

thr@illinois.edu
University of Illinois
College of Law
504 East Pennsylvania

Thomas H. Rousse, J.D., Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Law and Richard W. & Marie L. Corman Scholar

University of Illinois College of Law

Education

Ph.D., '24, Media, Technology and Society Program, Northwestern School of Communication

J.D., '24, *cum laude*, Northwestern Pritzker School of Law

Northwestern University, Evanston–Chicago, IL, USA 2013–24

Creative Realism: Innovation Beyond the Ownership Incentive

Dissertation. Committee: Aaron Shaw (advisor) and Aymar Jean Christian, School of Communication; Matthew Kugler, Northwestern Pritzker School of Law

MSc., '13, Media, Technology and Games

IT University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark 2011–13

Play and Justice: Online Governance in Game Communities

Master's Thesis advised by Miguel Sicart, IT University of Copenhagen

B.A., '10, American Studies with Honors, *magna cum laude*, Weinberg College of Arts & Science

Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, USA 2006–10

Electronic Games and the First Amendment: Free Speech Protection in the 21st Century

Senior Thesis advised by Martin H. Redish, Northwestern Pritzker School of Law

Professional Experience

References available by request.

University of Illinois College of Law, Champaign, IL

Assistant Professor of Law and Richard W. & Marie L. Corman Scholar

August 2026–Present

Teaching Video Game Law and Contracts; research on intellectual property, contracts, and the law of creative industries.

Rousse Law L.C., New Orleans, LA

Sole Practitioner (part-time)

October 2024–Present

Intellectual property strategy and registration; expropriation disputes and right of way negotiations; counsel on entertainment contracts.

Northwestern Pritzker School of Law, Chicago, IL

Research Associate

January–December 2025

Pursued independent research on copyright and AI; collaborated with Professor Peter DiCola on the political economy of music licensing.

Stoel Rives LLP, Technology & Intellectual Property Group, Portland, OR

TIP Litigation Associate

2021–22

TIP Law Clerk

Fall 2018–20

TIP Summer Associate

Summer 2018

Worked with close-knit group of partners on all phases of IP litigation and counsel for matters spanning copyright, trademark, trade dress, utility patents, design patents, WIPO domain name tribunals, trade secret, commercial defamation, contract disputes, label compliance, and related commercial issues for clients ranging from individuals represented pro bono to major multinational corporations. Led discovery production and response, conducted investigations into alleged trade secret leaks, developed case strategy and facts for high tempo commercial defamation motion practice, analyzed patent validity, conducted historical research to invalidate opposing patents, interviewed and advised clients, scrutinized expert witness reports. Full brief drafting and specialized in-depth research on complex topics at trial and appellate level in federal court as well as PTAB, TTAB, WIPO, and other IP tribunals.

United States District Court, District of Oregon, Portland, OR

Deputy Clerk to Hon. Michael H. Simon

May–July 2017

Supported clerks and judge with legal writing and research; observed trials and negotiations; drafted orders for SSDI and asylum matters as well as orders on pre-trial motions.

United States Court of Appeals, Fifth Circuit, New Orleans, LA

Judicial Extern to Hon. James L. Dennis

May–August 2016

Advised clerks and judge on staff attorney opinions and party briefs; sentencing guideline recommendations; census of Fifth Circuit cases on reasonable suspicion to support drafting for published dissent; observed oral argument.

Science of Networks in Communities (SONIC) Lab, Evanston, IL

Research Assistant

2009–11

Worked with teams led by Brooke Foucault-Welles & Noshir Contractor to support IRB compliance, test videogame-based social network experiments, and support article research and writing for NSF and IARPA-funded grants; supervised a team of undergraduate researchers in qualitative research within virtual worlds.

Academic Publications and Accepted Manuscripts

- Thomas H. Rouse. Some Respect Reserved? Survey Experiment Insights on the Perception of Creative Commons and Copyright Infringement. 44 CARDOZO ARTS & ENT. L.J. 269 (2026).
- Matthew Kugler & Thomas H. Rouse. *The Privacy Hierarchy: Trade Secret and Fourth Amendment Expectations*, 104 IOWA L. REV. 1223 (2019).
- Lisa B. Hurwitz, Aubry L. Alvarez, Alexis R. Lauricella, Thomas H. Rouse, Heather Montague, & Ellen Wartella. "Content Analysis Across New Media Platforms: Methodological Considerations for Capturing Media-Rich Data." *New Media & Society*. Vol. 20, No. 2, pp. 532–548 (2018).
- Thomas H. Rouse. "Reconstructing *WARRIOR*: Vectorbeams, Pepper's Ghost and Business Intrigue in Early Arcade Design." *Kinephanos*. (2015). (Invited submission for Best Paper Award).
- Thomas H. Rouse. "Ian Bogost's *A Slow Year*." *Well-Played Journal*. Vol. 4, No. 1 (2015).
- Brooke Foucault-Welles, Thomas H. Rouse, Nick Merrill, & Noshir Contractor. "Virtually Friends: An Exploration of Friendship Claims and Expectations in Immersive Virtual Worlds." *Journal For Virtual Worlds Research* 7, no. 2 (2014).
- Thomas H. Rouse. *Electronic Games and The First Amendment*. 4 NORTHWESTERN INTERDISCIPLINARY L. REV. 173 (2011).
- Thomas H. Rouse. "Electronic Games and the First Amendment." *First Amendment Rights: An Encyclopedia*. Eds. Nancy Lind & Erik Rankin. ABC-CLIO: 2012. [Reprinted as chapter in edited collection.]
- Thomas H. Rouse. "A Review of Raiford Guins' *Game After*." *American Journal of Play*. Vol. 7.2, (2015).
- Thomas H. Rouse. "A Review of Chris Paul's *Wordplay*." *Journal of Gaming and Virtual Worlds*. Vol. 5.1 (2014).

Academic Publications in Progress

- Thomas H. Rouse. *Reassembling IP Norms: From Gatekeepers of Indie Games to Gamergate*. [Based on dissertation research; presented at DiGRA '25, WIPIP '26, and LSA '26; targeting the February 2027 law review submission cycle.]
- Thomas H. Rouse. *Fake, Faux Fake, and Fakeout Advertising in Mobile Games Advertising*.
- Thomas H. Rouse. *The Pinball Paradox: Creation and Regulation in Chicago Gaming*. [Based on research from Ph.D. coursework and conference presentations. Reworking prior material and adding additional research for submission to media studies venues.]
- Thomas H. Rouse. *A Review of Julien Mailland's The Game That Never Ends: How Lawyers Shape the Videogame Industry*. [Book review, in draft.]

Decisions on Selected Matters

Rasa Vineyards, LLC v. Rasavada, LLC., TTAB Opp. No. 91268532 (Jan. 4. 2023).

Assisted in opposing registration of Mark RASAVADA for Mark-holder Rasa Vineyards.

Alaska Oil and Gas Association v. Obada Alzatari, WIPO Case No. D2021-3598 (2021).

Assisted in representing business association in recovery of stolen domain name.

Meredith Lodging LLC v. Vacasa LLC, 6:21-cv-326-MC (D. Or. Nov. 15, 2021).

Assisted in defending rental management company against commercial defamation.

Bar and Court Admissions

State of Louisiana	October 2024
State of Oregon	May 2026 (Inactive)
Eastern District of Louisiana (Federal)	March 2025

Teaching Experience

Instructor of Record, University of Illinois College of Law, Champaign, IL, 2026–

Video Game Law

Seminar (2 credits), Fall 2026

Teaching Assistant, **Northwestern University**, School of Communication, Evanston, IL, USA, 2013–18

Privacy Law

Undergraduate course with Prof. Rick Morris, Spring 2018

Economics of Creative Enterprise

MSc. course with Prof. Cory Sandrock, Winter 2018

Social Network Analysis

Ph.D. and MSc. course with Prof. Noshir Contractor, Fall 2014, Fall 2017

Introduction to Social Network Analysis

Undergraduate course with Prof. Noshir Contractor, Spring 2015

Understanding and Leveraging Organizational Networks

MSc. course with Prof. Noshir Contractor, Spring 2014

Designing and Leveraging Organizational Networks

MMM course with Prof. Noshir Contractor, Spring 2014

Teaching Assistant, **IT University of Copenhagen**, Copenhagen, Denmark, 2012

Foundations of Play and Games

MSc. Course with Prof. Espen Aarseth & Daniel Vella, Fall 2012

Conference Proceedings and Presentations

Thomas H. Rousse. “Against Neodeodandism: Artificial Intelligence Is Not an Author.”

Faculty Retreat, University of Illinois College of Law. Champaign, IL. August 18th, 2026.

Thomas H. Rousse. “Build to the Line.” Ready Player One Webinar Series, Section on Technology, Law & Legal Education, American Association of Law Schools. July 15th, 2026.

Thomas H. Rousse. “Indie Innovation: Norms, Cultural Platforms and Shaming v. Intellectual Property in Independent Video Game Creation, 2005–2019.” Law and Society Association. San Francisco, CA. May 29th, 2026.

Thomas H. Rousse. “Fake, Faux Fake, and Fakeout Advertising in Mobile Games.” What is...? Hosted by the University of Oregon School of Journalism and Communication. April 25th, 2026.

Thomas H. Rousse. “Indie Innovation: Normative Failure in Video Game Development.” Works In Progress in Intellectual Property.” Boston, MA. Feb. 27, 2026.

Thomas H. Rousse. “Measuring Substantive Similarity in Videogames Through AI-Generated Prototyping,” Sh[ai]rk Tank Panel. Kevin Frazier, Kevin Lee, and Renee Henson (moderators). American Association of Law Schools. New Orleans, LA. Jan. 7th, 2026.

Thomas H. Rousse. “Open Licensing, Hidden Costs: Survey Experiment Insights on Creative Commons and Copyright Infringement.” Intellectual Property Scholars Conference. Chicago, IL. August 8th, 2025.

Thomas H. Rousse. “Indie Innovation: Norms, Cultural Platforms and Shaming v. Intellectual Property in Independent Videogame Creation, 2005–2019.” Digital Games Research Association. Msida, Malta. July 3rd, 2025.

Thomas H. Rousse. “Open Licensing, Hidden Costs: Survey Experiment Insights on Creative Commons and Copyright Infringement.” Law and Society Association. Chicago, IL. March 22nd, 2025.

Thomas H. Rousse. “Social Science at the Bar: Media Effects Research and the Supreme Court in *Brown v. Electronic Merchants Association*.” Law and Society Association. New Orleans, LA. June 4th, 2016.

Thomas H. Rousse. “Chicago’s Pinball Paradox: The Legal Impact of Games and Gambling.” Digital Games Research Association. Lüneburg, Germany, May 14th, 2015.

Thomas H. Rousse. “Ian Bogost’s *A Slow Year*.” Digital Games Research Association, Well-Played Summit. Snowbird, Utah. June 27th, 2014.

- Thomas H. Rousse. “Chicago’s Pinball Paradox: Regulation and Production.” Interplay: A Graduate Studies Games Conference. Chicago, IL. October 23rd, 2014.
- Thomas H. Rousse. “Building *WARRIOR*: Vectorbeams, Pepper’s Ghost & Business Intrigue in Early Arcade Design.” Symposium Annuel Histoire du Jeu 2014: Cultural History of Video Games. Grande Bibliotheque, Montreal, Canada. June 28th, 2014. (*Best Paper Award.*)
- Thomas H. Rousse. “Massively Multiplayer Justice: *League of Legends*’ Tribunal as Online Dispute Resolution.” Game Studies Pre-Conference, International Communication Association. Seattle, WA, USA. May 22nd, 2014.
- Thomas H. Rousse. “Excessive Play.” Extending Play: Media Studies Conference. Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. New Brunswick, NJ. April 19th, 2013.
- Thomas H. Rousse. “Uncanny Telepresence.” Virtual World Research Network Inaugural Conference. University of Edinburgh, Scotland. May 18th, 2012.
- Thomas H. Rousse. “What *EMA v. Schwarzenegger* Can Teach Us: New Media and Free Speech Theory.” The Game Behind the Video Game: Business, Regulation, and Society in the Gaming Industry. Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. New Brunswick, NJ. April 8–9th, 2011.
- Foucault Welles, B., Shim, K. J., Ratan, R., Kennedy, T. L. M., Rousse, T., Contractor, N., Srivastava, J., & Williams, D. “Disambiguating Age, Gender, and Skill: An Exploration of Online Chat Behaviors Among MMOG Players.” Paper presented by Foucault Welles, International Sunbelt Social Network Conference (XXXI). St. Peter Beach, FL. February 10th, 2011.

Awards and Grants

- Best Paper Award, International Symposium for the History of the Electronic Game, Montreal, Canada, 2014
- International Game Developer’s Association Scholar Award, Game Developer’s Conference, San Francisco, 2013
- Scholarship and stipend for academic merit, M.Sc. in Media, Technology and Games, IT University of Copenhagen, 2011–13
- Weinberg Summer Research Grant (\$3,000), “Foundations of Constitutional Law,” Advisor: Martin Redish, Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law; Northwestern University, 2009
- American Studies Department Nominee, Katherine L. Kriehbaum Scholarship, Northwestern University, 2009
- Undergraduate Research Grant (\$3,000), “Social Fantasy Play in *World of Warcraft*: An Ethnography,” Advisor: Gary Alan Fine, Department of Sociology, Northwestern University, 2008

Institutional and Academic Service

Reviewer, Digital Games Research Association Conference, 2025–Present

Senior Online Editor (now Online Editor-in-Chief on current masthead)

Northwestern University Law Review Vol. 112, February 2017–April 2018

Dean's Law and Technology Committee Member

Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law, 2016–17

Vice President & Director of Finance, American Constitution Society

Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law Chapter, 2016–17

President, High Tech Law Society

Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law Chapter, 2016–17

Executive Board Secretary

Digital Games Research Association (DiGRA), 2012–14

Conference Submission Referee

International Communications Association, 2013

Graduate Fellow, Chapin Humanities Residential College

Northwestern University, 2013–15

Copy Editor, Transactions of the Digital Games Research Association (ToDIGRA), 2013

Founder and President, PlayIT CPH Student Group

IT University of Copenhagen, 2012–13

Judge, Nordic Indie Sensation Award

Copenhagen Games Collective, 2013–15

Student Representative, Subject Area Team: Media, Technology & Games, (2 terms)

IT University of Copenhagen 2011–13

Student Representative

International Game Developer's Association (IGDA) Denmark 2011–12

Editor-in-Chief, Helicon Literary Magazine

Northwestern University, 2009–10

Vice President of Academic Affairs, Residential College Board

Northwestern University, 2009–10

President, Chapin Humanities Residential College (2 terms)

Northwestern University, 2008–10

Participant, Lecturer Hiring Committee

Sociology Department, Northwestern University, 2009

Selected Popular Writing, Games & Talks

Curator, *Chicago Games as Art & Culture*, Dittmar Memorial Gallery, Northwestern University. October 30th–December 2nd, 2014.

Tommy Rousse. “On the Frontlines of the Coming Backlash Against VR.” *Kill Screen*, Vol. 8. “The VR Issue.” May 2014.

Producer, Game Designer, and Sound Designer, *LAZA KNITEZ!!* arcade game.

Winner of Nordic Indie Sensation Award 2012, Nordic Game Conference.

Nominated for Artistic Excellence, Danish Spilprisen 2013.

Released for OUYA Android Microconsole and Windows, OSX & Linux, 2014.

Selected for exhibition in the U.S. (including Museum of the Moving Image), Denmark, Sweden, Belgium, Germany, South Africa, and Australia.

“Excessive Games,” invited talk, *Free to Play*, Designcenter de Winkelhaak, Antwerp, Belgium. June 2nd, 2013.

Independent games exhibitor, “Babycade project,” with Glitchnap. Roskilde Music Festival, Denmark, June 2013.

Tommy Rousse. “Chewing the Cud: Ian Bogost’s *A Slow Year* Review.” *Kill Screen*. April 20th, 2012. Republished on *Pitchfork*.

Tommy Rousse. “On Ruining *Dear Esther*.” *Oh No! Video Games!* March 19th, 2012. Featured on *Critical Distance*, cited by several academic publications and books.

Tommy Rousse. “Miniatures: Control & the Self.” *The Ontological Geek*. March 26th, 2012. Featured on *Critical Distance*.

Tommy Rousse. “Gaming’s Newest Grind: Nordic Game Jam.” *Kill Screen*. February 9th, 2012.

Tommy Rousse. “Not New Enough: *Brown v. EMA*.” *Kill Screen*. July 5th, 2011.