

*Seminario Permanente
Instituto de Estudios de la Ciencia y la Tecnología*

FILOSOFÍA, CIENCIA Y TECNOLOGÍA

22/02/2024

17:00 h GMT+2

Sala de Grados del Edificio FES

EVA HEMMUNGS

Department of Culture and Society, Linköping University, Sweden

“The Patent Office Takes Command: Examining the Scientific Information Problem, Washington 1961”

<https://usal-es.zoom.us/j/83653125266?pwd=WG9Xb1M1Q3Rqb253dm5CSW80Q1FUZz09>

Abstract

In September 1961, John F. Kennedy signed proclamation 3434, designating the week of 18-25 of October “The American Patent System Week,” a seven-day celebration of the 125-anniversary of the 1836 Patent Act. One of the events during that week was *The International Patent Office Workshop on Information Retrieval*, which took place at the Department of State in Washington D.C. The workshop addressed one of the most significant of problems facing both the patent system and the science system at that time: how to search, store and retrieve information. In my talk, I’ll explore the overlaps between the patent system and the science system (broadly speaking) at this time, arguing that the Patent Office became a sort of probe in the process of finding a solution to what was referred to as the “scientific information problem”.

Bio

Eva Hemmungs Wirtén is Professor of Mediated Culture at the Department of Culture and Society, Linköping University, Sweden, and has written extensively on the cultural history of international copyright, the public domain and, more recently, on patents as documents. Her most recent book, *Making Marie Curie: Intellectual Property and Celebrity Culture in an Age of Information* was published by University of Chicago Press in 2015. In 2017, she was awarded an ERC Advanced Investigator Grant for the project “Patents as Scientific Information, 1895-2020,” (PASSIM), which ran between October 1, 2017, and June 30, 2023. She’s currently working on a new book about Champagne and intellectual property.

Further info

The PASSIM website lists all articles and outputs from the project: www.passim.se

A recently published article which considers the 125-anniversary jubilee, and the granting of the 3 million patent is “Patents of Persuasion: Tempo-Metrics and the Shaping of Knowledge About Knowledge,” in *Journal for the History of Knowledge* vol 4, 2023. <https://journalhistoryknowledge.org/article/view/12419>

See also a presentation of the PASSIM project: “Patents; sources of scientific information?” EU Research, Spring 2023 vol. (34), pp. 65 - 67. <https://doi.org/10.56181/VWQN5946>