

How “Intellectual Property” Impedes Competition

Written by Kevin Carson, as published at the Center for a Stateless Society.

Any consideration of “intellectual property rights” must start from the understanding that such “rights” undermine genuine property rights and hence are illegitimate in terms of libertarian principle. Real, tangible property rights result from natural scarcity and follow as a matter of course from the attempt to maintain occupancy of physical property that cannot be possessed by more than one person at a time.

“Intellectual property,” on the other hand, creates artificial scarcity where it does not naturally exist and can only be enforced by invading real, tangible property and preventing the owner from using it in ways that violate the supposed intellectual property rights of others.

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