production, is the current task. We need to situate copyright as *multiply constructed*: legally, historically, culturally, and disciplinarily.

In this presentation, I'll talk about the history of intellectual property in the U.S., situating this history in its legal and cultural contexts, and drawing disciplinary connections for us to consider. Throughout, I'll focus on cases, stories, and scholarship that illuminate and illustrate what's at stake in terms of copyright, culture(s), and composition.