equipment own all rights to its progeny, including the right to copyright its writings, just as the owner of a dog owns its puppies?

The 1976 Copyright Act was passed as an attempt to bring legal protection of writings into the new technology. Even now technology is asking questions that the 1984 Copyright Act cannot answer. Eventually, either the courts will answer questions that the act does not, or Congress must produce new forms of protection that are appropriate to new technologies. The community of computer professionals must participate in the formulation of the answers to be provided.

The law has few, if any, “right” answers. Rather, answers seem best in the light of the kind of society that the majority wishes to foster. However, society depends on those with special expertise to provide insights into the feasibility and implications of various possible solutions so that the optimal answer can be identified. Who owns the product of intelligent software?

This is the question. While I believe that the owner or licensee of creative software should have all rights in the product of such software, a definitive answer is yet to be found.

References
7. 17 USC, Sec. 201(b).
8. 17 USC, Sec. 101.

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