THE GAZETTE

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The past months have been packed with fabulous HSTM events. Our sister organisation, the European Association for the History of Medicine and Health, held its biennial conference in Birmingham in August. The SHM regularly sponsors online virtual issues which showcase archive materials. Our most recent virtual issue, ‘Sensory History Comes of Age: Exploring the Senses in Social History of Medicine’, was associated with the EAHMH conference. The introduction that appears in this issue of the Gazette represents a longer version of that published online. Unfortunately, it had to be truncated for production reasons. But the SHM editors are grateful that our guest editor, Professor Jonathan Reinarz, agreed to his original introduction appearing here in full.

The next SHM virtual issue is also linked to a conference—the Australian and New Zealand Society of the History of Medicine conference in Auckland in December. ‘Beyond Borders: the History of Health and Medicine in Australia and New Zealand’ has been curated by Linda Bryder and Derek Dow (Auckland), and will go live to coincide with the conference on or around 2 December. The SHM editors welcome any suggestions for future virtual issues, so please send them in!

During the EAHMH conference, the SSHM held its own AGM, the minutes from which will be printed in the February Gazette. Dr Carsten Timmermann and Dr Catherine Cox sadly stepped down from the Exec Committee at the AGM. The Committee and Society are grateful for all the amazing work they have done. But we’re delighted to welcome Dr Laura Kelly, Dr Rebecca Wynter and Dr Cara Dobbing as new EC members.

Sadly, this is my final issue as editor of the Gazette (we’ll be appointing a new editor shortly, so keep an eye on the SHM website for more info). But I’m looking forward to remaining involved with the Exec Committee as SSHM Webmaster. If there is anything you would like advertised on the website, please get in touch! And as it is my final issue, I thought I would have some fun with this quarter’s cover star. Ladies and gentlemen, I give you The Easy Girlfriend—wartime Britain’s most feared purveyor of venereal disease and sartorial elegance.

Signing off for the last time. It’s been a blast.

Anne Hanley, Editor


4 Jenner, as note 3.
tangential. If there is a gap, it is the near absence of taste as it relates to food, which the morsel of Lloyd’s review essay does not quite fill. Others may be more critical of the European focus of my nine selected articles, covering as they do Britain (4), Italy (2), Sweden (1), while Kennaway’s and Michaels’ are more sweeping in their geographical coverage and discuss both Europe and America.

If Corbin brought sensory history to historians across its many sub-disciplines, Bynum’s and Porter’s Medicine and the Five Senses encouraged medical historians to consider aspects of sensory perception as it related to diagnosis and treatment in the past. Based on a symposium held in 1987, their edited volume discussed the senses in medicine Greek medicine through to late-twentieth century, when technologies enhanced doctors’ senses, or noticeably transformed them into readable tables and charts. Interestingly, the book was reviewed in this journal far less enthusiastically than was Corbin’s ground-breaking work. Among other things, its reviewer felt the collection was ‘lacking in cohesion’. While the reviewer of Corbin’s work claimed that a study of smell usefully challenged the ‘privileging of the sense of sight’, the reviewer of Porter and Bynum’s volume was, quite tellingly, most impressed by the chapter that examined Renaissance medical illustrations. It is perhaps not surprising that the journal was not immediately overwhelmed with submissions tackling a field that was clearly wide open for exploration. Very few articles appear even to mention the senses throughout the 1990s. Indeed, surprisingly few key sensory history texts were even reviewed in the pages of the journal, and when they were, reviews seemed to indicate that medical historians were still largely preoccupied with sight above all other senses. Ludmilla Jordanova’s review essay of 1990 was nevertheless a significant contribution, as was the appearance of her work, Defining Features, a decade later, though, remarkably, this work on medical portraiture was not reviewed in the pages of this journal either. She was, perhaps less surprisingly, one of the keynote speakers at the EAHMH conference.

It was in the same year that Jordanova’s book on medical portraiture appeared (2000) that Faith Wallis’s article on pulse and urine inspection as described in early medieval texts was published in this journal. Its approach in many respects follows that outlined in Medicine and the Five Senses, although it does not reference that work, or any other key work in sensory studies. Nevertheless, like the contributions to Bynum and Porter’s book, it invites us to consider the sensual ways in which the pulse was described in a handful of Italian medical anthologies; was it fluid, rapid, frequent, irregular? Alternatively, how did urine appear, smell or taste and what did this suggest about the state of the body’s digestive powers. As importantly, although we might know how the authors of such texts were trained, we will always struggle to understand the individual, craft-like phronesis, or hands-on knowledge that is hinted at in such writings. However, references to the position in which a patient was lying, their colour, voice, silences, all spoke volumes to practitioners. My selections for this virtual issue, in turn, might be read with these medieval texts in mind. If approached in this way, one will better appreciate what sense historians like Mark Smith have said about this field. It is not so much about doing things differently, than perceiving things differently. Evidence of the senses is everywhere in the texts that we have all trawled through before, only now we need to retune our own sensory habits to re-read them for evidence of scents, sounds, pains, tastes and sights. Another lesson that emerges from Wallis’s article is that sensations associated with the pulse and urine are not simply physical signs without associated semiotics. Senses have meaning, and not always ones we might immediately recognise. Jenner’s article on tasting pulse perhaps best reminds historians that we might have to fundamentally reconsider the model of culture that underpins the work of practitioners like John Floyer, or we might easily misinterpret and misunderstand the way people, and not just practitioners, sensed their environments in the past. If we are to write convincingly about patients’ experiences in the past, we must sometimes interpret evidence very differently.

If readings of ordinary sensory experience in the past require great care, it is no surprise that some of the first works to do so concentrated on unusual, if obvious, sensory episodes, such as great stinks. In David Barnes’s case, a single pungent episode that was perceptible to all who lived in Paris in 1880 generated enough historical detail to

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11 Smith, Sensory History, 4–5.
illuminate an entire culture or era. Corbin’s work similarly opens with smells that overwhelmed a public health official who inspected nuisances that accumulated along the Seine and would have been evident to even the most poorly trained nose. However, Corbin also explored the less pungent scents that permeated the decor of homes and were thought to have the potential to impact upon on the health of dwellers before they even became as obvious or distinct as the average tannery or manure heap. While Parisians, past and present, might easily identify the bad airs discussed in ancient texts, including Hippocrates’ ‘Airs, Waters, Places’, Sandra Cavallo’s 2016 article in this journal was a timely reminder that scholars had perhaps too easily presumed that medical definitions of unhealthy air remained unchanged for centuries. Like a patient’s pulse or urine, air acquired a physicality that was ‘experienced by all the senses’ (704). An early modern doctor might have described good air as ‘light, thin, transparent and fresh’, but also, perhaps most importantly, as ‘mobile’ (705). Through an examination of early modern Italian domestic interiors, Cavallo also demonstrates that consumers’ choices about home design and furnishings were about controlling the bad airs produced in the home. In this way, she reveals important shifts in the way in which good air, as well as bad, was conceptualized and how medical expertise determined decisions about seemingly mundane matters. Household objects, such as the ideal drinking vessel, wall hanging and blanket, varied depending on the time of year and their selection greatly impacted on a prevailing domestic health culture that extended to the servants. This ‘empire of things’, which characterized the wealthiest Italian homes during the Renaissance, also determined the lived experience of its inhabitants, including their digestion, temperature or subject to bedbugs, in ways that should remind readers of Emily Cockayne’s rounded view of sensory experience in urban industrial England. As both Cockayne and Cavallo remind us, bad air did not always come from outside one’s residence, or an insalubrious district, but was increasingly recognized as generated by the body itself (Cavallo, 708). For this reason, perfuming practices also evolved around this time, not just to protect households from plague, but to modify the humoral qualities of the domestic air, stimulate the brain and lift the spirits. As such, Cavallo addresses the pre-history of perfume as explored by Dugan in a book that sought to insert England into modern cartographies of scent. When reviewed here, Dugan’s book was also recognized for communicating the important lesson that ‘sensation is a kind of historical thinking’ (150), reiterating an adage that recurs at the outset of most introductions to sensory history.

Just as air was judged by the way it moved, looked and (of course) smelled, water’s quality was determined by its taste, sound, smell and appearance. Water also frequently turns up as a standard topic of medical history research, whether dealing with hydrotherapy, sewers or drought. Tomory’s exploration of the quality of London’s drinking water in the eighteenth century, however, is particularly interesting in terms of sensory history for the way in which it weaves elements of moral and spiritual impurity into discussions around the New River and its contamination after it became popular with working-class bathers. While letters to newspapers communicating anxieties about the changing colour and flavour of the water speak volumes about the way in which (mostly affluent) members of the public articulated and read about pollution, they also demonstrate that Mary Douglas’s arguments about conformity and transgression, first expressed in Purity and Danger, are still central to debates in the history of the senses. The disgust expressed by contemporary commentators equally demonstrates the way in which sensory studies intersect with another emerging historiographical field, the history of emotions. As a result of middle-class complaints, the expanding city of London not only began to employ inspectors of nuisances in the early modern period, but also the lesser known ‘walkmen’, who patrolled the river to prevent its pollution by working-class bathers. Unlike other sources of filth that seeped into the metropolitan public’s and publican’s preferred water source, the disgust provoked by simply viewing nude bodies was amplified by the swearing and other so-called depraved (sensory) acts that accompanied the lower-class practice of washing. As long as the New River remained a water source and its banks attracted polite walkers, these working-class bathers would continue to be construed as contaminans.

If some of the articles in this virtual issue appear to engage with the senses, without actually addressing the new historiography of the senses, the same cannot be said about Erica Storm’s Roy Porter Student Prize Essay on

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patent medicines in the early nineteenth century. While Storm’s essay is a particularly deserving winner for adding several layers to the subject of quack medicine, to which Porter also made significant contributions, it equally considers these remedies in the context of their sensory qualities, including their colours, shapes, textures and, of course, flavours. It also engages with the senses of patients, rather than practitioners, in this case the sensory, or rather multisensory, experience of the quack’s customers. Although branded, some medicines, such as Godfrey’s Cordial, were not produced using standard additives and came in varying strengths. At the same time, Storm considers the way in which the customer’s experience of consuming these medicines was mediated by commercial technologies, namely the way these medicines were wrapped, bottled, boxed, advertised, thereby following other sensory scholars in producing a ‘materialist history of the senses’ (46). The physical attributes of medicine bottles are considered, and even depicted in illustrations, much like perfume bottles, a staple feature of smell histories. Gilded pills, like designer perfume flacons, denoted value, and thereby communicated social taste, but also usefully disguised unpleasant tastes. Storm’s consideration of the flavours of medicine usefully extends my own work on the sensory world of the eighteenth-century hospital, and while whiteness or colourlessness has been considered in relation to the history of adulteration, she astutely associates the tastelessness of patent medicines with purity. Given that we have all struggled to swallow pills, it is surprising that Storm is almost alone in considering this aspect of medical consumption. As such, she demonstrates that seemingly mundane and private acts can be reinterpreted as vibrant and meaningful processes, especially when scholars take the realm of the sensory into consideration. Alternatively, as expressed differently by Hannah Newton in 2012, by reading our sources in creative ways, historians can ‘capture the sensations of the sick in past centuries’.

If bad airs and stinking, stagnant waters have become the ubiquitous tropes in histories of olfaction, surely the royal touch is one of the standard ways, along with pulse-taking, in which medical historians have traditionally thought about the sense of touch. In his work, reviewed here, Brogan demonstrates that this tactile tradition allegedly dates back to Christ’s healing touch, and remained remarkably durable among early modern monarchs, who used the idea to assert their divine right to rule. Not only was royal thaumaturgy practised by Charles II and James II on 100,000 occasions, but it was regarded as a means to heal both subjects’ bodies and the body politic. Less known than the laying on of royal hands was the desire of some of those people afflicted with swellings and skin conditions to be stroked by the hanged man’s hand, a practice that came into prominence in the second half of the eighteenth century. Taking advantage of the recent digitization of British newspapers and periodicals, Davies and Matteoni examined 27 instances of stroking of wens, goiters, scrofula and tumours at executions between 1758 and 1863 and considered both the presumed benefits of the practice and popular responses to this unusual and dramatic public performance. While there are other examples of the way in which the corpse, or at least its constituent parts, whether in the form of fat, bones, blood or sweat, was incorporated into medical remedies, the criminal body appeared to offer a far more potent medicine to those prepared to come into contact with it. When hanging was abolished in 1868, the ritual of the hanged man’s hand, like that of its royal counterpart, also naturally came to an end (if almost a century later). However, in its last stages, it had noticeably come under criticism from many who witnessed the practice, not least because of the disgust that this ‘revolting’ spectacle provoked (703). Again, like Tomory’s study, Davies’ and Matteoni’s article touches on the history of emotions and reveals just how easily these two fields intersect.

As sensational an exploration of tactility as the hanged man’s touch was the late nineteenth-century practice of gynaecological massage. Invented by Thure Brandt, a Swedish Army Major, the manual therapy explored in Anders Ottosson’s article might (to a modern audience) appear to break taboos around touch, but won international recognition in the 1880s and was extensively practised in Scandinavian and German settings until at least the 1910s. Rather than instigate a string of charges of


immoral behaviour, this potentially penetrative practice was more often associated with discomfort and pain, than sexual stimulation. Unlike surgical interventions then coming into prominence, like ovariotomy, however, these radical methods were regarded as both safe and natural, thereby rendering them more acceptable among proponents of conservative approaches to ovarian disease, and far less shocking than readers might suppose. Thure Brandt’s uterine massage was in fact taught at the Royal Centre Institute of Gymnastics in Stockholm, the world’s first institute for physical therapists. In a relatively short period of time, it gained considerable acceptance, thanks in some part to its association with this institution. Rather than being regarded as inappropriate and invasive, the procedure was even for a time regarded as a means to treat nymphomaniac tendencies. At a time when neurological research warned against nervous overstimulation, this manual method was deemed a way to dampen irritability through applying pressure directly to nerve stems. Gynaecological masseurs, many of whom were women, offered a seemingly natural, hands-on treatment for uterine disease. Like all good sensory history, Ottosson’s article has the potential to overturn our preconceptions, as well as the most established ideas.

Unlike the authors of the papers on touch, Kennaway’s article on musical hypnosis again engages more directly with the history of the senses literature. However, like the studies of tactility, not to mention Tomory’s article, it deals with prevailing anxieties about personal autonomy and explores the trance-like states music reputedly induced from the age of Mesmer to the moral panics provoked by rock and roll and heavy metal in the mid-to-late twentieth century. Interestingly, an earlier edited collection by Kennaway, reviewed here, was criticised for its neglect of Mesmer, but he made up for this in his article, which thoroughly explores the role that music played in the German doctor’s system of energy transference. Importantly, like much of the best sensory history, Kennaway acknowledges the ways in which the senses combined in Mesmer’s hypnotic, animal magnetism, which relied upon fixing patients with his eponymous gaze and was further reinforced with ‘sympathetic vibration’ generated by violins, gongs or the glass harmonica. Like gynaecological massage, music acted upon the patient’s nerves in order to induce a state of hypnosis. When played by professionals, like Charcot, the nerves, or their subjection to sounds, could equally produce cataleptic fits, a recognised stage in the French neurologist’s own method of hypnosis. Musical trances and aversion therapy continued to be at the centre of experiments during the Cold War, and the mass hysteria provoked by bands like the Beatles, suggested the power of music was still to be tapped. Combined with satanic iconography, heavy metal became another easy target for critics of the genre, who attempted to link this form of musical contagion to increasing rates of teenage suicide between 1950 and 1996. Kennaway expanded this discussion of the relationship between music and the nerves in his book, Bad Vibrations, which explored in even greater detail both the pleasures and pains that various forms of music have induced historically.

If there is an involuntary element associated with the study of the senses, this must include the almost automatic way in which historians continue to think through their subjects in a visual manner. The cultural context that elevated the eye above all other sensory organs and allowed the visual to become so dominant culturally cannot be rehearsed here, but was thoroughly explored by Luke Davidson in another of this journal’s prize essays in 1996. An indication of just how embedded visual thinking is in historical research, however, is easily discernible from the everyday language academics employ in their presentations and papers. Not only do scholars in this and other periodicals regularly ‘focus’ on specific subjects, make ‘observations’ in efforts to provide ‘insight’ into various issues, but well-illustrated studies of sight and vision, like the last two articles to be discussed in this introduction remain the most common sensory studies in scholarly journals, whether medical or historical. After all, medicine, as argued decades ago in Foucault’s Birth of the Clinic, transformed in the eighteenth century from a symptom-based practice into a visual one, with diagnosis, treatment and prognosis driven by the doctor’s gaze. Of course, practitioners continued to employ their other senses, but the dominance of vision in medicine and society was evident everywhere, not least in several works reviewed in this journal: Skelly (2015), Kennedy (2012), Givens et al. (2008) and Buklijas and Hopwood (2009). As

Chris Otter has convincingly demonstrated, England in the nineteenth century, like many other Western European countries, became a gas-lit society and its government expanded the power it exercised through technology, design and administration.\textsuperscript{30} Despite developments in surveillance, better illumination not only allowed authorities to better observe populations, but opened the way to achieving greater personal freedoms. Although Otter’s study concludes in 1910, Weaver, in this journal, takes this story forward a decade in an article arguing that eyesight in 1920s Britain became a public concern to a previously unseen extent (these puns are part and parcel of sensory history, so get used to it).\textsuperscript{31} This is evidenced in Weaver’s examination of key inquiries into the causes of visual impairment and related legislation in these years. These include the 1920 Departmental Committee on the Causes and Prevention of Blindness, set up by England’s newly-founded Ministry of Health, and the Medical Research Council’s Departmental Committee on the Physiology of Vision (est. 1925). Drawing on Caroline Jones’s work, Weaver claims this era witnessed the ‘disaggregation of the senses into compartmentalised units’ that could be more efficiently ‘administered, commodified and contained’ (242). The official remit of ophthalmologists was expanding as they began to assume a mediating position between employers and workers, as well as schoolchildren (dare I say pupils?) and educators, given national concerns about productivity and efficiency. A complex structure of committees and authorities, although acting individually, seemingly targeted particular groups and difficulties and simultaneously highlighted the eyes as a discrete concern. Further concerns about venereal disease and the impact of conditions, like ophthalmia neonatorum in newborns (made notifiable in 1914), similarly underscored the place of eye specialists in these debates. The proliferation of the automobile and invention of the television in subsequent decades merely consolidated vision’s dominance within the sensory hierarchy.

Childbirth serves as a tentative link between two final and otherwise very different papers. The last, by Paula Michaels, explores films and phonographic records used as didactic tools in antenatal classes from the 1950s to the 1980s.\textsuperscript{32} As one might expect, the visual nature of these audio-visual artefacts once again places sight at the heart of the discussion, but the inclusion of audio recordings prompts readers to consider more than just the visual spectacle of childbirth (and prevents this virtual issue from appearing more of a visual one). Like other studies of childbirth in this journal, regardless of era, Michaels regularly refers to the pain of delivery, a fact that usefully reminds us that childbirth is a multisensory experience. While modern discourses around birthing pain clearly changed from early modern ones that invoked martyrdom explored by Sharon Howard,\textsuperscript{33} the context had clearly changed by the second half of the twentieth century. Emotions of mothers may have been as complex, but recordings now often included fathers who were regularly present during labour and delivery. Screams might also be accompanied by grunting, whistling, blowing, if not the ‘quiet, composed demeanour’ of the Lamaze advocate (Michaels, 36). If not mute, doctors and midwives equally varied in their approaches, occasionally scolding or encouraging mothers, as did partners, who were not just visually present, but often stroked, caressed or massaged the labouring mother. Over time, films showcased diversity and similarly allowed for a greater range of emotions from those present, ranging from fear to joy. Partners, once at the margins of birth, were now active participants at the delivery. By the end of the period, the dominant position of doctors was also profoundly challenged. Practitioners like Dick-Read and Lamaze appeared to have succeeded in bringing about a revolution in obstetric pain management. In a similar way, it may not be an exaggeration to suggest that sensory historians have had a similar impact on historical studies. Like the didactic tools of childbirth produced by Michaels’ practitioners, medical historians in recent years have more actively explored new ways of reading for and writing about the senses. One might similarly regard the approaches evident in the articles collected here as indicative of the changing place of sensory history in our field over the last three decades. It was once a very marginal consideration, as in the case of Wallis’s article, but has in the last ten years more often resembled an approach that has moved to the centre of many more projects, discussions and debates in the history of medicine, as in the contributions by Storm, Cavallo and Kennaway. The dominant position of visual culture in the discipline is equally, if gradually, starting to give way, and has been supplemented by studies that are more


theoretically informed by the work of leading sensory scholars. Given the rich programme we have been able to assemble for our conference, the pages of this and other medical history journals will only see more examples of such direct engagements with sensory history in the future. More than likely, some of these contributions will not merely incorporate and confirm the results of past studies, but open up new avenues of debate and investigation.

**MEETING REPORTS**

**BORN YESTERDAY: CROSS-DISCIPLINARY INVESTIGATIONS INTO BIRTH, MIDWIFERY AND CHILDHOOD, UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM**

On 5–6 September the attendees of the Born Yesterday Conference were gathering together in the great hall of the Trent Building on campus of the University of Nottingham. With the help of the SSHM travel bursary, I was able to participate in the stimulating event. In the two-day conference midwives, historians, linguists, clinicians, and many other interdisciplinary representatives, most of them women, came together to discuss their researches in five sessions with three parallel panels.

In the name of the organising team, Richard J. Whitt (Assistant Professor of Linguistics, University of Nottingham) gave us a warm welcome at the first morning of the conference and introduced us to the rest of the organising team: Kim Russell (Associate Professor of Midwifery, University of Nottingham), Anna Greenwood (Associate Professor of History, University of Nottingham) and Julia Allison (Honorary Professor of Midwifery and Vice President of the Royal College of Midwives). Right after the welcome Julia Allison gave the first keynote about the social and political history of English midwives from the fourteenth to the twenty-first century. As an interesting fact, she noted that in the 1930’s the maternal death rate at birth was nearly as high as in the times of the Tudor dynasty. Due to her work experience as a midwife for homebirths, she was able to share fascinating stories about her own experiences as midwife and developments during the years of work.

After the keynote tea and coffee were served in the great hall and the first speakers prepared for their paper presentations in the following panel sessions. Although the geographical focus of the conference was clearly on the UK, the international origin of the participants (UK, Ireland, Spain, France, Germany, Netherlands, Austria, Sweden) made it possible to engage in research from all over the world. The participants also represented a wide range of career levels: From students over postgrads to professors. Unfortunately, the number of characters is too small to mention all the speakers, so I can only name a few, although they were all very exciting. Due to my researches on institutional birth in Vorarlberg (Austria), I found the paper of Maria Wisselgren (University of Umea, Sweden) very impressive. Although her research has just started, she could give us already a highly fascinating insight into her work on the different temporal and spatial conditions of the institutionalization of birth in Sweden. The last lecture of the first day was a keynote by Julie Roberts about the problems within televising births, like an increasing fear of birth and how midwives must take these fears away from women.

After all sessions and keynotes, the wine reception in the Great Hall and the social dinner were excellent possibilities to establish new contacts.

The second day started with a keynote by Laura King about the role of fathers and the change of their role in the twentieth-century UK. Next, I could present my research on maternity homes in Vorarlberg throughout the twentieth century. The discussion on gender roles in the debates during the closing of the last maternity home in Lustenau in 2001 was very helpful for my further work. All in all, the conference was highly inspiring. Especially for an early stage scholar like me, the experience of presenting my research, connecting with other participants is a unique possibility. Along with such a friendly and supportive atmosphere, many fascinating discussions made the conference a lively and enjoyable event.

Daniela Reis
Medical University of Innsbruck

**BRITISH SOCIETY FOR THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE POSTGRADUATE CONFERENCE**

A history of science conference in Cambridge provides an inspirational platform for postgraduate students studying the diverse array of topics that fit into this field of enquiry. In April this year 113 scholars took advantage of this opportunity and spent two and a half days darting around the Department of History and Philosophy of Science and the Whipple Library at the University of Cambridge to participate in 33 panel sessions as part of the British Society for the History of Science (BSHS) Postgraduate conference.

The conference began with a reminder that the BSHS is not British centric, it has global reach and relevance. A sentiment that was reflected in the international delegation and the variety of narratives that embraced Indigenous knowledge and other non-Western perspectives as part of their presentations. One
presentation that demonstrated why these narratives are so important in this type of emerging academic environment was made by Avioop Sengupta. His talk on the British biologist JBS Haldane demonstrated the Indian, or Hindu, influence on a British scholar and how this offered the scientist a different epistemology to develop his field of study. Considering Darwin from a Hindu perspective was particularly fascinating, especially the debate on why the theories of evolution were easier to comprehend from a Hindu perspective because of their long-established connection to nature.

The key themes of the conference were the histories of astronomy, psychology and chemistry; science and medicine in modern China; the history of the mind; collecting in the colonial context; science and representation; innovation and teaching and learning; book and print history; science and the environment, the arts and gender; and science and medicine in nineteenth century India. This diverse spread of themes led to an thought-provoking array of topics including: how seventeenth century astronomy went from science to superstition in France; the application of Gutting’s Attitudes to Knowledge as means to understand the work of Carl Jung; and a consideration of psychical research in Britain and how the study benefits from looking at those who embraced the ‘science of seances’ as much as those who were attracted to it to ‘debunk’ the practice.

A trend that emerged from this array of themes was the importance of considering how science was taught to understand historic practice. One talk in particular by Polina Merkulova discussed this argument by considering the role of teaching in the university as opposed to practical teaching in the lunatic asylums in nineteenth-century Scotland. Historically there was an argument as to which produced the person better prepared to care for the persons suffering from a mental illness, and which produced the person better prepared to research and teach the next generation of practitioners.

The key note was delivered by Dr Sujit Sivasundaram, from the Faculty of History at the University of Cambridge, on the topic of Islanding in the global history of science. The fascinating talk reminded the new and emerging scholar of the need to move the histories of science beyond the politics of the global and consider local dynamics at play in smaller regions of scientific enquiry. Dr Sivasundaram expertise in Indian and Pacific Oceans in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, especially in South and Southeast Asia and Polynesia is an area of growth in the BSHS Postgraduate community and it is hoped this is the beginning of future correspondence for many.

A stand out talk for many delegates was given by Nina Liebenberg. It was not only a beautiful delivered presentation it demonstrated the opportunities provided by viewing the history of science through the artistic and curatorial lenses. The talk explored a Tabloid medicine chest situated in the Manuscripts and Archives Department of the University of Cape Town library. Liebenberg presented how she as both a curator and artist engaged with the object’s layered history to discuss the history of imperialism, colonialism, disease and local medical
practices of the period. Applying the narrative of viruses interacting with the environment was thought provoking and enabled the audience to establish an empathetic link with the object and its environment.

A personal highlight for me was being able to present my research into the private collection of Australian Indigenous human remains with speakers from Portugal, Catarina Madruga and Sophia Viegas, who were researching African exploration and their collection legacies. Hearing their stories of exploration and understanding how the romance of exploration was considered in Portugal was a reminder that there are so many similarities in the histories of colonisation. This is an important reminder to those working in isolation to reach out and look to other countries histories to gain perspective.

The next BSHS Postgraduate conference will be held at the University of Leeds in 2020. These conferences present an ideal platform for students to test and finalise their arguments and for those considering study in this area, they can prove to be very inspirational.

Johanna Parker
Australian National University

HISTORY OF SCIENCE SOCIETY ANNUAL CONFERENCE

At the start of the History of Science Society Annual Conference in Utrecht (23–27 July), several hundred delegates sitting in the plenary session at the grand Janskerk church, were reminded that in times of political uncertainty, anthropogenic climate change, and the return of far-right fascism, historians, philosophers, and sociologists of science have a critical role to play outside of the academy. Scholars of science studies, the panellists argued, need to be politically engaged: our expertise is urgently required in public debates over climate change, global surveillance, and waste disposal, amongst other pressing issues.

HSS19 was the first meeting of the History of Science Society to be hosted outside of the United States. The conference venue was the University of Utrecht, situated in the centre of the city, alongside a charming Dutch canal. The distinguished lecture and plenary session took place in two magnificent eleventh- and thirteenth-century churches, the Domkerk and the Janskerk. Graduate and Early Career Scholars were treated to a suite of social networking, and career-building events, including a welcome reception, a mentoring event with the editors of Isis, and a CV support session. These events were successful, and the atmosphere was one of intellectual generosity, collegiality, and warmth (not only a result of a fiery heatwave).

Keeping with the themes outlined in the plenary session, some of the most successful panels attempted to transcend disciplinary silos and engage with broader social trends and problems. One of these was ‘Cross-Cultural Interactions Across Time: Imperial Entanglements and the Makings of Natural, Medical, and Cultural Knowledge from the Early Modern to the Modern Period’ organised by Genie Yoo and Šebestián Kroupa, and supported by papers from Faizah Zakaria and Edna Bonhomme. This panel explored the production of scientific knowledge in a crucible of European, North African, and Asian cultural contacts within British, Dutch, French, and Spanish empires. It not only demonstrated the transcultural nature of science, but also included a brilliant discussion on approaches to decolonising the history of science. Making steps towards addressing this complex goal, the participants argued, requires a fundamental re-examination of the sources that historians of science depend on: state, institutional, and personal archives of scientists. A decolonial history of science would not only highlight non-Western perspectives within such archives, but also examine non-European language sources, oral history, and ‘counter-archives’. Moreover, the archive itself, they argued, needs to be problematised as an instrument of Western knowledge and power, and the hierarchies within universities and between academics and the public needs to be challenged. Although this is a conversation that is in its infancy in most European and North American institutions, it is encouraging to see the call of South African student protests reverberating across the world.

The impacts of anthropogenic climate change were strongly felt at the meeting that took place during a heatwave in which the highest temperature was ever recorded in the Netherlands (thirty-nine degrees). One excellent paper delivered by Aaron van Neste (Harvard University) stood out in this environment. Van Neste’s paper focussed on the African palm weevil, palm oil plantations in Malaysia, and the extensive habitat and biodiversity that has been lost in fuelling palm oil driven industries in the ‘plantationocene’. In 1981, the palm oil weevil, a West African insect which fertilises oil palm plants, was transported from Cameroon to Malaysia. The introduction of this insect enormously expanded plantation productivity in Malaysia, which in turn accelerated rainforest destruction. Plantation workers who had previously fertilised the plants by hand lost their jobs to the free labour it provided. Fascinatingly, van Neste argued that this constituted a form of automation – mechanisation by insect.
A personal highlight was participating in the panel ‘Scientific Cultures in Africa’. This panel aimed to create conversations between researchers based in African history and history of science and address the lack of representation in this area at HSS. We aimed to juxtapose the contradictions between the colonial stereotype of Africa as a continent lacking science, and the indispensability of indigenous Africans in the production of scientific knowledge. My own paper, entitled ‘Extracting Blood, Flies, and Ideas: David and Mary Bruce, the gamenagana link, and the role of Zulu Knowledge, c. 1890s-1920s’ examined the a series of scientific studies into tsetse fly, animal trypanosomiasis, wildlife, and livestock in Zululand, South Africa. It argued that Zulu informants were indispensable intellectual agents in these studies, yet their participation was systematically erased as the concept of ‘Zulu knowledge’ was bifurcated from science during a series of vitriolic animal-conservation debates. This, I argued, shows a need to distinguish between the idea of ‘indigenous knowledge’ as a historian and historical actors’ category. Such an approach would simultaneously acknowledge the role played by indigenous people in the sciences and examine how a corpus of knowledge was constructed as ‘African’ by those scientists who depended upon it.

Overall, I am sure most participants would agree that despite the heat, HSS19 was one of the most successful meetings yet hosted by the society. The programme chairs Christine van Oertzen and Simon Werrett, the HSS organising committee, the Descartes Centre for the History and Philosophy of the Sciences and the Humanities Department of Utrecht University, as well as student volunteers and support staff are to be congratulated on a stimulating and masterfully organised meeting.

Jules Skotnes-Brown
University of Cambridge

‘SITES OF HEALTH: A SYMPOSIUM ON THE MEDICAL HUMANITIES’

On 26 and 27 April 2019, Shanghai University’s David F Musto Center for Drug Policy Studies (MDPS) jointly hosted ‘Sites of Health: A Symposium on the Medical Humanities’ with the University of Strathclyde’s Centre for the Social History of Health and Healthcare (CSHHH) Glasgow, with the generous support of the Wellcome Trust. Organised by a team of postgraduate fellows, postgraduate students and academic faculty based at Shanghai University, the conference was attended by more than 35 delegates from twenty-one institutions in China (including Hong Kong), the UK, Indonesia, France, the US, India, Norway, Nigeria and Australia. The delegates represented a wide range of disciplinary perspectives: historians, social scientists, architects, botanists and medical practitioners, which enabled wide-ranging deliberations and reflections on the medical humanities.

Over two full days, panels were chaired by faculty from Nanjing University, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Shanghai University, and the University of Strathclyde, graciously volunteering their time to coordinate the discussion sessions and offer feedback. To facilitate discussion and exchange of ideas each of the six panels were held in the same venue. This allowed for continuity in the debates and reflections on each paper and its contribution to the overall conference theme of ‘Sites of Health’. In addition, several informal events for networking were also organized to facilitate explorations of common research interests as well as help continue the conversation beyond the symposium.

Yong-an Zhang (Shanghai University) welcomed the delegates to Shanghai and introduced the work ongoing at the Musto Center. This was followed by the opening keynote by Shujian Zhang (Shandong University of Traditional Chinese Medicine) who offered insights into how the People’s Daily positioned acupuncture at various phases in China’s postwar history from 1946 to 1986. The first panel focused on Hong Kong, with papers ranging from contemporary memories of SARS (Chris Wemyss, University of Bristol), colonial environmental development projects (Chi Chi Huang, University of Hong Kong and Maxine Decaudin, Sorbonne University) and competition with Shanghai as a model hygienic city during British Empire (Frederick Stephenson, Nottingham University/Shanghai University). The next panel used the theme of disease and prevention, identification and treatment in Karnataka (Poleykett, University of Exeter), malaria prevention in interwar Polish swamps (Slawomir Lotysz, Polish Academy of Sciences) and medical museums in post-Soviet countries (Katarzyna Jarosz, International University of Logistics and Transport in Wroclaw). Day One ended with a panel on emerging health challenges in the developing world with papers examining non-communicable diseases in Sub-Saharan Africa (Branwyn Poleykett, University of Exeter), cancer care from prevention, identification and treatment in Karnataka (Shraddha Murali, Kasturba Medical College), the origins of transcultural psychiatry and the phenomenon of koro in Asia and the world (Howard Chiang, University of California, Davis), and finally, the resurgence of traditional medicine in

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Nigeria’s health care system (Patrick Chukwudike Okpalaene, University of Uyo).

Day Two began with a panel on inclusion and exclusion in healthcare, whether in regards to regulation, scientisation and standardisation of contraceptive clinics in the early twentieth-century North Kensington Women’s Welfare Centre (Natasha Szuhan, Australian National University/Shanghai University), the potential for digital storytelling as an inclusive form of therapy for children (Mary Lockwood, Manchester Metropolitan University) or the search for genetic roots of same-sex desires in the late twentieth-century American scientific community (Chris Babits, University of Texas at Austin). This was followed by the fifth panel on global health interventions. Papers related independent Indonesian policymakers’ interactions with WHO and UNICEF regarding nutrition (Shendy Vegaziandra Arsandy, Universitas Padjadjaran), discussions and debates around Universal Health Coverage in northern Ghana using interviews with former health ministers (David Bannister, University of Oslo), the idea of Western medical practitioners using national Chinese herbal medicines in early twentieth-century China (Fan Rui, Sun Yat-Sen University), and the distinction between Ford Foundation’s New York and New Delhi offices in global AIDS from the late 1980s to 2001 (Reiko Kanazawa, University of Exeter/Shanghai University). The final sixth panel exemplified the wide range of themes and contexts explored throughout the symposium. Papers explored China’s under-addressed significance in the global effort for smallpox eradication (Lu Chen, University of York), early pioneers in non-standard insulin treatment regimes for Type 2 diabetes (Stuart Bradwel, University of Strathclyde) and the simplification of longevity in ‘blue zones’ to quantifiable factors such as diet and nutrition (Catherine Newell, University of Miami). The panel ended with a synthetic and creative reflection on the role animals may have played in each paper presented at the symposium (Kit Heintzman, Harvard University).

The concluding keynote was given by Alex Mold (London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine) on the various and sometimes competing concepts of producing ‘healthy’ citizenship in post-war Britain, as analysed through information and education materials. The final session was led by James Mills (University of Strathclyde) and Ved Baruah (Shanghai University) who concluded the symposium with a roundtable discussion. Drawing on themes, contexts, methodologies and concepts that were deliberated upon throughout the symposium, the roundtable concluded with an acknowledgement of how each delegate’s paper explored an aspect of a dynamic emerging research area.

‘Sites of Health’ was an exciting event to organise within an ongoing collaboration on medical humanities between Shanghai University and the University of Strathclyde, supported generously by the Wellcome Trust. This international research exchange programme between the UK and China has benefited many masters students, postdoctoral and early career researchers and academic staff since 2012. We hope the symposium was an engaging experience for all and are thankful so many took the time to travel to Shanghai and present their work.

Organising Committee

CANADIAN SOCIETY FOR THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE/CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE HISTORY OF NURSING CONFERENCE

I was fortunate to be able to attend the annual Canadian Society for the History of Medicine/Canadian Association for the History of Nursing conference from 1–3 June as part of Canada’s Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of British Columbia. I am grateful to both the SSHM and CSHM for funding my travel.

The CSHM/CAHN conference programme was, as always, packed with fascinating papers, and with three parallel panels running in every session, this report represents only a fraction of the papers presented. One of the major themes from the papers was the interface of law and politics with the development, management, and reform of public health services. Papers on this topic encompassed the Canadian Medicare system, the NHS, health systems in Australia and New Zealand, and the health provision in asylums. In the case of those focusing on Canadian public healthcare provision, a related theme of the relationship between the settler government and indigenous peoples’ healthcare needs also emerged.

Of the papers that explored these themes of indigenous peoples’ relationship to the colonial government’s health care, Kathryn McKay’s paper on indigenous women in British Columbia’s experience of mental hospital highlighted the different health outcomes, both mental and physical, related to rurality, poverty, and the role of the ‘Indian agent’. Lucy Vorobej’s paper on alcohol abuse and disease concepts in Ontario’s colonial past, meanwhile, explored the tensions between settler disease concepts of alcoholism and indigenous understandings of the reasons for alcohol use and recovery methods.

The politics of reproduction and maternity also factored into this theme. Linda Snyder’s paper on the 1990 New Zealand Nurses Amendment Act, which changed the laws around the status of midwifery, exposed the professional and generational divides between doctors, nurses, and...
activist midwives. Angela Yu’s paper, meanwhile, looked at the legal and ethical debate around assisted reproduction after the birth of Louise Brown and how IVF became incorporated into the NHS.

Following the theme of law, policy, and the availability of treatments to patients, Stuart Bradwel’s paper on intensified insulin therapy highlighted the ways patients can resist their doctors and implement their own health care decisions outside of policy and approved practice by finding written evidence of British type-1 diabetics developing their own systems of intensified insulin therapies decades before this became NHS policy. Jacalyn Duffin’s paper ‘The Yew Tree and the Crab’ meanwhile, told the incredible story of a small Canadian pharmaceutical company’s struggle against big multinational pharmaceutical companies, flawed Health Canada inspections, and patent and trademark hoarding to deliver high quality, affordable cancer drugs.

Esyllt Jones’ paper on the pre-history of Medicare in Saskatchewan covered grassroots health activism in the Saskatchewan of the 1930s, and showed the different options being considered by activists and how they different from what was eventually implemented. Nicole O’Byrne’s paper, meanwhile, covered the introduction of Medicare to Newfoundland – the first province to implement the federal Medical Care Act – and the difficulties and opportunities this presented. Lastly, Hayley Brown’s paper on health reform in New Zealand and the UK in the 1970s and whether this represented the beginning of the end of the post-war consensus.

Psychiatric and mental health services more broadly were also frequent topics within this year’s conference. Sandra Harrisson’s paper on ‘missing’ elderly people with bipolar disorder and schizophrenia highlighted her research on hospital records in Ontario that suggest that, in old age, the population with bipolar disorder and schizophrenia engaging with health services disappears into nursing homes. Karine Aubin’s paper on nursing in a mental hospital in the age of deinstitutionalisation used nursing notes on patient records to explore the day-to-day life and work of psychiatric nurses in a time of immense change. Marie Label’s paper, meanwhile, picked up on the theme of rurality and health care needs by using oral history methodologies to explore the career path of a social worker’s 25-year career serving the Francophone population of North-eastern Ontario.

The two keynote talks tackled some of the biggest questions researchers ask. Karen Nolte delivered the Hannah Lecture on Palliative Care in the nineteenth century. This lecture asked what it is we understand the ‘good death’ to mean, and how our notions of death in the past as being peaceful, non-medicalised, and supported by family are complicated by economic and social class. She explored these issues through the lens of lay sisters in Germany’s mission to ‘improve’ the deaths of the sick poor by providing spiritual and physical aid. Warwick Anderson’s Patterson Lecture, meanwhile, focused on Planetary Health. The concept of planetary health, as distinct from global health, incorporates the need to protect the planetary natural systems that support human health and as such encompasses concerns around climate change, plastic pollution and deforestation into a health framework. It also seeks to address health needs without regard to international border on a planetary scale, as opposed to a global health model which, in his argument, reproduces colonial boundaries.

In addition to a wide range of panels, the conference featured two keynote talks and a range of social activities including a post-graduate pub night, book launch, and banquet at the excellent East is East in Vancouver. The conference was a very enjoyable one full of enlightening papers and opportunities to interact with an international group of academics. My thanks to the CSHM organising committee for putting on an excellent conference.

Erin J Lux
University of Strathclyde

EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE HISTORY OF MEDICINE, ‘SENSE AND NONSENSE’ CONFERENCE REPORT

On 27–30 August 2019 the University of Birmingham hosted this year’s biennial conference of the European Association for the History of Medicine. The conference marked the thirtieth anniversary of the Association since its founding in Strasbourg in 1989. It was organised by its president, Jonathan Reinarz, and his team at Birmingham University. The conference had a varied and dynamic programme. Each day offered a keynote and the option of five different panels at four different intervals, enabling the conference to address the sensory theme in diverse ways, including but not limited to sensory experience, sensory measurement and the sensory environment.

For those that arrived in time, the conference opened with a workshop on hospital senses, offering an opportunity to engage with a range of sensory experiences befitting to the conference’s theme, including the smelling of health history and materiality. The workshop’s interdisciplinary nature tied in well with the first keynote by Ludmilla Jordonova, who used the topic of medicine and the senses to emphasise the importance of developing
integrative historical accounts that weave together a diverse range of approaches. Her examples were thought provoking and concluded with a broader theme that was tackled in novel ways over the course of the next three days: if we take senses seriously as subjects of study how might it change our historical approach?

The interdisciplinary panel, ‘The sensory world of childbirth’, on the Thursday illustrated the potential of the senses to open up new lines of enquiry and methodologies. Richard Whitt – as a linguist – discussed how critical discourse analysis and corpus linguistics can be used to analyse the terminology used in a range of midwifery texts from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. The discussion following his paper highlighted the value of cross-disciplinary exchange in interpreting these texts. Whitt’s findings – namely changes in the use of verbs and the subject – offered a new perspective on the broader historical narrative of childbirth, which focuses on a shift from the woman’s experience to the practitioner’s experience in the eighteenth century. Sarah Fox built upon the paper and thoughtfully explored the individuality of sensory experience and the difficulties of interpreting and understanding our own sensory experience. With a quotation that will stick in the mind – ‘groaning, grunting and ‘stagnant animal effluvia’ – she highlighted how lying-in created a very specific sensory environment. An emphasis on the smell of eighteenth-century childbirth within this demonstrated the value of material evidence. The final paper by Lizzie Marx also centred on another unforgettable phrase and topic: ‘Decaying whales and fumigated wombs’. Having received the award for best postgraduate presentation at the conference, the paper incorporated and engaged thoughtfully with the role of smell and health in the art of the Dutch golden age. In particular, it highlighted how the use of visual imagery and objects from the Rijks Museum collections can be usefully used for understanding historical sensory experience (the opportunity to try some of the scents also highlighted the value of historical recreation for fully understanding these tools).

Equally insightful was the medieval panel. Hillary Burgardt explored the in-between state experienced by people with epilepsy in the middle ages. Focusing on the relationships between ability and disability, the stigmatised and the marginalised, it highlighted how the impairment of sensory experience can be used to explore the broader social context, and the limits of acceptance, at any given time. Geraldine Gnych’s paper complemented these findings and explored the importance of studying both partial and total disability for the understanding of medieval speech and the challenges of impairment. The final paper by Patricia Skinner drew the panel together by exploring how reactions to – and the experience of – facial disfigurement changed between the twelfth and nineteenth centuries. Collectively, the panel showcased how sensory experience is not transhistorical. The questions and discussion at the end emphasised the value of cross-time period discussion for approaching sensory experience and sensory impairment in the past. Hopefully, there will be more medieval papers and opportunities for this kind of engagement at future events.

As my first EAHMH conference, I found it to have the same warm and friendly atmosphere as its SSHM sister event. The panel I presented in, ‘Measuring Senses and Insensibility’ alongside Coreen McGuire and Laura Sellers, also received a variety of interesting questions that drew connections between the central themes of normalcy and abnormalcy that had emerged across both time period and topic. Moreover, the tone of the conference allowed space for people to be both provocative and moving (Tracey Loughran’s keynote needs special mention here for tackling some of the issues academia still presents for women). Indeed, the conference dinner provided an opportunity for tasting some of Birmingham’s curry and beer, and also a chance to meet and engage in what is very much a supportive community of academics.

To return to the keynote on the first day, Jordonova finished by challenging historians to not just comment on the histories of the senses, but to comment on why they seem so timely now. The conference indicated how our scholarly interest in the senses has the potential to develop further – and has arisen out of interest in – the body, the emotions, the rise of new approaches such as material culture and a desire to more greatly understand the lived experience of a diverse range of people and cultures. To that end, the conference highlighted the potential of the senses to speak to a variety of histories and the exciting opportunities on offer for co-collaboration across disciplines and time periods to uncover new ways of approaching the past. I am grateful to SSHM for their bursary, which enabled me to attend and engage with these fascinating and emerging topical debates.

Gemma Almond
Swansea University

DISRUPTING NARRATIVES: NEW PERSPECTIVES ON COLLAGE

This early career researcher workshop was co-organised by Freya Gowrley and Cole Collins and held on 27 July 2019 at the Edinburgh College of Art. ‘Disrupting Narratives’, which featured six speakers, was the second event hosted by the Collage Research Network, an interdisciplinary scholarly...
community co-founded by Gowrley and Collins that aims to connect researchers from diverse fields and geographies whose work examines collage. Workshop participants pre-circulated their papers to attendees, which facilitated in-depth discussions of their research throughout the day. The workshop format and the discussion it engendered led to insightful, collaboratively constructed feedback and lent the event a congenial atmosphere. It’s worth noting that Gowrley and Collins prioritised funding for early career researchers as they organised the workshop and offered bursaries to each speaker.

The workshop began with Bridget Moynihan’s study of Edwin Morgan’s scrapbooks and poetry. Moynihan demonstrated that Morgan deployed cut and paste practices across both his visual and textual output. She subsequently argued that read through the lens of queer theory, Morgan’s use of the logics of collage disrupted both heteronormative artistic practice as well as linear temporality. Mira Xenia Schwerda’s paper exploring collage and composite photography in modern Iran rounded out the morning panel. Schwerda first called attention to the mobility and repeated re-use of printed images in Iranian visual culture. She subsequently contended that during the Iranian Constitutional Revolution, revolutionaries deployed the modern technologies of photography—particularly the layered and manipulated composite photograph—to present their protests as organised and peaceful to wide audiences.

The second panel of the day began with Moira Barrett’s analysis of home and femininity in the photomontages of Hannah Höch. Barrett links Höch’s cut and paste process to the vernacular folk and domestic collage practices documented in Germany from the 1200s on, including Spitzenbilder—early modern collages that combined images of saints with lace borders—as well as visual and material references to contemporary handicrafts. In so doing, Barrett contributed to growing scholarly efforts to muddy the divide between vernacular and avant-garde collage production in art history, while also critiquing to the ways Höch’s artistic output has largely been conceived in relation to Berlin Dada. The second paper in the panel was Kathleen Pierce’s study of the fin-de-siècle poster-pasted wall as a site of ephemeral collage production, which centred an anti-syphilis public health poster. Through close looking at the poster, she interrogated the relationship between surface and depth not only within the syphilitic body, but also in its visual representation on public health posters. She subsequently identified analogous modes of understanding the transient visual play between and among surface strata across the syphilitic body, the poster-pasted wall, and Cubist collage production. In so doing, she called attention to the way medical conceptions of the body in the late nineteenth century inflected understandings of the built environment as well as the surface in avant-garde artistic production and, like Barrett, decentered Cubism as the genitor of collage.

The final panel of the day began with Rodanthi Vardouli’s critical translations of Guillaume Apollinaire’s calligrams. In his calligrams, Apollinaire explored the visual modernism that so interested him (such as Cubism) through poetry by experimenting with the shape, form, and layout of his text. This challenges the roles of both representation and referentiality in language, which Vardouli subsequently interrogated by subjecting the calligrams to a critical translation grounded in collage praxis—which is to say a kind of layering, where the translated calligrams must correspond both visually and rhetorically to their originals. Liang-Kai Yu gave the final talk of the workshop. Yu’s paper examined identity and decoloniality in art history through the digital collage practice of Yuki Kihara. Kihara’s collages combine works from art history’s canon with visual culture rooted in colonialism and nineteenth-century ethnography. The process of cropping and combining canonical artworks with romanticised views of indigenous people such that they become hybrid bodies, Yu argued, undermines the male gaze, binary notions of gender, and stereotypes about indigenous people that persist from the nineteenth century through to the present day.

Several themes resurfaced in papers and discussions throughout the workshop. Moynihan and Vardouli, for example, both sought to demonstrate continuities in collage processes across text and image. Pierce and Yu emphasised the role of the body in collage, wherein the body challenges canonical scholarly narratives of collage and presents a way of thinking about identities and embodied existence as visually, materially, and/or metaphorically layered. Finally, several papers sought to understand what we could gain by thinking about collage not just as a material practice, but as a logic or theoretical framework. For those interested in reading more about individual papers, live tweeted threads for many can be found by searching #DisruptingNarratives on twitter.

Kathleen Pierce
Rutgers University

In acknowledgement of the centenary of the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act (SD(R)A), the Women’s History Network (WHN) held a two-day conference at the London School of Economics Library on Friday 6 – Saturday 7 September 2019 entitled ‘Professional Women: the public, the private, and the political’. It was organised by Dr Gillian Murphy, Curator for Equality, Rights and Citizenship at LSE Library and Dr Judith Bourne, Dr Caroline Derry, and Dr Kate Murphy from the WHN.

In total, the conference was attended by 130 delegates, of which, seventy-three were speakers, including three keynote and twenty-one panels of three to five presenters. There was also a poster competition and bookshop at the conference, promoting the latest research in the field of women’s history. The majority of panels were organised thematically around papers which explored women’s involvement in a range of professions, including law, civil services, writing, engineering, politics, arts, broadcasting, nursing, film, and accounting. In addition, some panels and roundtables explored other particular themes and topics relevant to women’s history such as gendered identities, gendered spaces, emancipation, activism, and the usefulness of oral histories for accessing women’s voices.

The conference was particularly valuable as it brought together historians, archivists, and curators interested in the history of women in the professions which sparked fascinating discussions around compelling primary materials and sources. The venue facilitated these interdisciplinary discussions as it is home to The Women’s Library, a collection with an overarching theme of campaigns for women’s rights and for women’s equality. This enabled items from the collection to be used by speakers in their presentations, for example, Teresa Doherty, Joint Manager of Library and Archive Services at the Royal College of Nursing, used multiple physical copies of the nurses’ register from throughout the twentieth-century to illustrate how they hold a wealth of information that can be used to explore gender, race, and class in women’s history. In addition, the venue provided access to a fascinating, and highly relevant, exhibition entitled ‘The Sacred Year 1919: women and the professions’ at LSE Library.

After warm welcomes and introductions from Dr Maggie Andrews, Chair of the Women’s History Network, and Martin Reid, Deputy Director of LSE Library, Dr Mari Takayanagi who is a Senior Archivist at the Parliamentary Archives, gave the first keynote address on the SD(R)A. Takayanagi detailed the fascinating history of the SD(R)A explaining how it was successfully passed, owing to it being less radical than the proposed Women’s Emancipation Bill, as it did not include clauses for equal franchise. Takayanagi argued that although the SD(R)A has been viewed as a ‘dead letter’ and a ‘broken reed’ by some scholars, that it was in fact remarkable considering the national and international political context of Britain in 1919.

The need to view subjects and individuals in women’s history in the context of their social, cultural and political milieu in order to recognise their achievements was a connecting theme linking many of the papers throughout the conference. Particularly interesting was Gail Savage’s paper which examined how four women who held the position of Director of Women’s Establishments impacted the civil service following the SD(R)A. Savage questioned the tendency of women’s historians to view those who first entered male dominated professions as ‘activists’ or ‘campaigners’ for women’s equality and rights, and reasserted the need to consider them as professional, working women, first and foremost, pursuing a career for themselves. Savage’s paper, like the vast majority of papers given at the conference, consisted of case studies of individual women which offered an insight into how women’s lives were both symptomatic of wider social, cultural and political influences but also driven by their own personal motivations and subjective experiences.

How women involved in medicine and healthcare negotiated gendered roles and assumptions to their benefit was also a prominent theme in papers throughout the conference. Anna Muggeridge demonstrated how two women working in local government in the West Midlands in the interwar period constructed and consolidated professional identity by drawing on their own experiences and working on matters such as infant welfare, birth control, and the treatment of the elderly. Elise Smith, Linda Martz and Frances Cadd spoke about female doctor’s and nurses’ status within the rigid, hierarchical structures of hospitals. Smith analysed characterisations of female doctors in mid-twentieth century novels by Elizabeth Seifert and explained how the characters were not taken seriously by their peers and patients as their femininity was considered compromised by their ‘cold, clinical competence’. Conversely, in the case of nurse, Avis Hutt, Cadd showed how a workplace romance between Hutt and her husband-to-be, surgeon Ruscoe Clarke, at Mile End Hospital in the late-1930s led to their development of an equal professional relationship on the wards, working together, in their separate roles, but towards the same goal of helping patients, challenging hospital staff hierarchies along class and gender lines. Linda Martz’s paper explored issues around standards of nursing education and training, aroused by the Nurses’ Registration Act in 1919, arguing that this caused tensions around the professional status and respectability of nursing which pitted nurses against...
their employers, peers, and nursing superiors in the interwar years.

All papers presented were insightful and encouraged thought-provoking questions during the panel discussions, generating a friendly atmosphere of knowledge sharing and support amongst like-minded researchers. Following this year’s event the WHN’s next annual conference in September 2020 on ‘Homes, Food, and Farms’ is greatly anticipated, turning the focus from ‘the public’ and the professional’ to the domestic and the private.

- Frances Cadd
  University of Nottingham

EMBODIMENT, HEALTH AND MEDICINE

The Medical Humanities Postgraduate Conference 2019 took place at the University of Exeter from the 24–25 June. It was organised by postgraduate students Jessie Stanier, Veronica Heney, Clare Davis, Joe Holloway, and Chao Long Jin with assistance from Dr Sarah Jones, and it was generously sponsored by the Society of Social History of Medicine (SSHM), the Society for Applied Philosophy (SAP), the Wellcome Centre of Cultures and Environments of Health (WCCEH), ExTalks, and the Exeter Centre for Medical History.

The conference included 14 panels from approximately 34 presenters, with around 70 attendees in total and two keynote speakers—Professor Laura Salisbury (Exeter) and Professor Havi Carel (Bristol). All of these registered delegates and attendees were postgraduate researchers, although a few were working as independent academics, artists or medical doctors, and many academics from the University of Exeter dropped into sessions or chaired panels.

The conference chair opened the event with a clear message inviting attendees to participate in making a friendly, accessible, and respectful atmosphere, which set the tone for the event. There was a pleasant, encouraging, and congenial energy at both panel sessions and during the breaks, which many attendees said was a highlight of the conference. There was a dynamic range of research at the conference, focused on but not limited to the theme of embodiment, health and medicine. A variety of fascinating papers were presented on themes of health, sexuality, narrative medicine, epistemic injustice, classical conceptions of health, literature, philosophy of mind, public engagement, and technology. Since panels were organised across disciplinary boundaries, many fascinating discussions emerged – in particular the panels of Lynsay Hodges (Goldsmith, London) and Jane Hartshorn (Kent), entitled ‘Doctor Knows Best: Epistemic Violence in the Intersections of Ableism and Misogyny’ and ‘Reframing the body in pain: how challenging heteropatriarchal notions of gender and sex can reclaim patient agency’ respectively.

SAP has encouraged delegates to submit their interesting papers stemming from the conference to their journal. Professor Laura Salisbury opened the academic sessions with her paper entitled ‘Depressing Time’, drawing together notions of waiting for medical appointments, Beckett’s literary works about waiting, and Bergsonian temporality. On the second day, Professor Havi Carel presented on ‘Organ Transplantation as Transformative Experience’, comparing L. A. Paul’s work on transformative experience with Jean-Luc Nancy’s experience of having a heart transplant.

To establish a network among delegates, the conference team invited Thomas Bray (Wellcome Trust) to give a talk on Wellcome Trust funding opportunities, and all attendees were offered a hearty lunch each day. There was no registration fee for the conference in order to make the event as accessible as possible, and sponsorship from SSHM and SAP meant that several travel bursaries were made available too. Delegates were invited to dinner at The Stable, a local pizza restaurant, on 24 June to continue networking and building up friendships, while watching the sun set across Exeter from a roof terrace.

We received some positive feedback via Twitter and in person during the event, and then sent out a Google Forms feedback form when the conference had ended. 71 percent of respondents said our communication and conference accessibility were ‘excellent’, and 64 percent said the catering and programme curation were excellent. We received some helpful feedback on giving clearer instruction to our chairs (most of whom were academics working within Medical Humanities at Exeter), filling out the seminar rooms more efficiently, and how to print a more intuitive programme next year. This will all be passed on to next year’s organising committee. Thanks to contributions from every delegate, attendee, and committee, the goal to bring together academics and experts in the field of medical humanities into a discussion has been achieved.

Chao Long Jin
University of Exeter
**CALLS FOR PAPERS**

**BSHS PG CONFERENCE 2020**

**Date** | 1 – 3 April 2020  
**Venue** | School of Philosophy, Religion and the History of Science, University of Leeds  
**Deadline** | 1 December 2019

The call for abstracts for the 2020 British Society for the History of Science Postgraduate conference is now open. The event will be held by the School of Philosophy, religion and the History of Science at the University of Leeds from Wednesday 1 April to Friday 3 April 2020. We welcome papers from graduate students working in the History of Science, Technology and Medicine or in disciplines whose work touches on any area of HSTM.

Papers should be 20 minutes long with 10 minutes for discussion. Joint submissions for three-person panels are also welcome. We invite you to submit an abstract of up to 250 words with your name, affiliation and contact details. For joint submissions, we require that an additional 100-word panel abstract be submitted. Applications should be sent to the committee: <bshspg2020@gmail.com>.

Members of the BSHS may apply for travel grants from the Butler-Eyles Fund. Subsided accommodation will be made available to speakers. For information about the conference, visit our website: https://bshspostgraduateconference2020.wordpress.com

For the latest news, follow us on Twitter: @PgBshs

**CULTURES OF INTOXICATION: CONTEXTUALISING ALCOHOL & DRUG USE, PAST & PRESENT**

**Date** | 7–8 February 2020  
**Venue** | Humanities Institute, University College Dublin

**Date** | 6 December 2019

This conference will focus on the cultural meanings and contexts of alcohol and drug use, both past and present. It aims to assess how cultural norms and stereotypes around alcohol and drug use shape policies, practices, treatment and users’ experiences and behaviour. In particular, it seeks to consider how and why those of certain ethnicity, race, religion, gender, sexuality and socio-economic background are deemed prone to excess while others are supposedly abstemious. Papers on the following themes will be considered, although this list is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive:

- Defining ‘drinking culture’ and ‘drug culture’
- Attempts to change drinking/drug cultures
- Ethnic, racial, gendered and socio-economic stereotypes/stigma of alcohol and drug use
- Medical/policy/public perspectives on drug and alcohol use
- Cultures of abstinence or excess
- Hidden cultures, subcultures and countercultures
- Culture-specific marketing and advertising
- Cultural representations of alcohol, drugs and their use (i.e. literature, drama, film)
- Alcohol and drugs tourism

Keynote Speakers:
Professor Geoffrey Hunt (Department of Psychology and Behavioural Sciences, Centre for Alcohol and Drug Research, Aarhus University); Dr Deborah Toner (School of History, Politics and International Relations, University of Leicester).

Abstracts of no more than 250 words, along with a short speaker bio, should be submitted to the conference organiser, Dr Alice Mauger <alice.mauger@ucd.ie>. Panel submissions are also welcome.

**TELLING A DIFFERENT STORY: NON-LINEAR NARRATIVES IN EARLY MODERN HISTORY**

**Date** | 19–20 March 2020  
**Venue** | ICUB, University of Bucharest  
**Deadline** | 15 December 2019

Invited Speakers:
Francesco Barreca (Museo Galileo); Dominique Brancher (Basel University); Sabrina Ebbersmeyer (Copenhagen University); Christiane Frey (Humboldt University Berlin); Christia Mercer (Columbia University); Iolanda Ventura (University of Bologna)
The workshop is intended for scholars from different fields of early modern studies, who want to explore alternative paths in the narration of early modern culture. Rather than proceeding along well-trodden paths, non-linear narratives aim to shed new focus on the less well-known corners, and move in the more ‘excluded’ regions of the past. When applied to the writing of history, the idea of non-linear narratives invites, on the one hand, to deliberate the theoretical nature of narrative structures and temporalities; on the other hand, it raises practical questions on how to employ non-linear narratives in historical writings and find alternatives to ‘genealogical’ writings that track the lineages of new, ideas, practices, and institutions.

Through several case studies, such as expanding the perspective on outsiders, heretics, women, and losers, or inspecting new frontiers of knowledge (from ontology and metaphysics, to cosmology, alchemy and botany, and to ethics and politics), or constructing alternative (hi)stories and narratives, such as eclecticism, opposing methodologies, and unearthing shadows in the age of evidence and light (such as irrationality enshrined in the age of reason), the workshop is not intended to simply present one’s own research, but aims to reflect on the role of alternative narrations while telling a different story.

Interventions aim to both investigate non-linear narratives, their actors, methodologies, and disciplines, and answer these methodological questions.

How would you describe the ‘grand narratives’ in your field? To which extent do they still dominate your field, explicitly or implicitly?

How does your own research relate to these narratives? Where do you see the critical, revisionist potential of your research? How much an alternative narration surfaces in your field, and does it reveal more engaging reflections? What is the result of this enlarged perspective?

Where do you see points of contact between your historical research and present discourses? Why do you think that these points of contact can be best described and analysed in terms of a non-linear narrative?

Please, send a short abstract (up to 500 words) and one-page CV to <fabrizio.baldassarri@gmail.com> and <matthias.roick@icloud.com>.


Date | 1 April 2020  
Venue | University of Leicester  
Deadline | 17 January 2020

This conference aims to reconfigure our understanding of the ‘madwoman’ in England’s long nineteenth century, asking key questions about the diagnosis, treatment, care and representation of women perceived as ‘insane’.

This period saw the institutionalization of large swathes of the population, including those considered mentally ill. Simultaneously, medical advancements and increased interest in mental illness saw a specific focus on conditions often typified as ‘female’, with disorders attributed to their reproductive organs and bodies. Places of treatment and care—such as public asylums, private madhouses, workhouses or prisons—were typically patriarchal institutions, run by males, with women diagnosed and treated by male doctors. As a result, procuring information about the female experience has proved difficult.

Addressing these core developments in the history of medicine and psychiatry, this conference interrogates the female experience of incarceration, often presented as a way of dealing with ‘difficult’ women. Keeping the methodological challenges of uncovering the incarcerated female voice in mind, papers are invited from a range of critical frameworks and disciplines. The event will provide a forum in which researchers can share findings in order to deepen our understanding of women and madness. We invite proposals for 20-minute papers; some guiding research topics might include:

- Deviance, disorder and immorality  
- Female agency within the asylum  
- Madness and race/class  
- Women and the built environment  
- ‘Feminization of madness’ and understandings of mental illness  
- Cultural representations of madwomen

‘Insanity supervening on habits of intemperance’. Credit: Wellcome Collection.
• Social and familial conditions of institutionalization
• Female versus male experiences of the institution
• The identity of the ‘madwoman’

The conference will be keen to look at a range of experiences in a variety of institutions, and will encourage presentations from scholars who use a diverse plethora of sources.

Please send a 250-word abstract and short to <tmati.2020@gmail.com>. Bursaries are available for students and early-career researchers who are members of the Society of the Social History of Medicine. For details about how to apply for a bursary please see the SSHM website: https://sshm.org/bursaries/

This conference has kindly been funded by the Society for the Social History of Medicine, and the Social History Society. Thanks go to both organisations.

Follow the event on Twitter: @TMATIConf2020 #MWC20

MEDICAL IDENTITIES IN GLOBAL HISTORY

Date | 18–19 June 2020
Venue | Radcliffe Humanities, University of Oxford
Deadline | 30 January 2019

Approaches to Global history often attempt to address the role of nation-states in the construction of historical narratives, while deconstructing the Eurocentric assumptions in the expression of history. Historians have now moved away from understanding history in terms of binaries and have accepted that transfer, spread, diffusion, and understanding of knowledge is multi-directional. In the history of medicine, these translations often involve the generation, negotiation, and interaction of identities.

This conference seeks to bring together postgraduate students, ECRs, and scholars in history for a conference on the topic of medical identities in the past. Medical identities are grounded in the interactions between self, body, and health, with the social, political, cultural, and intellectual context of medical knowledge. Interrogations of these relationships reveal important narratives of identity creation and complex webs of power relations.

In addition to panel presentations from a selection of speakers, this conference will host three engagement conversations: One focused on building collaborative networks amongst participants, one on public-outreach, and one round-table discussion for Early Career Researchers. Interdisciplinary focus is encouraged. Submissions can focus on the following themes:
• Embodiment and experience of health, disease, or medical identities broadly
• Intellectual and medical power connected with processes of imperialism / colonialism /
• territorial expansion and commercial gains in global markets
• Indigeneity, ethnicity, and nationality
• Hygienic modernity, medical education, hospital cultures
• Movement and immigration, oceanic and territorial space
• Material Culture, Objects, Objects in migration

The conference is not exclusive in theme and welcomes submissions which reflect a diversity of approaches to the concept of medical identity. Proposals with a clear application to public outreach or collaboration are especially welcomed. Paper proposals should be 200 words in length and emailed to:
<medical.identities@history.ox.ac.uk>

https://medicalidentitiesconference.web.ox.ac.uk

PHARMACOLOGICALLY ACTIVE SUBSTANCES

Date | 5–7 December 2019
Venue | University of Johannesburg

The dichotomy between pharmacologically active substances considered legitimate (and therefore worthy of regulation as medicines, and also provided as public goods) and those considered problematic (and therefore deserving of moral and legal opprobrium, prohibition and sanction) has informed global regulatory regimes for decades. (Andy Gray, 2017)

Drug policies and ways of thinking and talking about substances and treatment approaches are changing fast, both at national and international levels. These changes reflect a growing acknowledgement of core contradictions within the legislative regimes Gray described above, crafted respectively for ‘drugs’ and ‘medicines’ from the nineteenth-century onwards. Subversions of this dichotomy have lately become more apparent in the public eye – for example, in widespread addiction to opioid painkillers; in the repurposing of pharmaceuticals for pleasure, sedation or sociability; in the scientific legitimation of previously restricted drug alkaloids for medical application. Increasing criticism of ‘war-on-drugs’ style governance, the liberalisation of cannabis laws, and the advocacy of harm reduction approaches to drug treatment are among the indications of shifting views even within governments themselves.
The organizers of this event argue that precise historical understandings of how this dichotomy has worked in practice, in multiple and very different contexts, are necessary in order to map possible alternatives and futures. To clearly identify who established and maintained classificatory boundaries, what interests lay behind their actions, how they have been challenged, and why it is only now that faith in them seems to be waning are important tasks for historians of health, medicines and modernities, and those working in related fields and disciplines.

This event at the University of Johannesburg aims to draw together those addressing the questions below in their research. We invite submissions from postgraduates, together with emerging and established scholars, and are keen to include studies from around the world, as well as those that look at international or transnational contexts.

Guiding questions:

• What knowledge was generated to justify distinctions between medicines/drugs? By whom? How were decisions made about what evidence could be considered authoritative?
• Which groups and/or disciplines were involved in establishing or challenging the emergence of this dichotomy and what determined their success or failure?
• How have histories of various substances been created and deployed in justifying or disputing this dichotomy?
• What values have driven pharmaceutical technologies and their regulation? How have ideas about 'good' and 'evil' framed scientific and political discussions?
• How long has a shift towards a neuro-chemical society been happening and with what effects? Has it necessarily been a dehumanising process?
• Have chronologies of commodification, law-making and enforcement followed similar routes in different countries or contexts?
• How do historians recover neuro-chemical biographies, and what do these reveal about individual or collective experiences of the medicines/drugs dichotomy in practice?

The event is funded by the Wellcome Trust and is jointly organised by the Department of History at the University of Johannesburg and The Centre for the Social History of Health and Healthcare (CSHHH) Glasgow through the 'Changing Minds: Psychoactive Substances in African and Asian History' project.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE, MEDICINE, AND PSYCHIATRY: AN INTERNATIONAL, INTERDISCIPLINARY SYMPOSIUM ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEDICINE, PSYCHIATRY, AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Date | 16–17 April 2020
Venue | University of Newcastle, NSW, Australia

Keynotes:
Sameena Mulla, Marquette University, author of The Violence of Care (2014); Andrea Quinlan, University of Waterloo, author The Technoscientific Witness of Rape (2017); and Lisa Featherstone, Andy Kaladelfos, and Elizabeth Roberts-Pedersen.

The Sexual Harms and Medical Encounters Research Hub (SHaME) is pleased to announce its upcoming international, interdisciplinary symposium, ‘Sexual Violence, Medicine, and Psychiatry’, which will take place at the University of Newcastle (Australia) from 16–17 April 2020.

This symposium will explore the role of medical professionals in debates about sexual violence. Police doctors and forensic medical examiners, GPs, gynaecologists, surgeons, nurses, midwives, prison surgeons, psychiatrists, and therapists working in all forms of institutional and community settings have been influential agents in the interpretation, medicalisation, and adjudication of sexual attacks. This is an important time to investigate the relationship between medical professionals and sexual violence. Scandals around medical and psychiatric responses to sexual abuse emerge on a regular basis (viz. Nauru detention camp; the abuse of people in psychiatric wards, prison, and detention camps; failures to send the biological samples from ‘rape kits’ for forensic examination; complaints about medical examinations; popular anxieties about the medical treatment and rehabilitation of violent offenders). The symposium seeks
to promote human health through providing insights into the role of medicine and psychiatry in understanding sexual violence. Areas of interest include, but are not limited to:

- The role of medicine and psychiatry in understanding, interpreting, facilitating, treating, prosecuting, and preventing sexual violence.
- Medical jurisprudence and forensic medicine in relation to sexual violence.
- The training of medical professionals in how to respond to men, women, and children reporting sexual assault.
- The processes by which medical evidence is built into legal narratives for use by the prosecution or defence.
- Psychiatric classifications of perpetrators of sexual violence.
- The rise of psychiatric notions of rape trauma and their effects.
- Psychiatric or medical approaches to the sexual assault of trans or queer people.
- The role of medicine and psychiatry in anti-rape activism.

For more details, see our website: https://shame.bbk.ac.uk/events/sexual-violence-medicine-and-psychiatry-a-symposium/.

PROFESSOR JOANNA BOURKE FBA
RHETORIC LECTURE SERIES: EXPLORING THE BODY

Professor Joanna Bourke, who is Professor of History at Birkbeck University of London, will be Gresham Professor of Rhetoric from September 2019. In this role, Professor Bourke will be giving a series of public lectures centred around the theme, ‘Exploring the Body’. Below is the programme of events:

A History of the Breast
16 January 2020, 6pm. Barnard’s Inn Hall
There has been a great deal of research on breast cancer, surgery, and implants. This lecture looks at changing ideas about the healthy breast. It explores notions of beauty, sexual pleasure, and age. Early maturation of girls, coupled with a greater focus on the breasts of older women, have had major effects on cultural expectations and experiences. The lecture also asks: what happens when we turn attention to the male breast?

A History of the Penis and the Clitoris
13 February 2020, 6pm. Barnard’s Inn Hall
Is the clitoris simply a female version of the male penis? Many scientists and biologists in the past thought so. It is only in recent decades that the physiology of the clitoris has become understood. What can debates about these two organs tell us about scientific knowledge and gender identities? How have ideas about the “ideal penis” changed since the eighteenth century? What effect have these shifts had on the way men and women know their bodies?

A History of the Stomach
19 March 2020, 6pm. Barnard’s Inn Hall
Vertical banded gastroplasty surgery (or stomach-stapling) has drawn attention in recent decades to the hidden, but unruly, stomach. This organ has been the focus of weight-control regimes for centuries, however. This lecture looks at nineteenth-century fads involving stomachs, including the medical prescription of tapeworms that were supposed to live in a person’s stomach and “eat” food on their behalf. It also explores ideas about the relationship between a person’s stomach and their personality. It traces these medical ideas through to the present.

A History of the Foot
14 May 2020, 6pm. Barnard’s Inn Hall
The science of feet and footprints has a long, yet often forgotten, history. In this lecture, I look at what people from the late eighteenth century to the present knew about toes, arches, heels, and ankles. What makes a beautiful foot? How have ideas of foot-beauty changed over time? Size, shape, colour, smell, and even taste have been important markers in the literature, science, and sociology of feet.

THE GHOSTS OF FORGOTTEN FORMS OF SCIENCE: SOVIET SCIENCE AND BIOMEDICINE IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Date: May 7–8 2020
Venue: Liverpool John Moores University, Liverpool

In April 2019 the journal Nature published an article (Vrselja et al, 2019) that described the ‘restoration and maintenance…of the intact pig brain’ hours after said pig’s death. The article’s team of authors detailed the process by which they that developed a blood replacement and application system that had allowed many cellular processes to continue in the brain hours after death. This experiment was picked up by the media (for example, Davis 2019), which led to speculation about its usefulness in medical research and the ethical issues it brought up. What was never mentioned, however, was the almost exact overlap of this experiment with one conducted in the USSR nearly 95 years before.
In September 1925, the Moscow doctor Sergei Briukhonenko had managed to keep a severed dog’s head (and its brain) nominally ‘alive’ for nearly two hours after death. While Briukhonenko used dog’s blood instead of a blood replacement, his apparatus bore many similarities to the one used in 2019, and his observations – though unavoidably less exact – were not terribly divergent (see Kremenstov 2014, 43–45).

The fact that Briukhonenko went unmentioned in the 2019 discussion of restored pig brains is not unusual: today, as during the Cold War, Soviet medical and biological sciences receive little, and often derisive, coverage. When remembered, Briukhonenko’s experiments are cited largely as examples of the absurdity of socialist science. By and large, the Soviet medical and biological sciences have been dismissed as falling behind their Western contemporaries; held back by the likes of Trofim Lysenko in genetics, it is argued, they added little to the world’s knowledge.

In recent years, however, Western biomedical research has begun to independently return to many of the fields previously covered by Soviet scientists, confirming, for example, the use of viral bacteriophages in treating infection, or the links between dementia and heart disease. Important technical advances in diagnosing disease, such as the MRI, have been shown to have Soviet antecedents (MacWilliams 2003). Although labouring in isolation from Western colleagues – and frequently in difficult financial circumstances – Soviet biomedical scientists were making important breakthroughs in microbiology, gerontology, endocrinology, and many other related fields.

This workshop, organized under the auspices of the Wellcome Trust-funded project ‘Growing Old in the Soviet Union, 1945–1991’ at Liverpool John Moores University (http://sovietcycling.com/), aims to flesh out the history of Soviet biomedical sciences by gathering research on its development and context within twentieth-century science and medical humanities more broadly. Although the project is focused on post-War Soviet gerontology, papers are welcomed covering the whole of the Soviet period (1917–1991) and any subfield of biomedical science or the history of medicine.

The conference organizers are delighted to note that Professor Nikolai Kremenstov (IHPST, University of Toronto) is confirmed as the workshop’s keynote speaker. The conference organizers are able to provide accommodation in Liverpool during the conference, as well as partial travel funding, dependent upon availability.

Contact Email: i.m.scarborough@ljmu.ac.uk
URL: http://sovietcycling.com/
edge research and important fieldwork taking place right now in the hope that these deadly diseases will soon be consigned to history.’

Visitors to the exhibition will find out how diseases are transmitted and how parasites can adapt to fight back against modern medicine. They can explore the discovery of these diseases and get a taster of how a laboratory works. They will then have the chance to put their new knowledge to the test by attempting to diagnose and treat a disease.

On display will be objects from the lab and the field which are being used to combat these five diseases. These include an ingenious small boat which has been specially designed to catch tsetse flies, which spread Sleeping Sickness in sub-Saharan Africa and pipe filters which are used for drinking water and are a powerful tool in the fight against Guinea-Worm Disease.

Parasites is presented in partnership with the Wellcome Centre for Anti-Infectives Research at the University of Dundee, Edinburgh Infectious Diseases, and the Wellcome Centre for Integrative Parasitology at the University of Glasgow.

Catharine Goddard, Manager of The Wellcome Centre for Anti-Infectives Research at the University of Dundee said: ‘We are thrilled to have this opportunity to show people how Scotland’s scientific research community collaborates. By working together, we can find new treatments for neglected tropical diseases. The Drug Discovery Unit in Dundee was borne out of scientists’ determination to ensure their research could lead to new medicines. We hope this exhibition will share our passion with the public, and inspire the next generation of scientists to join us.’

Professor Sarah Reece, Chair of Evolutionary Parasitology at the University of Edinburgh said: ‘Understanding the strategies that parasites have evolved to cope with the challenges of a parasitic lifestyle are key to unlocking innovative ways to fight disease. This exciting and innovative exhibition will showcase the surprisingly sophisticated strategies that parasites have evolved for exploiting their hosts and evading control by medicine.’

Professor Andy Waters, Director of Glasgow University’s Wellcome Centre for Integrative Parasitology said: ‘The University of Glasgow are delighted to be involved in this important exhibition, highlighting the world-class research we and our colleagues in universities across Scotland do on parasitic diseases. At the Wellcome Centre for Integrative Parasitology our mission is to gain a deeper understanding of parasites in order to develop new treatments, and we hope this insight into our work will inspire future generations of scientists.’

TEACHING ANATOMY FROM CLASSICAL TO MODERN TIMES

Date| 26–27 June 2020
Venue| Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh

Announcing a forthcoming symposium hosted by The Scottish Society of the History of Medicine with the British Society for the History of Medicine. This prestigious event will explore the history of anatomy and anatomy teaching. Presentations will cover the ways in which anatomical knowledge has been acquired, portrayed and taught and how this has influenced the development of surgery. Discussions are welcomed from a range of perspectives including historical, social, cultural and modern innovations. This conference is aimed at medics with an interest in history and historians with an interest in medicine.

Monographs: Professor Keir Waddington
Email: waddingtonk@cardiff.ac.uk
Edited Volumes: Dr David Cantor
Email: cantord@mail.nih.gov

You can find out about the series, about submitting proposals, or to purchase books at www.manchesteruniversitypress.co.uk/series/social-histories-of-medicine

Below are a few examples of recent books in the series.
Communicating the History of Medicine critically assesses the idea of audience and communication in medical history. This collection offers a range of case studies on academic outreach from historical and current perspectives. It questions the kind of linear thinking often found in policy or research assessment, instead offering a more nuanced picture of both the promises and pitfalls of engaging audiences for research in the humanities. For whom do academic researchers in the humanities write? For academics and, indirectly, at least for students, but there are hopes that work reaches broader audiences and that it will have an impact on policy or among professional experts outside of the humanities. Today impact is more and more discussed in the context of research assessment. Seen from a media theoretical perspective, impact may however be described as a case of ‘audiencing’ and the creation of audiences by means of media technologies.

This collaborative volume explores changing perceptions of health and disease in the context of the burgeoning global modernities of the nineteenth century. With case studies from Britain, America, France, Germany, Finland, Bengal, China and the South Pacific, it demonstrates how popular and medical understandings of the mind and body were reframed by the social, cultural and political structures of ‘modern life’. Essays within the collection examine ways in which cancer, suicide, and social degeneration were seen as products of the stresses and strains of ‘new’ ways of living. Others explore the legal, institutional, and intellectual changes that contributed to modern medical practice. The volume traces ways that physiological and psychological problems were being constituted in relation to each other, and to their social contexts, and offers new ways of contextualising the problems of modernity facing us in the twenty-first century.

This collection of essays offers important new insights across a range of topics relating to medicine in early modern Ireland. Of particular note is the substantial attention devoted to the often neglected period before 1750. Among the key subjects addressed by the contributors are Gaelic medicine, warfare, the impact of
new medical ideas, migration, patterns of disease, midwifery and childbirth, book collecting, natural history, and urban medicine. The twelve essays effectively situate Irish medicine in relation to long-term social and cultural change on the island, as well as to appropriate international contexts; British, European and Atlantic. Early Modern Ireland and the world of medicine brings together a selection of established scholars as well as early career historians. It will be of interest to academics and students of the history of early modern medicine. It also contains much that will be essential reading for historians of Ireland.

Over two years, Building a Healthier City is cataloguing and conserving the records of the Bath Improvement Commissions, and records relating to the city’s water supply and sewerage. This article introduces the Improvement Commission records 1766–1851, a catalogue to which is now available online for the first time. During the eighteenth century, Bath grew from a small market and spa town into a fashionable health resort for the aristocracy and gentry—the tenth largest city in England. As a result, environmental improvements such as paved streets, street lighting, rubbish removal and watching (policing) became of increasing importance, both for the convenience of the inhabitants and to serve the city’s high class visitors. However, the Corporation did not have powers to undertake this work or to raise money to fund it and, as its various strategies in the first half of the century met with limited success, the Corporation turned to the solution adopted by other cities: the setting up of Commissions for specific purposes and covering specific, small areas.
The 1766 'Bath Act' created the 'Bath Commissioners', who were responsible for street cleaning, lighting, policing, widening streets and abolishing hanging shop signs. Their work was funded by a household rate. Some duties such as street cleaning and lighting were contracted out to local enterprises. However, for street widening works and the abolition of hanging signs the Commissioners had the power to issue notices to local property owners ordering the works to be done with financial compensation. The Commissioners were also responsible for the organisation of a Night Watch. By 1814 the original Bath Act 1766 was considered deficient and was replaced by a new and expanded Bath Act.

Whilst the provisions of Acts of Parliament such as these benefitted other cities in England, those of the Bath Improvement Act 1789 were unique to Bath: Within the City of Bath ... are ... several Baths and Hot Springs ... by long Use and established Experience ... found to be extremely efficacious in restoring to health great Numbers of Persons labouring under various Diseases and Complaints. The Act protected the baths and springs: from injury by encroachment; by rebuilding the Pump Rooms—a venue for drinking spa water, often taken on prescription; by widening existing streets and passages for the benefit of numerous invalids obliged to use chairs and carriages; and by building new streets and passages on the approaches to the hot baths and Pump Rooms. Interestingly, the work of these Commissioners was funded partly by the Corporation and partly by additional tolls taken at the Turnpike Roads into Bath; mortgages were issued on the profits of the tolls in order to raise the capital sums needed.

Commissioners for the parishes of Walcot and Bathwick were established in 1793 and 1801 respectively, with similar aims to the 1766 Bath Commissioners. The Walcot Commissioners’ responsibilities included the regulation of porters and sedan chairs and house-numbering. The 1793 Walcot Act was amended by a further Act of 1825.

Responsibility for the City, Walcot, and Bathwick Watchmen was taken over by the Council in 1836 under the auspices of the Municipal Corporations Act 1835. All other functions of the Commissioners were taken over by the Council through the Bath Act of 1851, under which the Council adopted the provisions of the Public Health Act of 1848 and became the Local Board of Health for the city. The 1851 Act repealed all the Acts relating to Commissioners, and provided for the assets of the Commissioners, including their records, to be passed to the Council.

The records of the Improvement Commissioners are a rich source for the study of the provision of public health amenities. Among them are: the minutes of the Commissioners; accounting and financial records, including rate books and night watchmen’s wagebooks; operational records such as volumes recording ‘nuisances’ which individuals were required to abate, survey books, lamp reports and watchmen’s inspectors’ reports; correspondence; papers of the Clerk to the Commissioners; and architectural plans.

These little-used records provide a wealth of information for researchers on the ways in which the public health challenges of the second half of the eighteenth century were perceived and the systems of administration and funding put in place to deal with them, as well as shedding light on issues relating to Bath as a unique health resort. They show how successful the Commissions were in meeting their objectives, and how they laid the foundations for mid-nineteenth century public health developments.

- Lucy Powell
Bath Record Office

AMATEURS: AMATEURS IN SCIENCE
(FRANCE, 1850–1950)

‘Amateur$’ is a research programme launched in France in March 2019. Funded by the National Research Agency (ANR), it associates two partner laboratories: TEMOS (FRE 2015, Le Mans Université) and CRULH (EA 3945, Université de Lorraine). Its scientific supervisors are Nathalie Richard (PR, Le Mans Université), Hervé Guillemaud (PR, Le Mans Université), and Laurence Guignard (MCF HDR, Université de Lorraine). The team consists of fourteen members from different fields, including historians of medicine, linked by a common reflection on the amateur in science.

‘Amateur$’ wishes to contribute to the history of amateur practices and individuals, in order to echo the questions that have emerged around participative and citizen sciences, as well as sciences in the digital age.
To this end, the project has a twofold perspective, both historical and transdisciplinary. While rooting contemporary debates in a period (1850–1950) marked by the advent of a professionalized science and scientific expertise, the project also benefits from the participation of historians of three different fields: astronomy, archaeology and health sciences, including medicine as well as complementary or alternative approaches.

A blog is available [https://ams.hypotheses.org/](https://ams.hypotheses.org/). It publishes research news linked to the programme, such as conferences or posts by members of the team on their topic of study.

MENSTRUATION RESEARCH NETWORK

Dedicated to bringing scholars of menstruation in the UK from any discipline together, the new Menstruation Research Network will host its next workshop on 14 November in 2019 at Heriot-Watt University, and the next in January 2020 at Stirling University. Information about the network and events can be found on our website: https://menstruationresearchnetwork.co.uk or on Twitter: @menstruationRN. On our website, you can find videos from our first conference in May 2019 as well. The project is funded by the Wellcome Trust, and will run from March 2019 to March 2020. We urge all menstrual scholars to get in touch via our platforms or with Dr Camilla Mørk Røstvik: cmr30@st-andrews.ac.uk

THE DAVY NOTEBOOKS PROJECT

The Davy Notebooks Project has just launched on Zooniverse, the world’s largest and most popular platform for people-powered research. Help us to transcribe the manuscript notebooks of Sir Humphry Davy.

Sir Humphry Davy (1778–1829) was one of the most significant and famous figures in the scientific and literary culture of early nineteenth-century Britain, Europe, and America. Davy’s scientific accomplishments include: conducting pioneering research into the physiological effects of nitrous oxide (often called ‘laughing gas’); isolating seven chemical elements (magnesium, calcium, potassium, sodium, strontium, barium, and boron) and establishing the elemental status of chlorine and iodine; inventing a miners’ safety lamp; developing the electrochemical protection of the copper sheeting of Royal Navy vessels; conserving the Herculaneum papyri; and writing an influential text on agricultural chemistry. Davy was also a poet, moving in the same literary circles as Lord Byron, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Robert Southey, and William Wordsworth.

The notebooks selected for this pilot run of the Davy Notebooks Project reveal how Davy’s mind worked and how his thinking developed. Containing details of his scientific experiments, poetry, geological observations, travel accounts, and personal philosophy, Davy’s notebooks present us with a wide range of fascinating insights. Many of the pages of these notebooks have never been transcribed before. By transcribing these notebooks, we will find out more about the young Davy, his life, and the cultures and networks of which he was part. All you need to contribute is a Zooniverse account. sign up today at: www.zooniverse.org/projects/humphrydavy/davy-notebooks-project.

If you have any questions, please send them to humphrydavyzo@gmail.com, or post them on our Zooniverse Talk boards. Project updates will be posted to our Twitter account: @davynotebooks

MEDICINE: THE WELLCOME GALLERIES

Free, Opens 16 November 2019
Science Museum, London, UK

Medicine: The Wellcome Galleries will completely transform the first floor of the Science Museum, creating a magnificent new home for the most significant medical collections in the world. Three thousand medical artefacts from the extraordinary collections of Henry Wellcome and the Science Museum Group will go on permanent public display in the world’s largest medicine galleries.

Spanning 500 years of history, the five galleries reveal moving personal stories and provide a rich historical context for our experience of medicine and health today. The vast and visually stunning new galleries feature more than 3,000 medical artefacts, striking artworks by Marc Quinn, Eleanor Crook, Studio Roso and photographer Siân Davey, interactive games and immersive experiences that bring the history of medicine to life for our visitors. The five galleries reveal how the quest to understand more about the human body has transformed medicine, examine treatments that save, improve and sometimes harm lives, highlight health challenges faced by populations and uncover people’s hopes and fears about their health. Visitors can step inside a real Victorian pharmacy, brought to life through an immersive digital experience, discover what’s needed to perform heart transplant surgery and treat a patient in a critical condition in an interactive game.

Designed by Wilkinson Eyre Architects, the galleries cover more than 3000m², an area equivalent to 1,500 hospital
beds. Visitors will see significant objects from the history of medicine, including two hundred year old wax anatomical models, the first stethoscope, lancets used by Edward Jenner in his smallpox vaccinations, medicine chests used on expeditions to Mount Everest and Antarctica, a rare Iron lung used by patients with polio and the world’s first MRI scanner.

JO SPENCE AND OREET ASHERY

30 May 2019 – 26 January 2020

Our free exhibition brings together two artists who explore the representation of chronic illness and reclaim the idea of ‘misbehaving bodies’. Influential photographer Jo Spence’s (1934–92) work documents her diagnosis of breast cancer and subsequent healthcare regime throughout the 1980s. Her raw and confrontational photography is shown alongside Oreet Ashery’s (b. 1966) award-winning miniseries ‘Revisiting Genesis’, 2016. Ashery’s politically engaged work explores loss and the lived experience of chronic illness in the digital era. In October 2019, a new commission by Ashery, exploring the recent death of her father, will be added. Follow your own path through this exhibition, challenge your understanding of ‘misbehaving’ or ‘untypical’ bodies, and reflect on how illness shapes identity.

PLAY WELL

24 October 2019 – 8 March 2020

Why do we play? How important is it for all of us, young or old? What does it mean to play well? We invite you to consider the impact of play in our lives. The exhibition is open to people of all ages, but there are limited opportunities for interaction and handling objects.

‘Play Well’ explores how play transforms both childhood and society. Using displays of historic toys and games, artworks and design, this exhibition investigates how play develops social bonds, emotional resilience and physical wellbeing. The exhibition includes: images of children at play in the street, in playgrounds and beyond; makeshift and commercially produced toys; digital games and a LARP (live action role-play) space by artist Adam James.

MA IN MEDICAL HUMANITIES: BODIES, CULTURES AND IDEAS

Course Directors: Dr Anne Hanley, Dr Peter Fifield and Dr Emily Senior

Duration: One year full-time or two years part-time

Applications are open. To apply, please visit: www.bbk.ac.uk/study/2019/postgraduate/programmes/TMAMHBCI_C

Scientific and technological advances are constantly pushing the bounds of medical possibility. But what role is
played by the humanities? How is the practice of medicine represented in art, literature, film and other media, and how do those representations, in turn, determine how we understand and experience our own bodies and the realities of sickness and health? Birkbeck’s interdisciplinary MA Medical Humanities explores human health through the lenses of culture and history, covering topics including infectious disease, diet and exercise, mental health and wellbeing, and disability.

The course draws together students and staff working across different disciplines, different historical periods and different geographical regions, to offer an interdisciplinary approach to the fascinating, complex relationship between medicine and the humanities. The interdisciplinary option modules are taught collectively by staff from across English, law, modern languages, philosophy, history, psychosocial studies, gender and sexuality, film and media studies and the history of art.

You will consider the development of clinical practices and institutions, the formation of medical expertise and authority, and the role of medical ethics and law. You will also learn about the history of the medical humanities as an academic field and the debates that have shaped its identity and role. The course is aimed at arts, humanities and social science graduates, and you will develop your analytical, research and writing skills.

BARUCH S. BLUMBERG NASA/LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CHAIR IN ASTROBIOLOGY, EXPLORATION AND SCIENTIFIC INNOVATION

Deadline | 1 January 2020

The NASA/Library of Congress Chair in Astrobiology, Exploration, and Scientific Innovation represents an opportunity for high-level scholarship to understand the interface between human society and the scientific exploration of the cosmos. In the spirit of Barry Blumberg, whose life and work spanned multiple disciplines, the Blumberg Program is interested in the concept of exploration broadly defined to include any aspect of space exploration within the parameters of NASA’s mission to ‘reveal the unknown for the benefit of humankind.’ The program is most interested in proposals that consider the philosophical, humanistic, legal, ethical, and policy dimensions of exploration.

Possibilities for research subjects are many. The following are meant to inspire, not to limit creativity: legal issues related to governance of planets and space; the ethical implications of cross-contamination; scientific and philosophical definitions of life; conceptions of the origins of life in theistic and non-theistic religions; comparison of the discussion of these issues in multiple nations and cultures. The Chair may also consider life’s collective future—for humans and other forms of life, on Earth and beyond, examining the impacts on life and future evolutionary trajectories that may result from both natural events and human-directed activities.

Within the parameters of NASA’s mission, a chair might also seek to investigate how innovative quests for fundamental understanding may lead to major developments for the betterment of society. Barry Blumberg, for whom the Chair is named, conducted ground-breaking research addressing a simple but fundamental question: Why do some people get sick while others, exposed to the same environment, remain healthy? That this work unexpectedly led to the discovery of the hepatitis B virus, the development of a vaccine, and the awarding of the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine illustrates the potential for unconventional thinking about fundamental questions to yield great rewards. Using methodologies from the history and sociology of science, the philosophy of science, legal, political, and cultural history, and other disciplines, a Chair might study and tell the story of how a basic research initiative led to completely unexpected discoveries and applications.

Additionally, the concept of ‘high risk, high reward research’ continues to find traction among a number of US Government agencies and is at the heart of international competition in science. Focusing on projects within the parameters of NASA’s mission, the Chair could also study a ‘high risk, high reward” initiative from a historical, legal, philosophical, or ethical perspective or one that draws on several disciplinary modes of analysis.

The Chair is in residence at the Kluge Center, in the Library of Congress. The Library is at the heart of serious conversation among scholars and policymakers and the Kluge Center’s distinctive mission is to bridge the gap between scholarship and the policymaking community. As such, the Blumberg Chair holds a highly visible, public role. The Library is particularly interested in scholars who are able and willing to speak beyond their disciplinary home in a way that is accessible and compelling to a broad audience.

The Chair is open to scholars and leading thinkers in the fields of philosophy, history, religion, astrobiology,
astronomy, planetary science, the history of science, palaeontology, Earth and atmospheric sciences, geological sciences, ethics, literature, media studies, or other related fields.

For more information and how to apply, see: www.loc.gov/programs/john-w-kluge-center/chairs-fellowships/chairs/blumberg-nasa-chair-in-astrobiology

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Deadline | 17 January 2020

The Linda Hall Library is accepting applications for its 2020/21 fellowship program. These fellowships fund research stays in Kansas City lasting between one week and four months for graduate students, postdoctoral researchers, and independent scholars in the history of science and related STS fields. The Linda Hall Library’s collections document the history of science, technology, and engineering from the fifteenth century to the present.

In addition to our existing travel and residential fellowships, we are thrilled to announce that the Linda Hall Library is partnering with the Clendening History of Medicine Library at the University of Kansas Medical Center to offer a new History of Science and Medicine Fellowship. This fellowship will support a doctoral student whose research examines the intersecting histories of those two disciplines. The History of Science and Medicine fellow will spend one month in Kansas City during the 2020/21 academic year conducting research at both libraries.

All Linda Hall Library research fellows participate in a vibrant intellectual community alongside scholars from nearby libraries and universities, including the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC), the University of Kansas (KU), and the Clendening History of Medicine Library. Fellows are also welcome to attend the Library’s lectures and public programs featuring scholars from around the world.

Please share this information with graduate students, colleagues, or anyone else who might be interested in the Linda Hall Library’s fellowship program.

For further information, visit https://www.lindahall.org/fellowships or email <fellowships@lindahall.org>.
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