



NST3HP

Natural Sciences Tripos Part III: History and Philosophy of Science

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Questions released at 12noon on Wednesday 6 March 2024

Answers to be submitted by 12noon on Wednesday 13 March 2024

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**Before you begin, read these instructions carefully:**

Students should answer **two** questions from the following list of 14 questions.

The two essays should be submitted by 12noon on 13 March by being uploaded to the HPS Part III Coursework site on Moodle.

The question number, title and word count should be stated on the first page of each essay.

## **NST Part III History and Philosophy of Science**

### Set essays

*Answer any **two** questions. Answers should not exceed 2,500 words each.*

1. Can we make sense of the notion that there can be multiple truths about the same subject matter?
2. What use is the concept of affordances?
3. Many philosophers claim scientists must make value judgments; many scientists deny that they make value judgments; what is going on?
4. Did astrophysics play any role in the Indian famines of the late 19th century?
5. Is our task (as historians) to use the methods and categories of modern science to find out what “really” happened? Answer with reference to one or more historical epidemics.
6. “Scientific periodicals convene and construct communities of scientific knowledge in a specific time and place.” Discuss with examples.
7. What methodological implications, if any, should historians of medicine draw from recent reflections on Covid-19 and the temporalities of epidemics?
8. Is rigour the right ideal for evidence-based policy?
9. “It’s immoral that people in Africa die like flies of diseases that no one dies of in the United States. And the more disease there is, the more political unrest there will be, leading to more Darfurs, which the US will have to pay to fix.” – Former US President Bill Clinton, 2005. Analyse with respect to the history of international and global health.
10. Is there a good reason to think of time as fundamentally directed?
11. Has the dominance of “model organisms” been productive or limiting for the biomedical and life sciences?
12. The IPCC has recently recognised that climate change has been driven by historical and ongoing patterns of inequity such as colonialism. How has imperialism shaped the climate sciences?

13. Should we conclude that nonhuman animals reason about unobservable variables?
14. Do you agree with Bruno Latour's account of the role of images and inscriptions in the development of Western science?

**END OF PAPER**