

Departmental Seminars

Seminars will be held once every two weeks on **Thursdays at 4.30pm in Seminar Room 2**, with tea beforehand from 4pm in Seminar Room 1. Organised by Stephen John.

Please note papers **will not** be pre-circulated this term. Seminars will revert to the traditional format, with papers presented by speakers for about 45 minutes, followed by discussion for about 45 minutes.

25 January **Sophie Weeks (Homerton College and HPS, Cambridge)**

Francis Bacon and the art-nature distinction

8 February **Paul Dicken (HPS, Cambridge)**

From manifest image to Musgrave's problem: some comments on van Fraassen's epistemology

22 February **Christina McLeish (St Catharine's College and HPS, Cambridge)**

Reference failure: why worry?

8 March **Tatjana Buklijas (HPS, Cambridge)**

Anatomical politics and urban transformation in Vienna, 1848–1945

Abstracts

25 January **Sophie Weeks (Homerton College and HPS, Cambridge)**

Francis Bacon and the art-nature distinction

Commentators generally expound Bacon's position on the art-nature relationship in terms of how much it retained or departed from traditional conceptions. This paper argues that an appreciation of the Baconian meaning of the terms 'art' and 'nature' requires a close examination of his wider cosmogonical speculations. Bacon's cosmogonical account moves from a state of unbridled chaos to the relatively stable system for which the term 'nature' is normally used. The fundamental principle lying at the heart of Baconian cosmogony is an enriched and appetitive matter: eternal, unchanging, and the plenipotentary source of all things. Successive limitations of matter's absolute power produced a lazy and habitual nature, which Bacon labelled 'nature free'. To shift nature from this otiose condition, the Baconian operator recapitulates the original binding of matter. Bacon designated the systematic procedures of binding nature the science of magic. Magic is Bacon's human counterpart to the original cosmogonical process which gave rise to the current system of nature. In Bacon's cosmogony all possible worlds unfold out of matter: the function of art is to shake out nature's hidden folds. Hence, the distinction between *naturalia* and *artificialia* maps onto the distinction between actual and potential. Nature free is without purpose but art – nature bound – knowingly brings into being an alternative nature designed for human utility. Bacon's goal, I shall argue, was to access the occult storehouse of matter's powers by means of the artful manipulation of matter itself.

8 February **Paul Dicken (HPS, Cambridge)**

From manifest image to Musgrave's problem: some comments on van Fraassen's epistemology

Constructive empiricism is an attempt to reconcile what Wilfred Sellars has called our manifest and scientific images of the world. As an epistemological project, it therefore consists of a delicate balancing act between believing too much, and believing too little, of our accepted scientific theories. In this paper, I try to steer a middle course between these two extremes, responding to challenges by both Peter Lipton and Alan Musgrave respectively. I conclude with some observations of what the constructive empiricist may learn from these considerations about the nature of belief.

22 February **Christina McLeish (St Catharine's College and HPS, Cambridge)**

Reference failure: why worry?

For some time, philosophers of science have felt that a good account of reference must be a significant part of the realist response to antirealist threats like incommensurability and the pessimistic induction. There is a very large literature which wrestles with the advantages or otherwise of one suitably tweaked view over another. A lot of this tweaking is over how we should best cope with the historical problem of reference failure. The realist needs to balance the competing demands of the historical record, which apparently shows that many of the theoretical objects of science past don't exist, with the desire to demonstrate that science has a special ontological continuity. Getting the balance right has tied the debate up into some famous knots.

Some philosophers have lately expressed frustration with this concern about reference. They think that the problem is a red herring, and that trying to solve it doesn't scratch where realism itches. Some have argued that the debate confuses issues about semantics with issues about existence, and that existence is where the trouble really is. Others have argued that even if the problem could be solved, that wouldn't provide the support for realism that the proponents of the debate apparently think it would.

I'll try to show that reference failure is a proper problem for realists to tackle. I'll first argue that I think the various 'red herring' arguments are mistaken. Among other things, I'll consider the curious fact that no-one supposes that there are *no* cases of reference failure for the theoretical terms of science, even though they disagree over what the cases are. I'll argue that this is surprising, because it covertly supposes that reference failure is indeed a legitimate target of realist explanation.

8 March **Tatjana Buklijas (HPS, Cambridge)**

Anatomical politics and urban transformation in Vienna, 1848–1945

Vienna around 1900 is generally imagined as home to a leisurely café culture and a lively art scene, and as a polyglot time bomb of class and ethnic conflict. Historians of medicine describe the Austrian capital as a leading educational centre, offering students unparalleled access to the bodies of patients, living and dead. How and why should we try to put these two views together? Following historians who are increasingly taking cities seriously as settings that mould the production of scientific knowledge, I treat the practice of anatomy as informed, not just by international struggles over disciplinary priorities, but also by local politics, society and geography. I hope to show how such an approach benefits both urban history and history of science. I am studying the hundred years between the revolution of 1848 and the end of Nazi rule, but the talk will focus on three important years in the history of the city – 1848, 1897 and 1927 – to explore the relations between the disciplinary politics of anatomy and urban transformation.

History of Medicine

Seminars are on **Tuesdays from 5.00 to 6.30pm in Seminar Room 1**. Tea is available from 4.40pm. All welcome!

Early Medicine and Natural Philosophy

Organised by Lauren Kassell, Elaine Leong and Alisha Rankin.

23 January **Emma Spary (Wellcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine at UCL)**
Making more out of meat in eighteenth-century Paris

13 February **Ayesha Mukherjee (Trinity College, Cambridge)**
Dreams of plenty: domestic economy in the writings of Hugh Platt

6 March **Michael Stolberg (University of Würzburg)**
'Murderous pity?' Active euthanasia in early modern medicine and society

History of Modern Medicine and Biology

Organised by Tatjana Buklijas and Nick Hopwood.

30 January **Andreas Mayer (HPS, Cambridge)**
Queer feet: tracing the normal and the pathological in nineteenth-century movement studies

20 February **Michael Worboys and Neil Pemberton (University of Manchester)**
'The dog days': rabies in England, 1830–1860

13 March **Christoph Gradmann (University of Oslo)**
Infection and imagination: Robert Koch and tropical medicine

From Generation to Reproduction

This seminar, which is funded by our Wellcome enhancement award in the history of medicine, is a forum for discussion of how, since 1500, our world of reproductive practices and controversy was created.

Seminars are on **Tuesdays from 5.00 to 6.30pm in Seminar Room 1**. Tea is available from 4.40pm. All welcome!

Organised by Nick Hopwood and Laurence Totelin.

6 February **Jean-Paul Gaudillière (CERMES, Paris)**
Why write a history of both red and green biotech? The controversies over DES in post-war France and the United States

27 February **Sigrid Weigel (Centre for Literature Research, Berlin)**
The concept of generation: historical and theoretical perspectives

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.

- 22 January **Martin Rudwick (HPS, Cambridge)**
Geological deluge and snowball Earth
- 29 January **Laurence Totelin (HPS, Cambridge)**
Conquering the world through plants: kings and botany in the Graeco-Roman world
- 5 February **Peter Bowler (Queen's University Belfast)**
Amateurs and pros(e): growing pains in twentieth-century natural history publishing
- 12 February **Jenny Rampling (HPS, Cambridge)**
Alchemy and natural history
- 19 February **Joe Cain (University College London)**
Ritual patricide: why Stephen Jay Gould assassinated his idol
- 26 February **Peter Edwards (Roehampton University)**
The Earl of Oxford's stud at Welbeck in the 1720s
- 5 March **Leucha Veneer (University of Leeds)**
Mineralogy, stratigraphy and practical geology: shifting tensions in the Geological Society of London, 1807–1840
- 12 March **Jenny Beckman (University of Uppsala, Stockholm)**
Linnaean traditions? School botany and biological recording

Psy Studies

History of Psychiatry, Psychology, Psychoanalysis and Allied Sciences

Seminars are held fortnightly 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.

- 31 January **Barbara Wittmann (Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin)**
The mismeasure of stickman: testing intelligence by drawings
- 14 February **Bibi Straatman (University of Nijmegen)**
On the metaphysics of listening and lying in psychoanalysis
- 28 February **Fernando Vidal (Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin)**
How we became our brains: a historical perspective
- 14 March **Alison Winter (University of Chicago)**
'No! No! Not the comfy chair!' The power of the experimental situation in social psychology

Epistemology Reading Group

We will be reading from Stephen Hetherington (ed.) *Epistemological Futures* (paperback, OUP, 2006). Two copies are on reserve in the Whipple Library. Each meeting of the group will focus on an article, 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.

- 18 January Paul Churchland, 'Inner Spaces and Outer Spaces: The New Epistemology'
- 25 January Stephen Hetherington, 'How to Know (that Knowledge-that is Knowledge-how)'
- 1 February Christopher Hookway, 'Epistemology and Inquiry: The Primacy of Practice'
- 8 February Adam Morton, 'Knowing what to Think about: When Epistemology Meets the Theory of Choice'
- 15 February Linda Zagzebski, 'Ideal Agents and Ideal Observers in Epistemology'
- 22 February William Lycan, 'On the Gettier Problem'
- 1 March Catherine Elgin, 'From Knowledge to Understanding'
- 8 March Richard Feldman, 'Epistemological Puzzles about Disagreement'

Scepticism Reading Group

We will be reading *Knowledge and Its Limits* by Timothy Williamson (Oxford University Press, 2000, paperback 2002). The book is available in paperback in the philosophy section at Heffers, and two copies will be placed on reserve in the Whipple Library. Each meeting will focus on one chapter, with a member of the group offering an informal presentation, followed by a general discussion. (We shall read the first eight chapters in Lent Term, and the last four in Easter Term.)

Meetings will take place on **Tuesdays 3pm-5pm in the HPS Lodge**. All are welcome.

Organised by Martin Kusch.

- 23 January Ch. 1 'A State of Mind', pp. 21–48
- 30 January Ch. 2 'Broadness', pp. 49–64
- 6 February Ch. 3 'Primeness', pp. 65–92
- 13 February Ch. 4 'Anti-Luminosity', pp. 93–113
- 20 February Ch. 5 'Margins and Iterations', pp. 114–134
- 27 February Ch. 6 'An Application', pp. 135–146
- 6 March Ch. 7 'Sensitivity', pp. 147–163
- 13 March Ch. 8 'Scepticism', pp. 164–183

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 Nicky Reeves if you are interested in giving a paper or adding your name to the e-mail list.

24 January **Vidar Enebakk (University of Oslo, Norway)**
Samuel Lilley and the Commission for the History of the Social Relations of Science, 1947–53

7 February **Lydia Wilson (HPS, Cambridge)**
The place of natural philosophy in Al-Farabi's classification of knowledge

21 February **Lisa Mullins (HPS, Cambridge)**
'Les particularités la plus considerable': Fontenelle's éloges

7 March **Francis Lucian Reid (HPS, Cambridge)**
Samuel Brown of Edinburgh: chemistry and the scientific career in nineteenth-century Scotland

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.

31 January **Alex Broadbent (HPS, Cambridge)**
The difference between cause and condition

14 February **Torben Rees (HPS, Cambridge)**
The sceptical consequences of phenomenal realism

28 February **Caroline Baumann (HPS, Cambridge)**
Practices, rules and motivation

14 March **Yoon Choi (HPS, Cambridge)**
Can Kant have an account of self-knowledge?

STS Workshop

Meetings are held fortnightly on **Thursdays, 12noon to 1.30pm in Seminar Room 1**. All welcome.

Organised by Martin Kusch and Simon Schaffer.

The meetings in Lent and Easter Terms 2007 have the common theme of 'Testimony'. Copies of all the texts will be on reserve in the Whipple Library.

25 January **Simon Schaffer** will introduce and lead a discussion of his paper 'Newton on the Beach: A Genealogy of Testimony and Solitude'

8 February **Martin Kusch** will present a paper entitled 'Testimony and the Value of Knowledge'

22 February **Jim Secord** will introduce and lead a discussion of his paper 'A Planet in Print: Rethinking the Discovery of Neptune'

8 March **Nick Jardine** will introduce and lead a discussion of his book chapter 'Historical Testimony'

Wittgenstein Reading Group

Meetings will be on **Fridays 2.00-3.30pm in the HPS Lodge**. We will begin by going through Part I of Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations* (Blackwell: Oxford, 1953). Each weekly meeting will focus on between 15 and 30 pages of the text.

Graduates studying HPS or Philosophy are welcome, as are visiting scholars and those unfamiliar with the text.

If you have any queries please contact David Clarke.

19 January §§1–64: On the Augustinian conception of language and on ostensive definition

26 January §§65–142: On language-games and family-likeness

2 February §§143–84: On understanding and reading

9 February §§185–242: On following a rule

16 February §§243–315: On the private language argument(s)

23 February §§316–62: On thought and speech

2 March §§363–427: On imagination and mental pictures, on the usage of first-person 'I' and on consciousness

9 March §§428–65: On expectation and fulfilment

Kant Reading Group

We meet on **Tuesdays from 1pm to 2.30pm in Seminar Room 1**.

For more information please contact Marina Frasca-Spada.

Science and Literature Reading Group

This term the Science and Literature Reading Group will focus on a series of short stories about doctors. Most of the texts are available online, and photocopies will be available in the Whipple Library box file from the beginning of term.

We meet, as usual, on **alternate Mondays from 7.30–9pm in the upstairs seminar room at Darwin College**. Please contact Melanie Keene if you have any questions about the group, or if you would like to volunteer to introduce one of the sessions.

Remember you can keep up with all things science and literature at our online weblog! Go to **<http://sci-lit-reading-group.blogspot.com>**.

29 January Anton Chekhov, 'Anyuta' (1886) and 'A Doctor's Visit' (1898)

12 February Franz Kafka, 'A Country Doctor' (1919)

26 February Ernest Hemingway, 'Indian Camp' (1925) and 'A Day's Wait' (1936)

12 March William Carlos Williams, 'The Use of Force' (1938) and 'The Girl with a Pimpley Face' (1938)

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.

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**.

Greek Therapy

The Greek Therapy Group meets on **Wednesdays at 5pm in the HPS Lodge**. Laurence Totelin is our language tutor. We are working through the final chapters of the diminutive *Greek for Beginners* by L.A. Wilding, referring as needed to *A Primer of Greek Grammar* by Abbott & Mansfield (both published by Duckworth). We hope to graduate to some of the easier passages from Plato later this term. 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.