

Code, culture and economics

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The problem of infinity

- Information goods can be copied infinitely
- Information goods are not scarce
- No economic value in *copies*
- Lots of value in the act of original creation
- How to capture that value?

Solution: Cooking-pot market

- “Cooking-pot market”
- Implicit exchange
- One-time value at the point of creation
- Access to copies of diverse creations

Solution: free software businesses

- **One-time creation gets you:**
 - **Reputation**
 - **Jobs**
 - **Skills**
 - **Access to services**
 - **Service-based business model**
 - **Money**

Solution: from culture

- **From past cultural activity...**
 - Patronage (related to creation, performance, not copying)
 - Subscription model for publishing novels (amidst rampant “piracy”, this linked future creation to profits from current creation)
 - “Street performer protocol”

Code is culture, is culture code?

- **Code – free software – has adopted an economic alignment of profits and creativity typical of (past) cultural activity**
- **Still, code uses a different pricing model**

Code is culture, is culture code?

- How much cultural activity faces the problem of infinity?
- Is cultural production as non-rival as code? “sharing” vs authorship
- “Improvement” or vandalism?