

Apple and Intellectual Property

Guest post by Chris Bassil.

In recent news, Apple, Inc. has won a decisive lawsuit against fellow electronics and software developer Samsung. The lawsuit, which found Samsung guilty of infringing on a number of Apple's patents, awarded over \$1 billion to Apple, and sent a formidably clear message to all others in the field. It has effectively dictated that any imitation of Apple's products will not be tolerated, and that consumers should receive all their finger scrolling and "pinch-to-enlarge" technology from a single company.

All of this, of course, has been done in the name of property rights. Specifically, it has been done in the name of protecting Apple's "intellectual property rights," a concept that today goes almost universally unquestioned. This is unfortunate, however, as the idea of intellectual property rests on less-than-sturdy philosophical foundations, and is not at all clear to be entirely justified.

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