1. Write a 342-standard summary of the Encore paper by Burnett and Feamster
2. (**research questions**… (end of 6th page) Do governments operate filters in a centralized way at Internet routers at the nations borders, or in a decentralized way closer to the users? How quickly are censors able to remove content from microblogging sites? Does censorship operate purely by blocking or removal of content, or are performance degradation and modification of content also part of the picture? How much censorship is there?
3. **contributions** Developed new measurement technology called “encore”, developed distributed measurement schedule platform, and found a way to measure censorship
4. **methods** An invisible script is embedded within the sites that users visit (usually through advertisements). The computer would download Encore and the script would send the user’s IP address without their knowledge/consent.
5. **results** Caused a huge ethical debate
6. **limitations** danger of poking around in censored information, thus decided to skew research instead on limited number of websites
7. **importance** This research raises important ethical questions for further research. For example, is the IP address considered to be personally identifying information that is private? This seems to vary country by country. Another example of a good question raised is research involving technology identifiable as human subject research?

1. The Feamster lab's research met ethical standards.

The Feamster lab’s research met ethical standards because before they even started conducting their research, it was determined that the research was not human subject research. Thus, they did not outright break any rules. Additionally, the researchers took ethical concerns into mind, and they chose to restrict their measurement device “encore” to measure only a few sites in consideration of the safety of those who were collecting data on their research. Finally, they chose instead to focus their research on developing measurement technology rather than reporting the results from the measurements they gathered. All in all, the group did actions in consideration of the wellbeing of people while not sacrificing the quality, caliber, and freedom of their research.

* 1. Concluded that the research was not human subject research
  2. Took ethical concerns into mind, restricted encore to measure only a few sites
  3. Focused research on developing measurement technology, not on reporting results from the measurements they gathered

1. The Feamster lab's research did not meet ethical standards; the lab and its leadership bear primary responsibility for the ethical failings of the work.

The Feamster lab’s research did not meet ethical standards, because they chose to go about research in a manner which they said themselves, “may endanger users in repressive countries”. These researchers failed to consider the safety and wellbeing of their participants, who did not even know they were participating. Instead, these researchers chose to not allow for consent for their users because they deemed it as “impractical”. Would you steal someone’s car because it was “impractical” go out and get your own car? This reasoning is completely illegitimate and illustrates how unethically sound these researchers are.

* 1. p. 654 “may endanger users in repressive countries”
  2. Done without consent
  3. Reasoning for doing without consent is because it’s impractical

1. The Feamster lab's research did not meet ethics standards; this was a systemic failure, not a failure of any particular involved party.

The Feamster lab did not meet ethical standards, but this was not their own fault. These individuals did not create the laws regarding censorship particularly in other countries. It also begs to question whether or not our current system is ethical. In our current environment, is it ethical to track what users are doing? Hubspot technology allows for individuals to track whether or not they have viewed and opened their emails. This is something that is done without the knowledge and consent of the other user. It is not inherent that the person who tracked their mail has poor ethics, but rather a systematic issue of lacking knowledge. This further applies to the modern day version of advertisement tracking. Many business models like facebook rely on tracking advertisers to make money. Given that this is the current climate for technology- it is unjust to put all of the blame solely on these researchers. There is a larger systematic issue which allows for unethical tracking.

* 1. Did not create the laws/censorship
  2. Is it ethical to track who opens your emails?
  3. Is it ethical to track advertisements?

Additionally, you may be assigned to group (d):

1. You are the judges of the debate. Your job is to articulate the principles and criteria on which you will judge the debate, and pass judgement at the end.

Did the group consider beneficence? (goal of the welfare of research participants and the balancing of probable harms.)

Did the group’s argument follow the three principles outlined in Privacy as Contextual Integrity by Helen Nisenbaum?

Personally, I think that this is a combination between the fault being on the researchers, and a larger systematic issue that is at hand. The researchers could have very wisely chosen to do things differently. For example, rather than releasing this across the globe and without consent of their users, they could have instead chosen to traverse to these different countries themselves and test to see what was reachable or not. If these resources were not possible, they should have gotten consent for individuals to try out different websites. It is just not ethically sound to spy on what others are doing, while hypothetically putting them in danger, for your own benefit.

On a larger scale, there is an issue that this technology is so easy to embed and that there are no laws currently existing that directly punish actions as such. It is not humanitarian to out rightly put others at risk. A very clear benefit of this paper is that such information is now out in the open and now it these ethical questions must be addressed.