

and responsible than the prevailing norms” and the diverse challenges these enterprises faced throughout modern history (p. 252). As each chapter stands on its own, it would make an excellent resource for classes in business or environmental studies, as well as serve as a useful reference for corporate sustainability professionals and “green entrepreneurs” looking for guidance about why achieving real environmental quality has proven to be so challenging.

Finally, I hope this book will encourage more intellectual histories of green business philosophies and the frictions that arise in different disseminations. As *Varieties of Green Business* makes clear, the vocabulary, assumption, and methods of corporate sustainability have multiple and often-obscured origins, have traveled prolifically over time, and have done quite different work in different national contexts. More nuanced historical work on corporate environmentalism is sorely needed if we are to ever create, as Jones calls for, a “new form of capitalism which addresses, rather than exacerbates, the environmental challenges and societal inequalities of the world” (p. 252).

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The Essential Guide to Intellectual Property. By Aram Sinnreich. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019. xvi + 283 pp. Illustrations, figures, notes, index. Paper, \$25.00. ISBN: 978-0-300-21442-0.

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Reviewed by Paul Duguid

The Essential Guide to Intellectual Property is an ambitious book. Aram Sinnreich offers “a critical perspective that seeks to understand the needs and interests of all the stakeholders involved in intellectual property, the historical contingencies of its development, and the consequences of these laws beyond their immediate application to information-based industries” (p. 226). To fold historical, legal, and contemporary industrial perspectives and beyond on this topic into a “people’s guide” and “course book” of 250 pages is a daunting challenge.

Sinnreich brings to the task the perspective of a communication studies scholar, seeking throughout the book to present intellectual property (IP) in relation to the communication media of the day. Thus he begins his narrative with the arrival in Europe of the printing press

and the challenges that the mass production and circulation of copy presented to emerging Renaissance notions of originality and authorship. Beginning with the age of Gutenberg, he might be said to end with age of Zuckerberg, in that he concludes by examining not merely Facebook but social media more generally and competing attempts to maintain IP rights within these new communication forms—and, conversely, attempts by many users to escape their hold—all within what he frames as the birth of a “new spiritual belief system that fundamentally challenges the ethics and morality of IP” (p. 248). To this useful academic perspective, Sinnreich adds another viewpoint: he is a musician, a bass player, a stance that informed his earlier books, *Mashed Up* (2010) and *The Piracy Crusade* (2013), and distinctly shapes this one, in particular where he revisits topics of piracy, sampling, and the like in both historical and contemporary circumstances. (He also notes that he has participated in IP court battles as an expert witness, which enables a distinctive perspective on legal proceedings.)

From these interesting angles, Sinnreich’s narrative is driven in part by an underlying faith in the enduring value of IP, which he seems to accept as “essential for the health and growth of businesses, cultures, and nations” (p. 1). But he also reveals a strong resistance to the “cultural cartels” who, in different ways, as he shows, shape the IP law we live under today to their advantage. Indeed, corporate lobbying plays a central role in this book, as Sinnreich discusses both the efforts put into such lobbying by the “cartels” and also the rewards reaped as a result. He notes that in 1998 the “top lobbying client related to copyright, patents, and trademark issues was the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA)” (p. 146). But he points out that most of the return on this investment goes to the cartels, not to musicians like himself on whose behalf the RIAA and similar companies claim to speak. Of course, times have changed. By 2015, the top IP lobbyist was Alphabet, overseer of Google and YouTube, but the returns are similarly biased. Google and YouTube thrive on “user-generated content” that provides little to no financial reward to those generators but huge profits to the companies.

Following Sinnreich’s attempt to give an even-handed account of this complex subject from these particular perspectives is generally interesting—and sometimes surprising. While setting up his detailed critique of lobbying, for instance, he insists in passing that “legislators need both the information and the funding that lobbyists provide” (p. 129). It isn’t quite clear what conclusions about IP or our legislative systems we should draw from this. But at times, Sinnreich’s desire to remain above the fray can lead to bland rather than tantalizing outcomes; for example, “Some conclude that P2P [peer-to-peer file

sharing] helps media industries and creators. . . . Others conclude that P2P hurts media industries” (p. 192).

Overall, for the business historian the book offers value as a “background text,” providing a broad overview of the topic and connecting the past to the present through the assumed continuity of IP across time. Sinnreich, though, is not a historian, and the history of IP is passed over rather summarily in a fast-moving chapter that takes us from Gutenberg to the Lanham Act, though he returns to discuss the history of visual art (starting with Dürer) and music (starting with Handel) in a chapter titled “IP and Cultural Expression.” While useful to general readers of a “people’s guide,” these key moments are simply assumed rather than justified in any detail.

Equally, the key term in the title, “intellectual property,” is taken for granted. There is no investigation of the term, which developed across the nineteenth century, providing specious unity to the disparate fields of copyrights, patents, and trademarks—a unity that Sinnreich barely questions in this book on the topic. He uses the U.S. Constitution’s “progress clause” (Article 1, section 8) to rationalize his argument about the utility of IP but does not comment on the rejection by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1879 of the attempts by Congress to bring trademark law under the same constitutional umbrella. As the court noted at the time, “Any attempt . . . to identify the essential characteristics of a trademark with inventions and discoveries in the arts and sciences, or with the writings of authors, will show that the effort is surrounded with insurmountable difficulties.” And even today the fragmentation of this supposedly unified body of law is evident in the separation of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office from the quite distinct Library of Congress, which oversees copyright law.

Finally, it is worth noting that for all its merits, this is a distinctly U.S. perspective, built on the assumption that “intellectual property is in America’s DNA”—citing Article 1, section 8 as evidence (but barely acknowledging the roots of the Constitution’s 1788 aim to “promote the progress of science and the useful arts” in the goal of the “encouragement of learning” in the 1710 Statute of Anne) (p. 36). And while such historical niceties might have to be overlooked in a book with so much to cover in so short a space, it is important for readers to be aware that, as recent complaints about EU General Data Protection Regulation rules show, Americans in general tend to have a quite distinct view of IP and related issues of privacy and constraints on freedom of speech. Thus the “new spiritual belief system” that the book assumes at its close is perhaps a distinctively American one.

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African Kings and Black Slaves: Sovereignty and Dispossession in the Early Modern Atlantic. *By Herman L. Bennett.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018. 240 pp. Notes, bibliography, index. Cloth, \$34.95. ISBN: 9780812250633.

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Reviewed by Alex Borucki

A historian of the seventeenth-century African diaspora in colonial Mexico, Herman Bennett conducts in this book a postcolonial analysis of the precolonial and earliest relationships between the Iberian powers and some of the sub-Saharan African kings and lords in the century after 1450. He emphasizes that theology and political theory shaped the main understandings of slavery by the Iberian authorities, clergy, and mariners who initiated the expansion of slavery in the New World through the transatlantic slave trade in the sixteenth century. The Portuguese and Castilians' first contacts, correspondence, and diplomatic ceremonies with sub-Saharan African lords influenced these understandings. In a vigorous way, the book confronts European historians who have long ignored slavery in the making of early modern European political theory (and have also overlooked Spain, Portugal, and their Catholic intellectual and institutional legacy), as well as those historians of Spain and Portugal who have ignored the role of slavery and Africa in the emergence of conceptions of sovereignty, absolutism, and empire in the Iberian peninsula. This is not exactly a history book, given that Bennett offers no new archival evidence and uses English-language published translations rather than Portuguese and Spanish texts; rather, it is a historiographical intervention oriented to Africanize the intellectual and political history of the early Iberian Atlantic, which is commendable.

Portuguese acknowledgment of links between African sovereignty and African kingship was central for the merchant networks among several African coastal societies and European traders that were generated after first contacts. The Portuguese saw very early on that places ruled by kings and lords also provided slaves. Bennett moves politics, ceremonies, and pomp to the forefront in these fifteenth- and sixteenth-century encounters, which only later were seen through the prism of