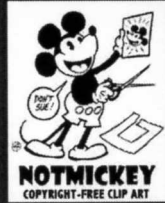


Digital Aesthetics 1:  
The cultural implications of  
copyright & intellectual property



SM2007 Culture, Society & New Technologies

Copyright is:

- A set of exclusive rights
- Granted by a government
- For a limited term
- To regulate the use of an idea or expression

Materials covered:

- Literary works
- Movies
- Musical compositions
- Sound recordings
- Paintings
- Photographs
- Software
- Live performances
- TV/audio broadcasts
- Industrial design (in some places)

Intellectual property: a more general term

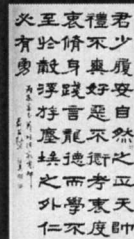
- Copyright
- Patents
- Trademarks

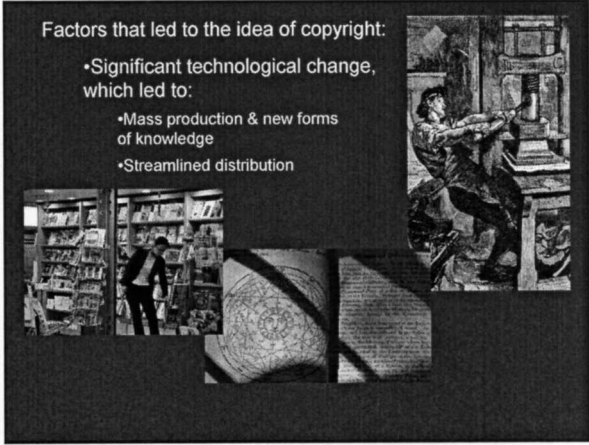
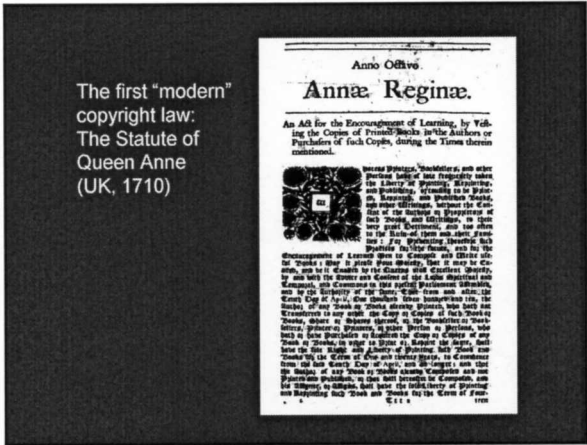
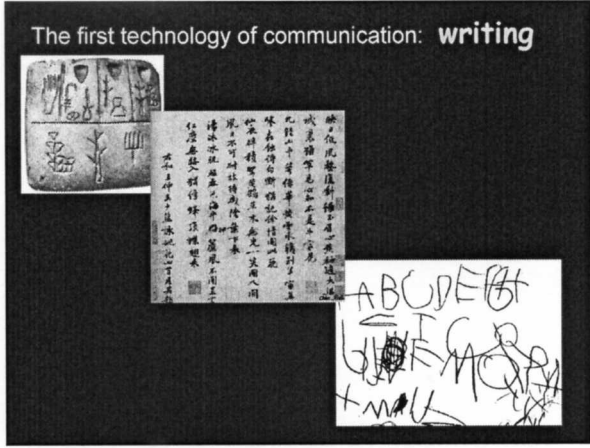
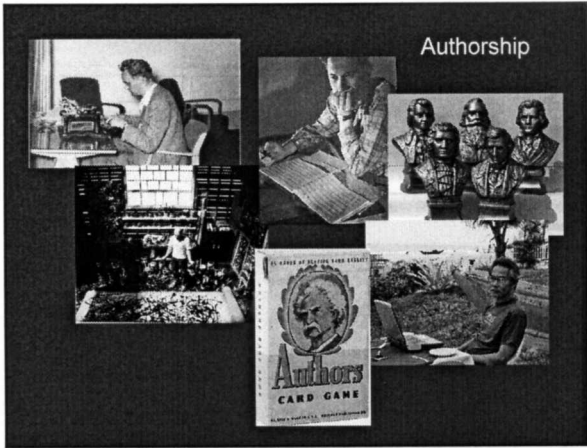


Copyright: contested cultural terrain



A key advantage of digital media technologies:  
They process all kinds of information the same way





Before the printing press, political & economic power in Europe was dominated by the Church

Velasquez, "Pope Innocent X" (1650)

A medieval scribe

Factors that led to the idea of copyright:

- A new economic order in Europe (mercantilism → capitalism)

Advantages of digital formats

- Fidelity
- Compression (4MB → 40KB)
- Flexibility
- Processing speed
- Convergence

The same copyright license can cover:

Plus:

- Cable TV
- Over-the-air TV
- Pay-per-view
- Webcast
- MP3

The downside of digital media for the media corporations



Responses to digital culture

- Near panic (by corporate copyright holders)

Three kinds of "fixes" have been tried:

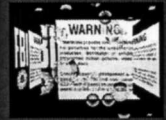
1. Technological



3. New business strategy



2. Legal



Responses to digital culture

- Celebration (by supporters of a digital "public domain")



The "postmodern aesthetic"

- Appropriation/borrowing is an accepted practice



Bacon, "Study After Velazquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X" (1953)

Lichtenstein, "Whaam!" (1967)

- "Originality" and "authorship" are devalued



