

Fighter for Free Trade and IP Abolition in Victorian Edinburgh

A Terra Firma Chambers Seminar
in association with the University of Edinburgh
Monday 2nd October 2017



Claims of crisis and chaos in intellectual property law, followed by calls for reform—or even abolition—are nothing new. Patent and copyright were attacked, yet ultimately expanded, in the nineteenth century. 'It is probable enough that the patent laws will be abolished ere long', wrote the Economist in 1869, while others argued that reform and expansion of patents laws were necessary to compete with the growing economic power of the United States.

Robert Andrew Macfie (1811-1893) was one of those arguing for the abolition of patent and copyright laws. A successful sugar refiner with staunch free trade beliefs, he used his position as MP for Leith to challenge the fundamental basis of the IP system. He published books and pamphlets, lobbied inventors and politicians, and even wrote topical poetry in his attempt to reform the laws of patent and copyright. This talk will discuss Macfie's extraordinary life and his views on IP, exploring the ways in which his criticisms might be applied to our contemporary IP regime.

Professor Hector MacQueen FBA FRSE will provide a response to the talk.

Speaker

Dr Barbara Lauriat

Dr Barbara Lauriat is a Senior Lecturer in Law at King's College London. She is also a Research Fellow of the Oxford Intellectual Property Research Centre (OIPRC) in the University of Oxford Law Faculty, an Adjunct Professor at the Notre Dame London Law Centre, and an Associate Academic Fellow of the Honourable Society of the Inner Temple. She serves on the editorial board of Arbitration International and the King's Law Journal and is the academic consultant for Copinger & Skone James on Copyright.

Commentator

Professor Hector MacQueen FBA FRSE

Hector MacQueen is a Scottish Law Commissioner and Professor of Private Law at Edinburgh University. The history of intellectual property, especially in Scotland, is amongst his research interests.

Chair

Roddy McIlvride QC

Roddy McIlvride QC is a highly regarded silk who has acted in some of the most high profile cases in Scotland in recent years. He is ranked Tier 1 for Commercial Litigation in the latest edition of the Legal 500. Previous editions have described him as 'A first-rate commercial litigator' and 'One of the best'.



Practical Information

When Monday 2nd October 2017 | Registration 4.30pm | Seminar 5pm | Drinks Reception 6.30pm
Where The Reading Room, Advocates Library, Parliament House, Edinburgh, EH1 1RF
CPD This event has been accredited for 1.5 hours of CPD by the Faculty of Advocates

There is no charge for attending however prior booking is necessary.
To reserve a space please email: seminars@terrafirmachambers.com