

Departmental Seminars

Seminars meet on **Thursdays at 4.30pm in Seminar Room 2**, Department of History and Philosophy of Science, Free School Lane, Cambridge. There is tea beforehand in Seminar Room 1 at 4.15pm.

Organised by Stephen John.

27 April **Marcel Weber (University of Basel)**

Three kinds of conceptual change in natural science

Conceptual change in natural science has often been construed in terms of referential success and failure, for example, in the well-known case of Priestley, Lavoisier and the replacement of phlogiston by oxygen chemistry. On the traditional picture, a term either succeeds completely in picking out a natural kind (e.g. 'oxygen') or it fails completely (e.g. 'phlogiston'). Philip Kitcher has developed a more sophisticated theory of reference that allows different tokens of a term to refer differently, depending on the intentions of the scientists. However, this account still requires that there is a unique way of dividing up the relevant domain into natural kinds; otherwise, reference is bound to be indeterminate. Using two different examples from the history of biology (genetics and taxonomy) I show that this uniqueness condition does not hold generally. The metaphysical reasons for this as well as the implications for the theory of reference and conceptual change will be discussed.

4 May **Peter Geimer (ETH Zürich)**

Picturing the invisible? Scientific photography and the 'optical unconscious'

Towards the end of the nineteenth century photography was treated as a medium able to 'see' more than human eyes. The reduction of shutter speeds to times below 1/1000 sec. and the constant improvement of sensitive plates and objectives produced images beyond the human spectrum. More and more it became the function of photography to yield recordings of 'the invisible' (rays, waves, fluids, thoughts etc). The information given by these recordings was hard to control, since no perceptible entities were available for comparative investigations. What does it mean to 'make the invisible visible'? And what did the pictures finally reveal? Facts or artefacts? My talk focuses on this specific balancing between visibility and invisibility, noise and nature.

Eleventh Annual Hans Rausing Lecture

Nelly Oudshoorn (University of Twente)

From victims to heroes?

Rethinking the role of users in technoscience

Thursday 18 May at 4.30pm

Winstanley Lecture Theatre, Trinity College

Special Seminar

Ronald L. Numbers (University of Wisconsin)

Science and religion among the vulgar:

a plea for a non-elitist history of science and religion

Wednesday 10 May at 5pm in Seminar Room 1

Science and medicine in the multinational empires of Central and Eastern Europe

A one-day conference, organised by Tatjana Buklijas and Emese Lafferton, to be held at the Department of History and Philosophy of Science on 23 June 2006.

This workshop aims to open new perspectives on the relationship between medicine, science and imperialism by studying it in the Russian and Austro-Hungarian context in the long nineteenth century. The papers, ranging in topics from Russian astronomy to Austrian military psychiatry, will study how science and medicine were deployed in nation-building strategies and 'internal colonization' of geographic regions and ethnicities, while, at the same time, they were appropriated for political goals by non-dominant social and ethnic groups, e.g. new national movements. The workshop will furthermore examine the importance of language as a tool of cultural domination within, and beyond, science and medicine. More generally, its aim is to contribute to history of science, medicine and imperialism, as well as to the social and cultural history of these regions.

For further information, and to register, go to www.hps.cam.ac.uk/medicine/empires.html

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 on our website at www.hps.cam.ac.uk/seminars

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Cabinet of Natural History

Seminars are held on **Mondays at 1pm in Seminar Room 1**. You are welcome to bring your lunch with you.

Organised by Francis Reid.

- 2 May Trip to Horniman Museum and Crystal Palace Park
- 8 May **Alistair Sponsel (Princeton University)**
Coral reefs and the young Charles Darwin
- 15 May **Benjamin Wardhaugh (University of Oxford)**
The logarithmic ear: Pietro Mengoli, music, mathematics and anatomy in the late seventeenth century
- 22 May **Anna Märker (Max Planck Institute, Berlin)**
Aliens and useful knowledge: Kant's *Natural History and Theory of the Heavens*
- 29 May **James Beattie (University of Otago)**
Empire and nature in New Zealand: theologies of nature and natural theologies, 1830-1920 (based on joint research with John Stenhouse)
- 5 June **William Adams (Department of Geography, Cambridge)**
Exhibition and extinction: the display of nature and the development of conservation
- 12 June Garden Party

Epistemology Reading Group

We will be reading articles from Tamar Szabó Gendler & John Hawthorne (eds) *Oxford Studies in Epistemology*, Volume 1 (OUP, 2005). The book is available in paperback and two copies are on reserve in the Whipple Library. Each meeting of the group will focus on one or two essays, 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.

- 27 April Alexander Bird, 'Abductive Knowledge and Holmesian Inference'
- 4 May Hartry Field, 'Recent Debates about the A Priori'
- 11 May Frank Keil, 'Doubt, Deference, and Deliberation: Understanding and Using the Division of Cognitive Labor'
- 18 May Thomas Kelly, 'The Epistemic Significance of Disagreement'
- 25 May John MacFarlane, 'The Assessment Sensitivity of Knowledge Attributions'
- 1 June Jonathan Schaffer, 'Contrastive Knowledge'
- 8 June Stephen Schiffer, 'Paradox and the A Priori'
- 15 June Brian Weatherson, 'Scepticism, Rationalism, and Externalism'

Psy Studies

History of Psychiatry, Psychology, Psychoanalysis and Allied Sciences

There will be one seminar this term, on **Wednesday 24 May at 5pm in Seminar Room 1**. Tea is available from 4.40pm. All welcome.

Organised this year by Emese Lafferton, Andreas Mayer and Deborah Thom.

- 24 May **Elizabeth Lunbeck (Princeton University)**
On Freud's narcissism: gender and self-sovereignty in life and works

Criticism and Culture

Seminars are held fortnightly on **Wednesdays at 5pm in the Faculty of English, 9 West Road**. All welcome. Organised by Mary Jacobus and David Hillman.

- 3 May **Lyndsey Stonebridge (University of East Anglia)**
The writing of post-war guilt: Rebecca West in Nuremberg?
- 17 May **Jani Scadura (University of Minnesota)**
Things left behind. Or, what to do with stuff

Science and Literature Reading Group

This term our texts have been chosen by Daniel Friesner around the theme of **mathematics**. Everyone is welcome to come along and join in what is usually a lively and wide-ranging discussion.

We meet fortnightly on **Mondays from 7.30-9pm in the upstairs seminar room of Darwin College**. Please note that to avoid bank holidays we are meeting on 'even' weeks this term.

Photocopies of selected extracts from the texts will be available in the group's box-file in the Whipple Library from mid-April; library classmarks for books are given on the reading list.

For further information, or if you would like to introduce one of the texts, please contact Melanie Keene or Katy Price.

- 8 May Martianus Capella, *The Marriage of Philology and Mercury* (c.425; 1977 translation). English faculty library, V 33 MAR vol. 2; University Library, North Wing Floor 1 716:1.c.95.51.
- 22 May Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), especially part 3. Many copies in College and University libraries; also available in print from £1.99 on amazon.co.uk.
- 5 June Edwin A. Abbott, *Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions* (1884). Many copies in College and University libraries; also available in print from £1.50 on amazon.co.uk.
- 19 June Yevgeny Zamyatin, *We* (1920; 1971 translation). University Library, West Room Ud.8.3094; English faculty library, R 74 ZAM.

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 our box file in the Whipple Library. Please contact Leon Rocha if you are interested in giving a paper or adding your name to the e-mail list.

- 3 May **Patrick Boner (HPS, Cambridge)**
Naturalising the heavens: Johannes Kepler and the material origins of celestial phenomena
- 17 May **Martin Kjellgren (Lund University, Sweden)**
The lamentations of Master Sigfrid: Sigfridus Aronus Forsius and astrology as heteropractice in early seventeenth-century Sweden
- 31 May **Rebecca Wexler (HPS, Cambridge)**
Bird watching: impacts of video technology on scientific observation explored in a 10 minute movie
- 14 June **Alistair Sponsel (Princeton University)**
'The good man who has spread his studies widely...is likely to prove a very useful individual': a history of the Natural Sciences Tripos from 1914 to 1950

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 1**, and are open to all researchers. For more information, or to add your name to the list of e-mail recipients, contact Mark Sprevak.

- 10 May **Elselijn Kingma (HPS, Cambridge)**
Health as a reference class
- 24 May **Sungho Choi (HPS, Cambridge)**
Dispositional properties, gerrymandered objects and causal processes
- 7 June **Adam Toon (HPS, Cambridge)**
Models and make-believe
- 21 June **Sasha Mudd (HPS, Cambridge)**
Scepticism as a moral problem

Scepticism Reading Group

Meetings take place fortnightly on **Tuesdays 3.00-4.30pm in the HPS Lodge**. The topic in Easter Term is Edward Craig's book *Knowledge and the State of Nature* (Clarendon, Oxford, 1990).

The group is open to all. For further information contact Martin Kusch.

- 9 May Chapters I – V (pp. 1 – 44)
- 23 May Chapters VI – IX (pp. 45 – 81)
- 6 June Chapters X – XII (pp. 82 – 119)
- 20 June Chapters XIII – XVII (pp. 120 – 167)

Latin Therapy

The Latin Therapy Group meets on **Fridays at 4pm in the HPS Lodge** to practise the art of translation, improve our Latin grammar, and determine who deserves more 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. Select meetings will be held in historic college libraries, with a session to be scheduled at the Parker Library, Corpus Christi College during Easter Term. The language tutor is Debby Banham. All are welcome to attend.

For more information, and to be added to the mailing list, please contact Patrick Boner. Information is also available on the Latin Therapy website, www.hps.cam.ac.uk/latintherapy.

Judith Butler Reading Group

The Judith Butler Reading Group meets on **Fridays from 11.30am-1pm in the HPS Lodge**, for the first four weeks of Easter Term (starting from 28 April).

We will finish off Butler's *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity 10th Anniversary Edition*, London: Routledge, 1999. (Whipple Library Z.1450 A,B). We will also read a couple of articles from *Judith Butler Reader*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2004. For more information, please contact Leon Rocha.

Modal Logic Reading Group

The Modal Logic Reading Group meets on **Mondays at 3.30pm in the HPS Lodge**. We will be continuing with Boolos, Burges and Jeffrey's *Computability and Logic*.

For more information, please contact Paul Dicken.

Heidegger Reading Group

The Heidegger Reading Group meets on **Tuesdays at 1pm in St Catharine's College**, seminar room W1. This term, we shall be beginning division 2 of *Being and Time*.

For more information, please contact Paul Dicken.