

Preface and Acknowledgements

Property theory, for the most part, uses for its examples physical objects. Land, hunting on land, fisheries and the turfs which servants have cut are amongst the favourites. Intellectual property law deals with abstract objects. Abstract objects are not like physical objects. They do not, for instance, have obvious boundaries. For this reason at least intellectual property rights are worth a separate philosophical investigation.

This book develops one line of investigation using the tools of analytical philosophy. It is interdisciplinary minded in its approach. It draws on history, economics and sociology in the arguments it develops. For the purpose of illustration and example it uses the intellectual property law of Australia and England and, to a lesser extent, US intellectual property law. It is not and could not hope to be a survey of intellectual property law in these jurisdictions. Many excellent legal texts would have to be combined to do that job. The book should be of interest to intellectual property teachers, social and political theorists with an interest in property and intellectual property lawyers. The arguments are presented in a way which makes them accessible to the non-specialist.

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