



Openness and Intellectual Property

ISHTIP Annual Workshop 2015

July 22-24

University of Pennsylvania

Submission deadline: January 15

The International Society for the History and Theory of Intellectual Property will hold its 7th annual workshop at the University of Pennsylvania, July 22-24, 2015. Philadelphia is the birthplace of the US Constitution, which empowers Congress to create IP laws that “promote the progress of science and the useful arts.” And the University of Pennsylvania was founded by inventor, printer, and IP-skeptic Benjamin Franklin, who wrote in his autobiography, “That, as we enjoy great advantages from the inventions of others, we should be glad of an opportunity to serve others by any invention of ours; and this we should do freely and generously.” Today, there are many movements to promote open access scholarship, open source software, open data, and open culture. What does it mean for intellectual property to be open? And how do current calls for openness connect with the history, theoretical underpinnings, and national traditions of intellectual property?

We seek a broad representation of international scholars as well as scholars from across the disciplines. Papers may concern trademark, patent, copyright, or related rights, including confidentiality and trade secrecy, and they may be historical or address current issues from a theoretically-informed perspective. Both established and junior scholars are encouraged to submit abstracts.

Potential topics include (but are not limited to):

- the pre-history of intellectual property; what was open before IP; histories and theories of the public domain
- cultures of ownership and ideas of the commons
- cross-cultural comparisons of openness
- complementary and divergent interdisciplinary definitions and connections of openness or IP

- secrecy as intellectual property/intellectual property and secrecy
- IP and the codification of knowledge
- intellectual property registration systems as reservoirs of information/sources of openness
- public libraries, educational institutions, museums/archives and open knowledge
- IP and 'taxes on knowledge'
- slippery objects (facts, ideas, theorems)
- the limits of trademarks (genericism, functionality, cultural signifiers)
- overlapping IP and reappropriation of the public domain
- the impact of public domain scholarship on law-making
- technologies of openness (catalogues, bibliographies, search engines, hyperlinks, viral licenses, open technical formats) and IP
- IP, interactivity and interoperability
- freedom of information, access to state documents, governmental transparency and IP
- historical and current 'pirate' movements
- the history of IP skepticism
- methodology: what should histories and theories of IP be doing; what role should interdisciplinarity play?

Timeline:

To be considered for the workshop, please submit a 300-word abstract of your proposed paper as well as a one-paragraph bio and 2-page CV by **January 15, 2015** to ISHTIP2015@sas.upenn.edu.

Complete papers (of max. 9000 words) will be due **June 15** so that they may be distributed in advance to registered workshop participants. Papers are not presented by their authors at ISHTIP workshops. Instead, a discussant presents a brief summary and critique to initiate 45 minutes of general discussion of each paper. All panels are plenary. ISHTIP workshops are thus a great venue for presenting and receiving feedback on work in progress from a global, multidisciplinary community of scholars.

Please direct questions to Peter Decherney (decherney@sas.upenn.edu).

For additional information, including past programs and 2015 program updates, visit the ISHTIP website at www.ishtip.org.