

Departmental Seminars

Seminars meet on **Thursdays at 4pm in Seminar Room 2**, Department of History and Philosophy of Science, Free School Lane, Cambridge. There is tea beforehand in Seminar Room 1 at 3.45pm.

*** Please note the change of time ***

Organised by Simon Schaffer.

- 22 April **Iwan Morus (Queen's University Belfast)**
Bodily disciplines and disciplined bodies: instruments, skills and Victorian electrotherapeutics
- 29 April **Robert Nola (Auckland University)**
The optimistic meta-induction and ontological continuity: the case of the electron
- 6 May **Laurie Paul (University of Arizona)**
Change is multiple realization
- 13 May **Paul Hoyningen-Huene (University of Hannover)**
On the nature of science
- 20 May *Ninth Annual Hans Rausing Lecture: 4.30pm at the Old Labs, Newnham College*
Ian Inkster (Nottingham Trent University)
Patents, technology and everything in the world, 1830-1914
- 27 May **Fa-Ti Fan (Binghamton University, State University of New York)**
British naturalists in Qing China: science, empire, and cultural encounter

Abstracts

- 22 April **Iwan Morus (Queen's University Belfast)**
Bodily disciplines and disciplined bodies: instruments, skills and Victorian electrotherapeutics

Throughout the nineteenth century the human body was an important locus for disputes about the nature of electricity and its relationship to the stuff of life. Electricity and the kinds of instruments, practices and skills that defined it were also, as it turns out, important resources for managing the body throughout the Victorian period. Late Victorian bodies could be treated like machines, integrated into the mensurational culture of late nineteenth-century physics, precisely because of the labour that went into sustaining the networks of instruments and skills that surrounded them. This process was not without its resistances. Late Victorian medical electricians differed vociferously over the vexed question of the relationship between the bodies they treated and the kinds of skills and practices needed for such treatment. Controversies like these lay bare the cultural relationship between ontology and epistemology. Questions about the ontological status of the body – what kind of machine was it? – could not be solved without addressing the question of what kinds of skills were appropriate for its treatment – what kind of person should the practitioner be and what did they need to know? Looking at episodes like these therefore helps us look inside the cultural mechanisms that sustain the image of body as machine.

29 April **Robert Nola (Auckland University)**

The optimistic meta-induction and ontological continuity: the case of the electron

The pessimistic meta-induction attempts to make a case for the lack of ontological continuity with theory change; in contrast, its rival the optimistic meta-induction makes a case for considerable ontological continuity. The optimistic meta-induction is argued for in the case of the origin, and continuity, of our talk of electrons (even though the term 'electron' was not initially used). The case is made by setting the history of identifying reference to electrons in the context of a generalised version of Russell's theory of descriptions, Ramsey's theory of theoretical terms and a development of these ideas by David Lewis.

6 May **Laurie Paul (University of Arizona)**

Change is multiple realization

The problem of change arises from a clash between two compelling ideas: (i) identicals must be indiscernible and (ii) ordinary things can persist through a change of their properties. I argue there is a better way of understanding the debate over change than has been previously considered. My view is that the problem of change is a version of a familiar problem in the philosophy of mind: the problem of the multiple realizability of the mental. Indeed, I shall argue that it is the same problem, applied across times instead of across minds, and that the same solution applies – if we have solved the problem of multiple realization we have solved the problem of change. The view provides a framework from which to tie together several puzzles (such as constitution, realization and supervenience) in metaphysics and mind.

13 May **Paul Hoyningen-Huene (University of Hannover)**

On the nature of science

The paper addresses the question of what the nature of science is. I will first make a few preliminary historical and systematic remarks. Next, in answering the main question, I shall propose the following thesis: scientific knowledge is primarily distinguished from other forms of knowledge, especially from everyday knowledge, by being more systematic. This thesis has to be qualified, clarified, developed and justified. Finally, I will compare my answer with alternative answers.

27 May **Fa-Ti Fan (Binghamton University, State University of New York)**

British naturalists in Qing China: science, empire, and cultural encounter

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Western scientific interest in China focused primarily on natural history. Prominent scholars in Europe as well as Westerners in China, including missionaries, merchants, consular officers, and visiting plant hunters, eagerly investigated the flora and fauna of China. This paper examines the research of British naturalists in China in relation to the history of natural history, of empire, and of Sino-Western relations. It discusses how the British naturalists and the Chinese explored, studied, and represented China's natural world in the social and cultural environment of Qing China. Using the example of British naturalists in China, the paper argues for reinterpreting the history of natural history by including neglected historical actors, intellectual traditions, and cultural practices. It also proposes an approach that moves beyond viewing the history of science and empire within European history and considers the exchange of ideas, aesthetic tastes, material culture, and plants and animals in local and global contexts.

Psychoanalysis and the Humanities

Seminars are held on **Wednesdays at 5pm in Seminar Room 1** (except the seminar on 19 May, which will be in Seminar Room 2). Tea is available from 4.40pm. All welcome.

Organised by Mary Jacobus and David Hillman.

- 28 April **Peter Rudnytsky (University of Florida)**
Philip Roth and psychoanalysis
- 5 May **Jacqueline Rose (Queen Mary College, London)**
'Imponderables in thin air': Zionism as psychoanalysis
- 12 May **Coline Covington (Society of Analytical Psychology and British Association of Psychotherapists)**
Killing with kindness: the masochistic response to persecution (on *Dogville*)
- 19 May **Andrew Webber (Faculty of Modern & Medieval Languages, Cambridge)**
'Un chien andalou': the case of the dog man (includes video showing)

Cabinet of Natural History

Seminars are held on **Mondays at 1pm in Seminar Room 1**. You are welcome to bring your lunch. Organised by Emma Spary.

- 26 April **Sandra Sherman (University of Arkansas)**
Green thoughts and incarnate herbs: the human affinity with plants in the seventeenth-century imagination
- 3 May **Jenny Mander (Newnham College, Cambridge)**
Metamorphoses of the expatriate European: piracy, savages and 'natural history' in Raynal's representation of the Caribbean (Book 10, *Histoire des Deux Indes*)
- Tuesday 4 May Outing to London to visit the Chelsea Physic Garden, Lindley Library (Royal Horticultural Society) and Old Operating Theatre Museum (St Thomas's Hospital). Leave from outside the Department at 9.15am sharp. Places are offered on a 'first come, first served' basis, and a sign-up sheet will be circulated later. Please bring your own lunch.
- 10 May **Ruth Barton**
Gentlemanly London science c. 1840-1855: the paths of J.D. Hooker and John Lubbock, sons of Sir William Hooker and Sir John William Lubbock
- 17 May **Claudia Stein (University of Warwick)**
The kidney stone affair of 1580, or how the body natural corrupted the body politic
- 7 June Cabinet Garden Party, Gonville and Caius Rose Garden. Details will be circulated.

Epistemology Reading Group

We will be reading articles from Michael Lynch (ed.) *The Nature of Truth* (MIT, 2001). The book is available in paperback, and two copies are on reserve in the Whipple Library. Each meeting will focus on one chapter, with a member of the group offering a preliminary evaluation, followed by a general discussion.

Meetings will take place on **Thursdays at 2pm in Seminar Room 1** and are open to all. Organised by Peter Lipton.

- 22 April Bertrand Russell, 'Truth and Falsehood', J.L. Austin, 'Truth'
- 29 April William Alston, 'A Realist Conception of Truth'
- 6 May Terence Horgan, 'Contextual Semantics and Metaphysical Realism: Truth as Indirect Correspondence'
- 13 May Brand Blanshard, 'Coherence as the Nature of Truth'
- 20 May Ralph Walker, 'The Coherence Theory'
- 27 May Linda Alcoff, 'The Case for Coherence'
- 3 June Charles Peirce, 'How to Make our Ideas Clear'
- 10 June William James, 'Pragmatism's Conception of Truth'

Wittgenstein Reading Group

'Cavell's Wittgenstein'

We will be reading Stanley Cavell's *The Claim of Reason: Wittgenstein, Skepticism, Morality, and Tragedy* (Oxford University Press 1979, or 2nd ed. 1999). Two copies of the book will be on reserve in the Whipple Library. For a one-hour introduction to Cavell's life and work, go to: <http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/people2/Cavell/cavell-con0.html>

Meetings will take place fortnightly on **Tuesdays at 2-4pm in the Whipple Museum Reserve Gallery**. For further information contact Martin Kusch.

- 4 May Part 1: Wittgenstein and the concept of human knowledge
- 18 May Part 2: Skepticism and the existence of the world
- 1 June Part 3: Knowledge and the concept of morality
- 15 June Part 4: Skepticism and the problem of others

EPACTS

This term EPACTS (the Early Physics, Astronomy, Cosmology and Technology Seminar) features the fabulous annual punt party, on Midsummer's Eve (24 June). All welcome to come and eat, drink and mess about on the river – contact Katie Eagleton for details.

History of Science Workshop

The History of Science Workshop is a seminar group devoted to peer discussion of work in progress on the history and historiography of science, for example PhD chapters, dissertations, articles intended for publication, or conference papers. The seminar aims to provide an informal arena for the exchange of ideas among students of the history of science in HPS and elsewhere.

We meet on **alternate Wednesdays at 1pm in Seminar Room 1**. Papers are circulated by e-mail before each meeting, and a copy is left in Box File 30 in the Whipple Library. Please contact Tatjana Buklijas if you are interested in giving a paper (new PhD students and MPhils welcome) or adding your name to the e-mail list.

- 28 April **Lars Falk (Swedish Defence Research Agency)**
The force on Newton's apple
- 12 May **Matthew Underwood (HPS, Cambridge)**
Alfred Russel Wallace, disappointed naturalist
- 26 May **Koen Vermeir (University of Leuven)**
Mirror, mirror on the wall...
- 9 June **Gina Dahl (University of Bergen and HPS, Cambridge)**
Religion and science in Norway 1650-1750
- 16 June **Patrick Boner (HPS, Cambridge)**
Written in the stars: Kepler's early astrological correspondence

Philosophy Workshop

The PW is a fortnightly peer group seminar devoted to the discussion of on-going work by researchers in philosophy. Short papers will normally be circulated by e-mail one week in advance of each meeting, where the author will give a brief synopsis. The aim of the seminar is to provide a forum for informal, constructive interaction amongst those currently engaged in philosophical research.

Meetings take place **every other Wednesday at 1pm in Seminar Room 2**, and are open to all researchers. For more information, or to add your name to the list of e-mail recipients, contact Mark Sprevak.

- 28 April **Lubomira Radoilska (Clare Hall, Cambridge)**
Moral imagination
- 12 May **Anandi Hattiangadi (Trinity College, Cambridge)**
Is meaning scepticism incoherent?
- 26 May **Stephen Clarke (Charles Sturt University)**
Situationism and character: Doris in a daze
- 9 June **Aaron Lambert (University of Chicago and HPS, Cambridge)**
Davidson and Kim on the mind-body problem: a third way for physicalists?

Philosophy of Language Reading Group

We will be reading Timothy Williamson's book *Vagueness* (Routledge, 1994). Some cheap copies of the book have occasionally been seen in Galloway and Porter. Note that we will be starting our reading from the second chapter; the first chapter could perhaps be read over the Easter vacation.

The format of the group has changed from previous terms. Each meeting of the group will begin not with a presentation but with a couple of brief questions or critical comments from one of the members of the group. This will be followed by a general discussion and lunch.

Meetings will take place on **Mondays at 1-2pm in Seminar Room 2**. All are welcome, and please feel free to bring your lunch. Organised by Mark Sprevak and Christina McLeish.

- 26 April The ideal of precision
- 3 May The rehabilitation of vagueness
- 10 May Many-valued logic and degrees of truth
- 17 May Supervaluations
- 24 May Nihilism
- 31 May Vagueness as ignorance
- 7 June Inexact knowledge

Latin Therapy Group

The Latin Therapy Group meets on **Fridays at 4pm in Seminar Room 1** to practise the art of translation, improve our Latin grammar, and determine who deserves the most sympathy on account of the difficulty of their sources – all in a mutually supportive environment! Well-known (usually classical) texts of relevance to the history of science are studied, as well as texts on which members of the group are working. All are welcome to attend.

For more information, and to be added to the mailing list, please contact Katie Eagleton.

Medieval Science and Philosophy Reading Group

The Medieval Science and Philosophy Reading Group will meet on **Wednesdays, 1.00-2.00pm, in L1, Great Court, Trinity College**, starting on 28 April. We shall be reading Avicenna on the soul. Xeroxes of a translation will be supplied: those wanting them before the first meeting should contact John Marenbon.

Science and Literature Reading Group

This term we are reading plays on themes relating to physics and astronomy. All four plays are currently in print.

Meetings are **fortnightly on Wednesdays, in the upstairs seminar room in Darwin College at 8pm.** Everybody is welcome; for more information please contact Kate Price.

- 28 April Bertolt Brecht, *Life of Galileo* (1945)
Several copies in the UL; English Faculty Library (Gm 84 BRE)
- 12 May Friedrich Dürrenmatt, *The Physicists* (1962; trans. James Kirkup, 1963)
UL (9746.d.1119 and 9746.d.559); English Faculty Library (Gm 84 DUR)
- 26 May Tom Stoppard, *Hapgood* (1988)
UL (1988.8.1285 and 9001.d.8062); English Faculty Library (E 84 STO 1)
- 9 June Maureen Hunter, *Transit of Venus* (1992)
Heffers have been asked to stock copies (ISBN 0921368291)

Reading Kant

This term we are going to read the *Critique of Judgment*, Part II: 'Critique of teleological judgment'. Meetings are on **Wednesdays at 3pm in Seminar Room 1.**

Organised by Yoon Choi, Marina Frasca-Spada and Stephen John.

- 28 April **Alix Cohen:** Analytic of Teleological Judgment; sections 61-68; Ak 359-383
(G&M 233-255)
- 5 May **Aaron Lambert:** Dialectic of Teleological Judgment I; sections 69-76; Ak 385-404
(G&M 257-274)
- 12 May **Nick Jardine:** Dialectic II/Appendix I; sections 77-82; Ak 405-429 (G&M 274-296)
- 19 May **Axel Gelfert:** Appendix II; sections 83-86; Ak 429-447 (G&M 297-313)
- 26 May **Steve John:** Appendix III; sections 87-90; Ak 447-466 (G&M 313-331)
- 2 June **Tim Lewens:** Conclusion; sections 91-end; Ak 467-484 (G&M 331-346)

Seminar Programmes are sent out at the start of every term to the names on our mailing list. Please contact the Department if you would like to be added to or removed from the mailing list, or if you change your address. Seminar information is also available at www.hps.cam.ac.uk/seminars.

Department of History and Philosophy of Science, University of Cambridge
Free School Lane, Cambridge CB2 3RH

Telephone: 01223 334500 Fax: 01223 334554