

Adrian Sterling

By Florian Koempel



Where to start? Professor Sterling's professional and academic excellence has been widely described. A barrister, a lawyer for the music industry, a professor of intellectual property. Known by all in the copyright world.

This only captures a part of Professor Sterling. For his colleagues and students he was a mentor, a counsellor and a friend. A humanist through and through; both for his knowledge from Shakespeare's Henry V to Beethoven's opus 111 (we disagreed on Mahler though and will continue our

discussions with Caroline - *de gustibus semper disputandum est*); and for his love of humankind. Together, the Sterlings were interested in people; they looked after all of their students, with many going on to choose a career in copyright because of Adrian's influence and his love of copyright. He was always respectful professionally of his fellow copyright enthusiasts, even if our approach was not always quite right. We are still here.

He always had time for us whatever the subject; when we timidly asked his advice he quoted his mother: "If you're too busy for your friends, you are too busy." Never forget. We all try to be better human beings because of Adrian; also better lawyers or academics for what it's worth. And there's quite a few of us around the world.

The British Copyright Council was privileged. For the best of 50 years we benefited from his creativity, his knowledge, and his wisdom, his humanism. We were working on copyright law: extended collective licensing, orphan works, liability of internet service providers, exceptions to copyright, international treaties, collective management, et cetera. His heart was with the artists. Their livelihoods.

He created our new technology working group 40 years ago. We are still discussing cutting edge issues of copyright law, and we will miss his wise words. We are all his students at the British Copyright Council.

He created the WIPO / British Copyright Council training course for developing countries in 1981; his former students in practice and academia will continue with the help of Caroline

Sterling. His spirit permeates this copyright course (as with so many copyright courses he created).

Dear Adrian, "If music be the food of love play on"; we will try with you supervising. Thank you for everything you've done for our (not only copyright) world.

[An electronic book of condolences is now live.](#) Please use this to write your condolence and share your memories of J.A.L Sterling. QMIPRI website. We too would of course love to hear your memories of Adrian. We will remember him.