

# Departmental Seminars

Seminars are held on **Thursdays from 4.30 to 6.00pm in Seminar Room 2**, with tea beforehand from 4pm in Seminar Room 1. Organised by Stephen John.

26 April **William Newman (Indiana University)**

Chymistry and colours: alchemy, matter theory and optics in the early work of Isaac Newton

In the mid-1660s, Isaac Newton came to the realization that white light is not a homogeneous substance, but is made up of colorfacient rays of unequal refrangibility. While this discovery has no obvious antecedents in optical theory, it is an undeniable fact that a similar move was made in the area of matter theory in the years immediately preceding Newton's discovery. Robert Boyle, in part dependent on an earlier alchemical tradition, argued extensively against the Aristotelian homogeneity of mixed substances, an idea that had achieved great prominence in medieval and early modern universities. My paper will explore the possibility of links between Newton's rejection of optical homogeneity and the chymical rejection of material homogeneity. The paper will assume no understanding of alchemical matter theory, but will instead provide the background necessary for understanding how such a linkage may have taken place.

3 May **Anthony Grafton (Princeton University)**

Kepler as chronologer

Historical chronology was one of Kepler's favourite subjects, after astronomy, optics and music. He devoted considerable effort to mastering its materials and methods, corresponded about its central problems with Protestant and Catholic scholars, and wrote about it at some length. In many ways, his mastery of astronomy and considerable prowess as a humanist made him an ideal chronologer, and he arrived at some findings of great interest. But he also found chronology a particularly contentious field, one that tested scholarly civility to its limit and sometimes beyond. In this paper I will locate Kepler's work in the interlocking, but not identical, fields that were referred to, in his time, by the single name of chronology. Then I will examine some of the striking ways in which the larger ethical and methodological ideas often associated with the Republic of Letters played out in what seems, from the outside, a very abstract and austere study.

10 May **Quassim Cassam (Faculty of Philosophy, Cambridge)**

Williamson on knowledge

I am going to raise some questions about Williamson's arguments for the hypothesis that the concept of knowledge can't be analysed into more basic concepts. In response to his proposal that knowing is the most general factive stative attitude I distinguish between a number of different approaches to the question 'what is knowledge?' and make a case for what I call a 'sources' approach. (Suggested reading: Williamson, *Knowledge and its Limits*, chapter 1.)

# Twelfth Annual Hans Rausing Lecture

**Trevor Pinch (Cornell University)**

Music and technology studies:  
from the Moog synthesizer to ACIDplanet.com

Thursday 24 May at 4.30pm  
Winstanley Lecture Theatre, Trinity College

Trevor Pinch is Professor of Science & Technology Studies and Sociology at Cornell University. His books include *Analog Days: The Invention and Impact of the Moog Synthesizer* (with Frank Trocco, 2002) and *The Golem at Large: What You Should Know About Technology* (with Harry Collins, 1998).

## Two Seminars on Counterfactuals

**Gunnar Björnsson (Göteborg University)**

Understanding counterfactuals

Friday 11 May, 12noon–1.30pm, Seminar Room 1

Standard theories of counterfactual conditionals are not only extensionally inadequate, but fail to make intelligible why the proposed truth-conditions would attach to natural language conditionals or counterfactual thought in science, philosophy, or everyday life. This talk will explain how a naturalistic contextualist account of conditionals can remedy these problems by tying the truth-conditions of counterfactuals to the cognitive function of natural inferential mechanisms.

**Tim Williamson (University of Oxford)**

Knowledge of counterfactuals

Friday 1 June, 3pm–4.30pm, Seminar Room 2

The talk will begin with some brief comments on the cognitive value to us of thinking in terms of counterfactual conditionals, including their use in inference to the best explanation. Accounts of their epistemology in terms of reasoning and simulation will then be considered. Finally, a moral will be drawn for the distinction between a priori and a posteriori knowledge.

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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](http://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**

**E-mail: [hps-admin@lists.cam.ac.uk](mailto:hps-admin@lists.cam.ac.uk)**

# Leverhulme Lectures

## **Ungoverned Reason: The Politics of Public Rationality**

Professor Sheila Jasanoff, Pforzheimer Professor of Science and Technology Studies at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, will deliver three lectures to mark her Leverhulme Visiting Professorship at the University of Cambridge:

- **Evidence**  
Tuesday 15 May, 5pm, Mill Lane Lecture Room 1
- **Science and Citizenship**  
Wednesday 16 May, 5pm, Mill Lane Lecture Room 9
- **Reason and Culture**  
Thursday 17 May, 5pm, Mill Lane Lecture Room 1

The final lecture will be followed by a discussion of the series, led by Professor Brian Wynne (University of Lancaster) and Professors Martin Kusch and Simon Schaffer (University of Cambridge).

All members of the University are welcome to attend.

Professor Jasanoff is jointly hosted in Cambridge by the Department of Geography (Professor Susan Owens) and the Department of History and Philosophy of Science (Professor John Forrester).

### **Outline of the lectures**

In democratic societies, rationality is seen as the best safeguard against abuses of power. Decisions that are founded on reason – rather than on passions, emotions, or subjective biases – require no further justification. To say that an action is reasoned is to grant its legitimacy, and effectively to put an end to public debate over it. Claiming reason thus becomes, in effect, a means of taking matters out of the domain of democratic politics. Authorities who bind themselves to the rule of reason need no added political constraints, or so it is thought.

In this series of lectures, I question these presumptions about the relationship of power, politics, and public reason in modern democracies. Looking at examples from fields such as the law, environmental policy, and the regulation of biotechnology, I argue that the processes by which we constitute public rationality – or, perhaps more accurately, the semblance of it – are deeply political, as well as culturally specific. Widely prevalent discourses of reason, such as rational choice, risk assessment or bioethics, often conceal underlying political assumptions that were never made explicit or exposed to full deliberation. Moreover, the institutions that should question authoritative claims of rationality are themselves limited in their power to expose rationality's inarticulate and undeliberated foundations. Accordingly, reason, while claiming the right to govern, remains itself ungoverned. These lectures are designed to open up the politics of reason to deeper analysis and democratic scrutiny.

# 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 David Feller.

30 April **Nick Hopwood (HPS, Cambridge)**

Anatomist holds model embryo: interpreting a marble portrait from 1900

Tuesday 1 May Field trip to the Hunterian and Soane museums, the former to include a special lecture by curator Simon Chaplin

14 May **Susanne Pickert (Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin)**

Setting eyes on the holy: the description of sacred sites in accounts of pilgrimages to Jerusalem and the medieval school of seeing, 12th–15th century

11 June Garden Party

# Psy Studies

## History of Psychiatry, Psychology, Psychoanalysis and Allied Sciences

Seminars are held on **Wednesdays at 5pm in Seminar Room 1**. Tea is available from 4.40pm. All welcome.

Organised by John Forrester, Andreas Mayer and Deborah Thom.

9 May **Michal Shapira (Rutgers University)**

Children in hospital: attachment theory and psychoanalytic research in post-war Britain

23 May **Alan Collins (Lancaster University)**

‘We might as well call it stuff!’: A short history of information as a psychological concept

# STS Workshop

Meetings are held on **Thursdays, 12noon to 1.30pm in Seminar Room 1**. All welcome. Organised by Martin Kusch and Simon Schaffer.

The meetings in Easter Term 2007 have the common theme of ‘Testimony’.

3 May **John Forrester** will introduce and lead a discussion of pp. 1-66 of his book *Truth Games: Lies, Money, and Psychoanalysis* (Harvard University Press, 1997)

17 May **Peter Lipton** will present a paper entitled ‘Alien Abduction: Testimony and the Growth of Knowledge’

# Epistemology Reading Group

We will be reading essays from Tamar Szabó Gendler & John Hawthorne (eds) *Perceptual Experience* (OUP, 2006). 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 essay, 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.

- 26 April Tim Crane, 'Is There a Perceptual Relation?'
- 3 May Fred Dretske, 'Perception without Awareness'
- 10 May David Chalmers, 'Perception and the Fall from Eden'
- 17 May Susanna Siegel, 'Which Properties are Represented in Perception?'
- 24 May Mark Johnston, 'Better than Mere Knowledge? The Function of Sensory Awareness'
- 31 May Anil Gupta, 'Experience and Knowledge'
- 7 June Michael Martin, 'On Being Alienated'
- 14 June Alva Noë, 'Experience without the Head'

# Science and Literature Reading Group

This term we will be reading the writings of Thomas Pynchon. Our discussions will focus on selected passages, detailed below, but if you have time then please feel free to read more! Photocopied reading packs are available in the Whipple Library box file, and the books themselves are also held in many college and university libraries.

We meet on **Mondays from 7.30-9pm in the upstairs seminar room of Darwin College**: please note the slightly irregular scheduling this term to avoid bank holidays. All are welcome!

Organised by Melanie Keene, who maintains our weblog: <http://sci-lit-reading-group.blogspot.com>.

- 30 April *Gravity's Rainbow* (1973) London: Vintage, 2000, 397-433
- 14 May *Against the Day* (2006) London: Jonathan Cape, 57-80
- 21 May 'Entropy', in *Slow Learner* (1984) Boston: Little, Brown, 79-98
- 4 June *Mason & Dixon* (1997) London: Jonathan Cape, 116-24; 190-8

# 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.**

Please contact Nicky Reeves if you are interested in giving a paper.

- 2 May **Patrick Boner (Kommission zur Herausgabe der Werke von Johannes Kepler, Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften)**  
A statesman and a scholar: Hans Georg Herwart von Hohenburg as a critic and patron of Johannes Kepler
- 16 May **Natalie Kaoukji (HPS, Cambridge)**  
The flying penman: John Wilkins and *The Secret and Swift Messenger*
- 30 May **Salim Al-Gailani (HPS, Cambridge)**  
Monstrous deliveries: fetal anomalies and the making of facts in nineteenth-century obstetrics
- 13 June **Margaret Olszewski (HPS, Cambridge)**  
Refashioning women: dress, science and the female body in late nineteenth-century Britain

# 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.

- 9 May **Stefan Brenner (HPS, Cambridge)**  
Colour-experience: eco-dispositionalism and inverted earth
- 23 May **Daniel Greco (Philosophy, Cambridge)**  
Williamson on knowledge as the most general factive mental state
- 6 June **Elselijn Kingma (HPS, Cambridge)**  
Environments: a problem for the bio-statistical theory of health
- 20 June **Florian Steinberger (Philosophy, Cambridge)**  
Supposing this and that

# Wittgenstein Reading Group

Meetings will be on **Fridays 2.00-3.30pm in the HPS Lodge**. We will begin by going through the last sections of Part I, as well as Part II, of Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (Blackwell: Oxford, 1953).

If you have any queries please contact David Clarke.

- 27 April §§466-490 – Thinking, causation and grounds for acting
- 4 May §§491-569 – Meaning and grammar; propositions and pictures; the idea of language as an instrument
- 11 May §§570-610 – Psychological concepts as distinctive
- 18 May §§611-693 – Willing, voluntary movement, intention and intended meaning

## *Part Two of the Philosophical Investigations*

- 25 May Parts i-x – Use of terms like 'grief' in comparison with 'pain', and their place within our form of life (i); Experiencing meaning as a mental image (ii-iii); Use of 'I believe' in the context of the mind-body problem (iv); Behaviour (v); Inner processes and the idea of words as being akin to musical phrases, sentences as compositions (vi); Sensations (viii); Observation, description and emotions (ix); Moore's paradox and 'I believe...' (x)
- 1 June xi – pp.193-214 or pp.165-182 3rd edition (up until 'In a law court, for instance, the question might be raised how someone meant a word...') – Discussion of seeing an aspect, meaning-blindness and the duck-rabbit figure
- 8 June xi – Remainder on experiencing the meaning of a word, primary and secondary sense, and the use of 'I know'. xii-xiv – The relation between our concepts and our natural history (xii); The expression 'to remember' (xiii); The confusions of psychology as conceptual and the inability of experimental method to solve such problems (xiv)

# Kant Reading Group

We meet on **Tuesdays from 1pm to 2.30pm in Seminar Room 1**. For more information please contact Marina Frasca-Spada.

- 24 April Introduction to 'Physical Geography'  
Presentation: Angela Breitenbach
- 1 May Preface of the 'Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View' (AA 7: 119-122) and section entitled 'On the Character of the Species' (AA 7: 321-333)  
Presentation: Alix Cohen
- 8 May Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View, §§6-7: On distinctness and indistinctness in relation to the consciousness of one's ideas (AA 7: 138-143) and §§41-44: Anthropological comparison of the three higher cognitive faculties with each other (AA 7: 197-202)  
Presentation: Sacha Golob
- 15 May Reviews of Herder's ideas on the philosophy of the history of mankind  
Presentation: Sasha Mudd

# Scepticism Reading Group

We will continue reading *Knowledge and Its Limits* by Timothy Williamson (Oxford University Press, 2000, paperback 2002). Meetings will take place on **Tuesdays 3pm-5pm in the HPS Lodge**. All are welcome. Organised by Martin Kusch.

1 May Ch. 9 'Evidence', pp. 184-208 (Presenter: Ulrich Stegmann)

8 May Ch. 10 'Evidential Probability', pp. 209-237 (Presenter: Martin Peterson)

15 May Ch. 11 'Assertion', pp. 238-269 (Presenter: Martin Kusch)

22 May Ch. 12 'Structural Unknowability', pp. 270-301 (Presenters: Paul Dicken and Martin Kusch)

Friday 1 June, 11am to 1pm, Timothy Williamson will join the group to answer questions about his book. He will also give a talk in the Department later the same day, 3pm to 4.30pm.

## 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!

Each week we study a classical, medieval or early modern text related to the history of science, often selected by members of the group as part of their research. We warm up with a short introductory piece before moving onto the main text – aiming to produce a working translation each week. Latin texts are circulated in advance, and further support is provided by our language tutor, Debby Banham. All are welcome to attend.

This term a behind-the-scenes trip to the British Museum is planned, giving therapists the opportunity to select and examine favourite items from the collection, and to practise some on-site translation of inscriptions.

For more information, and to be added to the mailing list, please contact Jenny Rampling. Information is also available on the Latin Therapy website, [www.hps.cam.ac.uk/latintherapy](http://www.hps.cam.ac.uk/latintherapy).

## Greek Therapy

The Greek Therapy Group meets on **Wednesdays at 5pm in the HPS Lodge**. Laurence Totelin is our language tutor. All welcome; anybody with a smattering of Greek from school or college would be able to catch up very quickly. For more information contact Nick Tosh.

## German Therapy

The German Therapy Group is meeting on **Tuesdays from 11.30am to 1pm in Seminar Room 1**. We'll be doing German grammar exercises and translation from German to English.

Everyone welcome. Please e-mail the tutor, Angela Breitenbach, if you would like to be added to the mailing list.



# Third Annual Workshop in the Philosophy of the Social Sciences

25–26 May 2007, Department of History and Philosophy of Science, University of Cambridge  
Organised by Martin Kusch

## Friday 25 May

- 9.15-10.15am Sasha Mudd (HPS): ‘From autonomy in thinking to epistemic responsibility: does Kant have an ethics of belief?’
- 10.15-11.15am Jeremy Kessler (HPS): ‘Supplementing meaning: Bronislaw Malinowski’s relationship to *The Meaning of Meaning*’
- 11.15-11.30am Coffee
- 11.30-12.30pm David Clarke (HPS): ‘Wittgenstein’s “forms of life” as communal frameworks, and the implausibility of individualistic and naturalistic interpretations’
- 12.30-1.30pm Lunch
- 1.30-2.30pm Tom Smith (Philosophy, Cambridge): ‘Trust in our peers, and trust in ourselves: joint commitment and individual commitment’
- 2.30-3.30pm Caroline Baumann (HPS): ‘Accounting for norm-guided behaviour: Gilbertian joint commitment vs. social skill’
- 3.30-4pm Coffee
- 4.00-5.00pm David Singerman (HPS): ‘Group-think: searching for individuals in Pettit’s collectives’
- 5.00-6.00pm Billy Wheeler (HPS): ‘Individualizing collective intentionality’
- 7pm Dinner in a local restaurant

## Saturday 26 May

- 9.15-10.15am Jill Howard (HPS): ‘Paradigm or pathology? The Milgram experiments and the epistemology of testimony’
- 10.15-11.15am Joab Rosenberg (HPS): ‘Intelligence and prediction’
- 11.15-11.30am Coffee
- 11.30-12.30pm Sonja Amadae (Ohio State University): ‘Rule-following and the law: is political obligation a mathematical exercise?’
- 12.30-1.30pm Lunch
- 1.30-2.30pm Michiru Nagatsu (Exeter): ‘Homo Oeconomicus as an interactive kind’
- 2.30-3.30pm Mattia Gallotti (Exeter): ‘On the philosophical foundations of social psychology’
- 3.30-4pm Coffee
- 4.00-5.00pm Nick Tosh (HPS): ‘Meaning scepticism and the sociology of knowledge: a case for amicable divorce’
- 5.00-6.00pm Discussion