

Mol -Mike-20050314080011

To: Julie L. Sigall
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From: Mike Mol

Comment:

I've tried on occasion to find software copyright holders, with the interest of aiding in the porting of their software to platforms I use, or, failing that, to get permission to clone their software. I've only found my target once, and that was in response to an announcement that I was in the process of building specs for a clone.

I don't see a particular need to automatically grant the right to use software whose author can't be found, SO LONG AS there is a central, free system that can be used to track down their works.

This could be as simple as a registry of copyrighted works, complete with contact information. If the contact information becomes invalid, and is not fixed within a specific amount of time, ONLY THEN would the copyrighted works become available for free use.

It would probably be best to provide strong incentive for developers to register their works. Such an incentive could take the form of greater copyright protections when registered than when not registered. To achieve this, greater specific protections could be allowed, or existing default protections could be reduced.

I would suggest making such protection description retroactive, since there's already precedent of retroactive copyright law.