



Virtual Items

Panel IV, 2013 Internet Law and Public Policy
Conference

May 4, 2013

Sources of Virtual Items

- **Massively multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG)** – Used for the development of the player's character, with "buffing" or "nerfing", *i.e.*, the strengthening or weakening, respectively, of particular game elements to defeat monsters and enter into the next level.
- **Digital currency** – Future denomination for Bitcoin and Ripple
- What else?



World of WarCraft EULA

- Ownership. A. *All* title, ownership rights and intellectual property rights *in and to the Game* and all copies thereof (including without limitation any titles, computer code, themes, **objects, characters, character names**, stories, dialog, catch phrases, locations, concepts, **artwork, character inventories**, structural or landscape designs, animations, sounds, musical compositions and recordings, audio-visual effects, **storylines, character likenesses**,



Examples of Virtual Objects

- EVE Online : “Tempest Tribal Issue” valued at 112,500,000,000 ISK (roughly US\$225)
- 500M ISK \leq US\$20
- “Titan Class” is valued around US\$6,000



Virtual Property

- *Guinness World Records 2008*, p. 301 - parcels at Planet Calypso in the Entropia Universe was sold for US\$635,000.00, a stunning ROI of 535% in five years.



Tragedies

- The murder case against Qiu Chengwei (邱誠偉) – over a stolen “dragon-slaying sword” (June 2005)
- Murder of Lee Hungwei (李鴻偉) – Victim slain by defendant and his friends after the latter’s character was “killed” online by the victim (June 2005)



So, How about

- No significance?
- Personal properties?
- Credits – as in points on a gift card or “miles” on an airline frequent flyer program?
- Services?
- Intellectual property rights?
- *Sui generis* rights?
- Tax and other consequences (civil and criminal liabilities)?