Essay on Tavani Ch 8

This week in Tavani Ch 8 I was faced with a question I had never really considered fully before. That is, should there be such thing as intellectual property? Something I had always just assumed to be good and serve us in a desirable way. There are inherent properties of intellectual property that make this question more important now than ever. In this essay I will claim that no, you should not be able to own intellectual property.

Let’s start off with, what is it? What is intellectual property? According to the World Intellectual Property Organization, (WIPO), intellectual property are “ creations of the mind, such as inventions; literary and artistic works; designs; and symbols, names and images used in commerce.” So, in essence, it is anything you could think up on your own.

The next point is that intellectual property and physical property are very different entities. For example, under the common notion of ‘ownership’, it is impossible for two people to own the same physical object. This, however, is not the case for something you thought of. It is true that two people can ‘own’ the same intellectual idea, and people have been for centuries. It is even true that people who have never interacted with can arrive at the same idea as you. In the past, the way this was settled was who thought (and wrote it) first? I don’t see this as ownership as much as I do precedence.

In our text, the author quotes Michael McFarland who is of the similar mindset that most people fail to consider that the sharing of information is in fact essential. McFarland claims, which I agree with, that information is created with the intention of being shared. If it is just for one person, why use an encoding process that anyone could understand?

Finally, I argue that 5 people can complete a task faster than 1 person. So why do we limit information and knowledge to select individuals? Would we not see a ginormous leap in human advancement if we shared all our knowledge so we could solves earth’s problems together?