The Moral Dimensions of Intellectual Property Rights

Steven Ang, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

This highly original and exploratory book analyses the role morality plays in Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs).

Steven Ang builds his idea that the justification for IPRs is bound up with a simultaneous duty to share part of that intellectual resource through public rights of access and a public domain which is facilitated by the moral elements in the various dimensions of IPR. In a globalized world with globalizing IPRs where culturally assumed norms must be re-examined, this work has an urgent and important contribution to make because it takes the main features of internationally mandated IPRs as a starting point and explores the moral commitments they imply and rely on, to identify a framework for further development and reform of IP regimes.

‘Professor Ang’s thoughtful book is the first comprehensive analysis of the philosophic underpinnings of the morality clauses contained in the principal IPR statutes. Morality issues in intellectual property are becoming increasingly important as a consequence of the recent debates over access to proprietary medicines, the implications of DNA patenting for medical treatment and the impact of IPRs on food security. Professor Ang’s book provides an important touchstone for consideration of these issues.’

– Michael Blakeney, University of Western Australia