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978-0-521-60639-4 - The Trajectory of (Corporate Law) Scholarship: An Inaugural Lecture given in the University of Cambridge October 2003

Brian R. Cheffins

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THE TRAJECTORY OF (CORPORATE LAW) SCHOLARSHIP

Professor Cheffins' lecture offers a path-breaking examination of potential trajectories for legal scholarship. Considerable attention is devoted to academic writing on law, but little has been said about the process by which the relevant literature evolves. This lecture focuses directly on the evolution of legal scholarship. It identifies five potential trajectories, revolving around concepts such as 'progress', 'paradigms', the marketplace for ideas, intellectual cycles, and fads and fashions. Professor Cheffins offers a summary of each trajectory and then tests the propositions he has advanced by means of a case study dealing with corporate law. He argues that scholarly trends in law develop in a manner that is at least partially consistent with each of the trajectories he identifies, but acknowledges that none captures fully the dynamics at work.

BRIAN CHEFFINS has been, since 1998, the S.J. Berwin Professor of Corporate Law at the Faculty of Law, University of Cambridge. He was a member of the Faculty of Law at the University of British Columbia from 1986 to 1997. He has held visiting appointments at Duke, Harvard, Oxford and Stanford. Professor Cheffins is author of *Company Law: Theory, Structure and Operation* and numerous articles on corporate law and corporate governance. He was awarded a John S. Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship in 2002.

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CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	1
II. Legal scholarship trajectories: an overview	4
A. The 'cumulative' model: 'progress' towards 'truth'	4
B. Paradigm shifts: Kuhn and legal scholarship	12
C. Market forces and progress	17
D. Intellectual cycles	22
E. Academic fads and fashions	28
F. Conclusion	36
III. Corporate law scholarship	38
A. A historical sketch	38
B. The literature outside the United States	54
C. Corporate law scholarship as science	57
D. Paradigms (?)	62
E. Corporate law scholarship and the marketplace for ideas	67
F. A cyclical dimension (?)	70
G. Fads and fashions	76
IV. Conclusion	82