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Science fiction refers to space as the next frontier, as the only remaining unexplored realm. Describing space this way makes it appear as the only territory left into which man can expand and grow. However, other forums exist through which an individual can advance himself and the rest of humanity. Civilization progresses along paths built on these precious forums. An individual can attain monetary success, grow intellectually, or create matters that will advance culture and technology. As long as a field leaves its venues open to the expression of freedom and creativity, a culture as a whole can improve and advance.

However, in each human being there rests a layer of innate selfishness, which can lead to the restriction of such forums. In the pursuit of self-preservation, in true Darwinian style, those with the opportunity to lend themselves security, those fittest for survival, will do so. Humans do not compete directly for food, at least in the more industrialized nations, as do most other animals, but rather they compete for authority and wealth. If an individual can best protect his or her own interests by isolating a territory, by securing ownership of it, he or she will. Just as animals struggle territorially for food and mating grounds, so do humans struggle for fields yielding potential economic growth. Ownership of such fields, granted legally through such terms as copyright or trademark, protects the individual but also locks out others seeking to grow on that plane (Lessig 318). Moreover, this pattern of seeking ownership has increased as technology has advanced. Now, pursuit of ownership has delved into almost ridiculous claims, as the conflict between the writers of the non-fictional [Holy Blood, Holy Grail](#) and the author of the fictional [The Da Vinci Code](#), described by Tim Wu in his article *The Holy Grail Wars*, displays. In this conflict, the authors of [Holy Blood, Holy Grail](#) actually try to gain ownership over, what they call historical facts (Wu). The extent to which people will go to gain ownership and profit seems unbounded.

The only opposition to this expanding restrictiveness of ownership lies in the efforts of the individual. Only the struggle to maintain freedom and creativity can tide the growth of ownership. However, the willingness of individuals to fight against the oppression of ownership has faded. People oppose ownership only when, in their pursuit of advancement, they infringe, often unintentionally, on the territory of others. Additionally, they only seek advancement in a field when they have an understanding of

that field. As technology advances the ability of an individual to gain an understanding of it becomes harder and harder. Modern technology requires more effort and more time to achieve an understanding (Toumey 531). The complexity, intricate details, and mass amount of material required to have an adequate understanding, has increased exponentially since the dawn of science. Gaining an understanding of only one field with depth enough to specialize in it has come to require an immense amount of commitment.

**W**ithout an understanding of a field, one cannot achieve all that the respective field has to offer and cannot advance oneself through it. As reaching an understanding of science's true extent becomes more and more impractical, it augments the ownership of those already in control and only increases the lack of opportunities granted to individual thinkers. The more technical science becomes the less willing the average person becomes to devote the required effort to gaining comprehension of it.

Unwillingness to apply necessary effort leads to a life of following. Living a life of absolute trust in authorities requires much less work than a life of complete independence. Trust in plenary powers, the simulacrum they evoke, and the guidance of our lives they provide, make life simpler (Toumey 530). Trust codifies life and makes the human quest for understanding a more achievable goal. Just as it originated in early man, pursuit of understanding has promoted the growth of plenary authorities. Religion began as a way to understand the mysterious environment into which man was born (Esler 19). It provided a sense of control, which humans desperately cling to because of the feelings of safety it instills. A safer world may seem ideal. However, the restrictions it would enforce would call for immense sacrifices, of which type, our modern society has already begun to make.

People trust authorities, surrender to them control, and grant them ownership. In doing so, people sacrifice their freedom and potential for creativity, all for the comfort of an organized world. The organization and ease of a trust-based society, coupled with the impenetrability of the technological world leads a person to choose a passive life, a life where one leaves all of the important decisions to others (Percy 413). One surrenders creativity for order, and freedom for security.

Human comfort exists in an almost unachievable balance of contradictory matters. Calm and excitement, self-indulgence and charity, faith and reason, absolute sovereignty and slavery, unbounded creative entropy and order; Aristotle's pendulum between hubris and *arête* as well as Buddha's Middle Way, prescribe this balanced middle path as the road to peace and full human achievement (Brodd 66; Hunt et al. 99). Humans, as sentient creatures, reach most of our achievements through action of the mind, not body. The mind constantly functions, assessing situations and analyzing environments. However, it also constantly creates. Whether goals, direct plans, or art, these creations work continuously for the mind to improve a being's existence. Some creations of the mind may serve no greater purpose than to bring about a smile amidst a dark day. However, they do still help a person move through life. Creativity works innately in each human being to provide a guide through life and to define each as an individual. It expresses the unique spirit of an individual and helps separate it from the masses.

However, problems do not arise in the pursuit of thinking creatively. Rather they arise in finding a forum to express these creative notions. The evolution of our society into the digital-age form it has adopted has restricted the accessibility of such forums. The specialization in, and ownership of, technological fields has increased the skill and training necessary to use them as a forum of expression, making them less available to the entire population. With creativity as an innate, continuous, function and outlets through which to express them restricted by our modern age, a challenge confronts

modern man. Where can one convey these thoughts of imagination, and furthermore how can one use them to help advance one's status in life? The ability of an individual to display what creative notions vibrate through him measures the extent of freedom he claims.

If everyone were to struggle against the abusive ownership of creative outlets then every individual would experience absolute freedom. However, no matter the charisma of the leader, one cannot achieve complete unified resistance. Humans struggle with a need for security and understanding, along with their need to individualize themselves creatively. Humanity grew amidst a perennial struggle to balance these two temptations. The urges towards security lead a person to follow the suggested path of authorities rather than paving one's own in freedom. The feebleness of the call for freedom renders it ineffective. Ownership and restrictions on creative outlets, and resultantly advancement, runs nearly unopposed when only confronted with a disorganized, meek call for freedom. Technology has caused this change.

In prior generations, freedom of creativity, though still fighting the common urge to sacrifice anything necessary for order, did not face the severe degree of ownership as does our technological society (Lessig 319). Without individuals being scared away from fields of advancement by complexities and mass detail, specialization was not required and even nonprofessionals could reap the benefits of a creative medium. Someone could express the creative content of his or her mind through any media imaginable, if, and when, the urge arose. However, today one needs immense training before gaining the ability to use a field to the full scope of its potential. The advancement of technology has changed things. It has made ownership easier for some and the struggle against it weaker in others, due primarily to the lack of motivation in the masses and the impracticality of specialization.

The growing tide of ownership does not restrict creativity. However, it does restrict freedom, the conductor through which creativity of the individual steps onto the world's stage.

The next frontier of advancement, a field not yet completely under ownership control, still has the potential to provide a creative outlet to the common person. The Internet, the epitome of the digital age, still presents opportunities for creative advancement (Lessig 319). However, as it becomes more and more an influential aspect of modern life, its economic value increases and, resultantly, its attractiveness as a property augments. The Internet, if left to the most business savvy investor like most other past innovations, will soon fall into the hands of an owner. Then, no longer could the public treat it, as a creative media, as part of their domain.

Creativity, without drastic environmental and social changes, should always remain present in humans as a constant natural function. The battle between freedom and ownership, however, will wage on eternally. What better fits civilization, absolute obedience and order, absolute sovereignty, or a balance of the two? What better suits the individual, security and trust, or independence and freedom? What balance of ownership and freedom best amplifies growth and advancement? How one views authority in respect to its influence on the individual and society, whether one sees it as corrupt and selfish or as a source of reason, makes an impact on how one views the war between freedom and control. No matter what, however, regardless of what the belief, one should make that decision a personal responsibility. Technology has changed the balance between ownership and freedom, however whether one perceives that change as beneficial or not, still lies in the heart of the individual. How one makes this decision and acts upon it marks the challenge of the digital age.

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