

# Ethics 2A and 2B

The assigned readings, especially the Shepard Fairey “Hope” poster case, made me re-evaluate how I’ve approached using creative work in the past.

## **Confession of a Past Copyright Crook**

Let’s be honest, before this class, I wasn’t always as mindful of copyright as I should have been. Looking back, I’ve definitely used cool images I found online without properly crediting the source. Maybe it was a cool graphic for a school project or a funny meme I shared on social media. At the time, I didn’t think much about it. Now, I realize the importance of giving credit to artists for their work. It’s about respecting their creativity and the effort they put into their creations.

## **The “Hope” Debate: Fair Use or Foul Play?**

The Shepard Fairey “Hope” poster case is a fascinating example of how copyright gets complicated. Fairey’s poster, inspired by an AP photograph, became an iconic image. While I understand his artistic reinterpretation, using the photo as a base without permission sparked the legal battle.

The arguments for fair use are interesting. Fairey’s poster undeniably had a different purpose than the original photo – promoting political activism versus news reporting. However, the core of the image remained the same. Personally, I lean towards the AP’s side. While Fairey undeniably added creative elements, profiting from a work derived substantially from another artist’s creation feels wrong. The outcome, with both parties sharing rights, seems like a fair compromise.

## Moving Forward: Ethical Design Practices

This class has definitely made me a more copyright-conscious designer. From now on, I'll be extra careful about using other people's work. Here's my plan:

- **Source Responsibly:** Always cite the source and acquire proper licensing whenever using external creative work.
  - **Give Credit Where Credit is Due:** When referencing another artist's work, properly credit them in presentations, social media posts, or anywhere else their work is used.
  - **Embrace Originality:** Focus on developing my own creative skills to produce unique and original design work.
1. AIGA Busines\_Ethics 47556721-Client-s-guide-to-design-1-1-MB.pdf
  2. AIGA Busines\_Ethics 47556733-Use-of-illustrations-1-MB.pdf