

## *IP, Creativity, and a Sense of Belonging*

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A number of scholars have explored IP's "negative spaces": areas of creation and innovation that thrive in the absence of formal protection. Scholars have observed that in many of these areas, copying and imitation are governed by informal "IP without IP" norms, and have speculated that adherence to these norms may be driven by economic motivators such as network effects and non-economic motivators such as shame and reputation. This project observes a potential synergy between low-IP equilibria and motivations to create, hypothesizing that in a number of low-IP communities, the same factors that encourage creation also encourage adherence to informal copying and imitation norms that differ from formal law. Specifically, in these areas, participants are motivated to create by a desire to "belong" to a particular creative community, and are motivated to comply with norms by that same desire for belonging. It follows logically that these communities would develop and adhere to copying and imitation norms different from those imposed by law not only to meet the particular needs of the creative community, but also as a form of "setting apart" - to distinguish the norms of the community from the more conventional strictures of formal law and reinforce the meaning of "belonging" to those creative communities. This refines the common narrative of formal intellectual property law as a necessary incentive for creation and innovation. Finally, the project explores the normative implications of this refinement.

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