

# lawyer of the week David Hooper



DAVID HOOPER, a media lawyer at Reynolds Porter Chamberlain, obtained a wide-ranging injunction to protect the confidentiality of *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince*, which is to be published on July 16, after attempts by two men to sell stolen copies of the book to journalists.

What are the main implications of such a "John Doe", injunction? A John Doe injunction is shorthand for the fact that such an order binds the world at large, namely any unnamed and at present unknown persons who wrongfully come into possession of the new Harry Potter book and who seek to disclose its contents or do any of the prohibited acts specified in the injunction. Any disclosure of the book's contents before July 16 will be unlawful and the John Doe order means that those who set out to destroy the reading public's legitimate sense of anticipation and excitement

— usually for money — are likely to be in contempt of court.

Are you a Harry Potter fan? Certainly. Few people can have listened more often to Stephen Fry's excellent recordings of all the Harry Potter books. The whole history of how Bloomsbury decided to publish the first Harry Potter book, which many others had turned down, is why the publishing industry is so fascinating.

What was your worst day as a lawyer? Acting as a young lawyer for a pregnant social security claimant whose suspended sentence was activated, mitigated only by persuading the Court of Criminal Appeal to release her a week later.

What was your most memorable experience as a lawyer? Discovering that an out-of-the-blue letter which began "Mr Hooper I admire you" had come from Marlene Dietrich and that she had read my book. It was not the hoax I feared and she wanted some libel advice.

Who has been the most influential person in your life and why? On a personal level, my son Edward, whose short life every day influences my outlook on life. On a wider level,

Nelson Mandela, who personifies the triumph of the human spirit and whose example won over his enemies and prevented widespread bloodshed.

Why did you become a lawyer? For independence of mind, to protect rights including freedom of speech and to expose charlatans.

What would your advice be to anyone wanting a career in law? Get as much practical experience of law as you can before taking the plunge. See what the worst parts are and whether you think you will be enjoying it in 30 years' time.

If you had not become a lawyer what would you have chosen and why? A writer. I have written a few books but have always hankered after writing good airport novels. The research sounds like fun and they are the sort of book one's friends actually read.

Where do you see yourself in ten years? Writing as many books as will keep my daughters in the style to which they will by then doubtless be accustomed.

LINDA TSANG  
l\_tsang\_8@yahoo.com