DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

MODULE HANDBOOK

2010-2011

SCIENCE, MEDICINE AND NATURE IN THE FRENCH ENLIGHTENMENT

Convenor: Dr Claudia Stein
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Context of Module

This module may be taken by students on the MA in the Social History of Medicine, on the MA in Eighteenth-Century Studies, on the MA in Religious and Social History, or any taught master's students within and outside the History Department.

Module Aims

This module will allow students to explore ideas and practices of science and medicine in Britain and western Europe from c.1450 to c.1800, a period which covers the so-called 'Scientific Revolution'. A particular concern will be to set these ideas and practices in their contexts - social, cultural, religious, political, etc. In addition, the impact of Europe's encounter with the wider world will also be examined.

Intended Learning Outcomes

- The development of seminar participation and presentation skills
- The ability to recognise and engage with the historiography of medicine, science and natural history
- To provide experience of independent preparation and writing of a 5,000 word essay, including the framing of a question, the demonstration of critical engagement with recent scholarship and effective use of primary sources where appropriate, independent evaluation of contrasting evidence and interpretations, the formulation of conclusions and the creation of an extensive and specialist bibliography and scholarly apparatus
- The ability to build on themes and skills related to the module to develop a dissertation topic.
**Week 1: Introduction**

**Readings:**

**Week 2: What is Enlightenment?**

**Readings:**
- Kant, Emanuel, ‘What is Enlightenment?’ (1782)
- Adorno, Theodor/Horkheimer, Max, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York, 1972), chapters on 'The Concept of Enlightenment'

**Week 3: The ‘Birth’ of the Clinic**

**Readings:**
- Foucault, Michel, *Birth of the Clinic*, chapter 4 and 5, pp. 54-87.

**Further Readings:**
- Armstrong, David, ‘Bodies of Knowledge/Knowledge of Bodies’, Colin Jones/Roy
- Frangos, E., *From Housing the Poor to Healing the Sick: The Changing Institutions of Paris under the Old Regime and the Revolution* (Madison, 1997)
- Riley, James, *The Eighteenth Century Campaign to Avoid Disease* (New York, 1987).
- Risse, Guenter, *Hospital Life in Enlightenment Scotland: Care and Teaching at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh* (Cambridge, 1986)
- Risse, Guenter, *Medicine in the Age of Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 1992)
**Week 4: Public Science: Science and Spectacle**

**Readings:**

**Further Readings:**
- Benedict, Maria M., *Curiosity: A Cultural History of Early Modern Curiosity* (Chicago, 2001), Chapter: Performing Curiosity
- Tetter Dobbs, Betty Jo/Jacobs, Margaret C., ‘Newton and the Culture of Newtonisim (Atlantic Hights, 1995), chapter 2
- Heilbron, J.L., *Electricity in the Seventeenth and eighteenth Centuries* (New York, 1999)
Landes, Joan, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of Revolution* (Ithaca, 1987).


Week 5: Scientific Facts and Human Imagination

Readings:


Further Readings:

- Ibid., Classical Probability in the Enlightenment (Princeton, 1988)
- Shapin, Steven/Schaffer, Simon, Leviathan and the Air-Pump (Chicago, 1985)
- Barbara J. Shapiro, A Culture of Fact: England, 1550-1720
**Week 7: Sentimental Science: the Case of Mesmerism**

**Readings:**

- Darnton, Robert, Mesmerism and the End of Enlightenment in France (Cambridge, MA, 1968), chapter 2: The Mesmerist Movement, pp. 47-81

**Further Readings (see also literature under Science and Spectacle):**

- Figlio, Karl, ‘Theories of Perception and the Physiology of Mind in the Late Eighteenth Century’ *History of Science* 13 (1975): 177-212
Ibid., (ed.), *The Language of Psyche: Mind and Body in Enlightenment Thought* (Berkely, 1990)


Week 8: Truth to Nature or Objectivity: Science and Visual Evidence

Readings:


Extra: Look up the terms ‘objectivity’ and ‘subjectivity’ in dictionaries of your choice!

Further Readings:

- Clarke, Bruce/Henderson Dalrymple, Linda, *From Energy to Information: Representation in Science and Technology, Art and Literature* (Stanford, 2002)
- Fleck, Ludwik, *Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact* (1935) (Chicago, 1979) (the! classic everybody should have read)


**Week 9: Inventing Human Nature**

**Readings:**


- Porter, Roy, 'Medical Science and the Enlightenment', in *Inventing Human Science: Eighteenth-Century Domains*, ed. by Christopher Fox, Roy Porter, and Robert Wokler, pp. 53-87


**Further Readings:**


- Porter, Roy/Teich, Mikulas (eds), *Enlightenment in National Context* (Cambridge, 1981)
Week 10: Final Discussion: Enlightenment and Postmodernity

Readings:


Illustrative Bibliography

M. Biagioli, Galileo Courtier (1993)

A. Cunningham, The Anatomical Renaissance (1997)


R. Darnton, Mesmerism and the End of the Old Regime (1968)


P. Dear, Revolutionising the Sciences 1500-1700 (2000)

J. Henry, Knowledge is Power (2003)


S. Shapin, The Social History of Truth (1994)


S. Shapin & S. Schaffer, Leviathan and the Air Pump (1985)


L. Schiebinger, Plants and Empire (2004)

E. Spary et al. (eds), Cultures of Natural History (1996)