

HSMT PRESENTS

FACULTY OF  
HISTORY



UNIVERSITY OF  
OXFORD

# A THEATRE KNOWLEDGE



POSTGRADUATE  
CONFERENCE  
2022

**Front cover:**

Designed by Andreas Wessel-Therhorn

**The History of Science, Medicine, and Technology  
Masters and First Year DPhil students**

***Present***

**A THEATRE of KNOWLEDGE  
Postgraduate Conference 2022  
16 & 17 June**

***With***

**Professor of the History of Medicine, Mark Harrison  
Associate Professor of the History of Science, Catherine M Jackson  
Professor of the History of Science, Rob Iliffe  
Associate Professor of the History of Medicine, Sloan Mahone**

Welcome to the 2022 postgraduate conference! We are excited to raise the curtain and bring to life presentations that showcase a year's work in progress. Over the next two days we seek to entertain with acts that are as varied as the theatrical songs representing each topic. From fourteenth century Mamluk Science at the Great Mosque of Damascus to the push and pull of benevolence and power projection wrapped up in twenty-first century American HIV/AIDS responses in South Africa our cast is eager to take you across four continents and seven centuries of historical research.

Our troupe will present twenty papers divided into six thematic groupings: Empire, Public Health, Memory & the Mind, Environment, Contesting & Shaping Science, and Technology & Bodies. These broad and flexible groupings are designed to spotlight similar interests and approaches rather than a specific purview. For example, our opening act "Gimme! Gimme! Gimme!" (Empire) unified by the approaches of the medical historian, emphasises the praxis of governmental policies and regulation be they aimed at disease control or the skeletal trade. Similarly, during "Strawberry Fields Forever" (Environment) our actors and actresses all seek to understand how humans interact with and make meaning out of nature.

We hope to entertain and challenge you with our wide-ranging research. Finally, we look forward to a lively and productive question and answer session after each act.

Please silence all mobile devices and without further ado, enjoy the show!

**A Theatre of Knowledge**  
HSMT Postgraduate Conference 2022  
Lecture Theatre, Faculty of History, George Street, Oxford

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**Thursday 16 June**

- 09:30-09:50     **Registration:** Seating – “*Getting to Know You*” (*The King and I*)
- 09:50-10:00     **Opening Remarks: Professor Mark Harrison**  
Curtain: “*This Could be the Start of Something Big*” (*The Bachelor*)
- 10:00-11:10     **Act 1: Empire – “Gimme! Gimme! Gimme!” (*Mamma Mia!*)**  
**Jane Mullaney**, Force and neglect? British Indian cholera control in 1880’s Bombay  
**Andrew Biederman**, The collected tools of Elector Augustus of Saxony: modelling Saxon work, industry and materials through aesthetic utility  
**Nilanjana Dutta**, Exploring the trail: situating the bone business in Colonial India and Britain amidst the wider socio-economic and ethical dimensions (1930-1985)  
*Chair: Pierce Jones*
- 11:10-11:30     **Interval:** Tea/Coffee – “*Let’s Have Another Cup of Coffee*” (*Face the Music*)
- 11:30-13:00     **Act 2: Environment – “Strawberry Fields Forever” (*Let it Be*)**  
**Tanya Zeif**, From sacred groves to groves of academe: an environmental history of Oxford University  
**Noé (Bertie) Royer**, Last epoch, and beyond: future and natural histories 1749-1845  
**Madeline White**, Arranging unknown worlds: plant collection, information management, and British Empire in the early 18th century  
**Yusuf Tayara**, A contextual history of Mamluk science: astronomy in the Great Mosque of Damascus  
*Chair: August Aalto*
- 13:00-14:00     **Intermission: Lunch – “Food, Glorious Food” (*Oliver!*)**
- 14:00-15:10     **Act 3: Memory and the Mind – “Knowing Me, Knowing You” (*Mamma Mia!*)**  
**Ffion Hughes**, Le Dain in the sky with diamonds: competing perspectives on substance use at Canada’s Commission of Inquiry into the Non-Medical Use of Drugs 1969-1973 **ONLINE**  
**Francis Benyah**, Prayer camps, mental health and healing traditions in post-colonial Ghana  
**Sami Alahmadi**, Re-analyzing the historiography of Ottoman POWs in WW1  
*Chair: Swathi Srinivasan*
- 15:10-15:20     **Interval:** Tea/coffee – “*Tea for Two*” (*No, No, Nanette*)

**A Theatre of Knowledge**  
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Lecture Theatre, Faculty of History, George Street, Oxford

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- 15:30-16:40    **Act 4: Public Health – “A Spoonful of Sugar” (*Mary Poppins*)**  
**Swathi Srinivasan**, Probing PEPFAR: a critical analysis of United States participation in South Africa’s HIV/AIDS response  
**Pierce Jones**, AIDS and London: a local history of community public health interventions  
**Antony (Tony) Hollingworth**, The introduction of a diphtheria vaccination programme during a time of war  
*Chair: Alexander (Alex) Aizenman*

- 16:40-16:50    **Closing Remarks: Dr Catherine Jackson**  
*Curtain: “Sunrise, Sunset” (*Fiddler on the Roof*)*

**Friday 17 June**

- 09:30-09:40    **Opening Remarks: Professor Rob Iliffe**  
*Curtain: “Seize the Day” (*Newsies*)*
- 09:40-11:10    **Act 5: Contesting and Shaping Science – “Sit Down You’re Rocking the Boat” (*Guys and Dolls*)**  
**Isabella Davis**, Information overload: spectacularization and the proliferation of pseudoscience in the early 20th century  
**Danielle Grey-Stewart**, Co-production of Cold War science research and science policy in the United States through the lens of the National Science Foundation  
**Alexander (Alex) Aizenman**, “In matters of science no other witnesses can be called”: historicity, precedent, and the expert witness  
**August Aalto**, Lovelock and the rise of Gaia: historicizing scientific criticism of the Holistic Earth System hypothesis, 1969-1985  
*Chair: Hai (Sophia) Jeon*
- 11:10-11:30    **Interval: Tea/coffee – “Coffee Break” (*How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*)**
- 11:30-12:50    **Act 6: Technology and Bodies – “My Favorite Things” (*The Sound of Music*)**  
**Asmita Sarkar**, A delicate matter: innovation, use and the X-ray in India  
**Hai (Sophia) Jeon**, When warm bodies meet cold tools: conflicts surrounding water management technologies in South Korea 1972-1992  
*Chair: Andrew Biederman*
- 12:50-13:00    **Closing Remarks: Dr Sloan Mahone**  
*Curtain: “Who Lives, Who Dies, Who Tells Your Story” (*Hamilton*)*

### Act 1: Empire

*"Gimme! Gimme! Gimme!" (Mamma Mia!)*

**Jane Mullaney**

MSc Candidate

College

### **Force and neglect? British Indian cholera control in 1880's Bombay**

My dissertation explores cholera control in Bombay during the 1880s. As India's major trading hub and sole embarkation point for the Haj, historians have explored how the city's cholera policies were subject to unique international scrutiny. However, in the context of ongoing financial constraint and increasing native political participation, public health measures were also contentious local issues. By analysing a collection of anglophone native press summaries and contextualising them with the public health commentary provided by official state records, I explore the intracommunal impact of sanitary reform in Bombay in the period, and offer new insight into its political ramifications.

### Act 1: Empire

*"Gimme! Gimme! Gimme!" (Mamma Mia!)*

**Andrew Biedermann**

DPhil Candidate  
Christ Church College

### **The collected tools of Elector Augustus of Saxony: modelling Saxon work, industry and materials through aesthetic utility**

My research addresses Elector Augustus of Saxony's (r. 1553-1586) Dresden-based collection of tools and how it expanded his understanding of Saxony's potential to harness nature through work and intellect. This study focused *Kunstkammer*, or cabinet of curiosities, remains unique in its focus upon objects of science and technology, particularly its almost 10,000 tools (*Werkzeuge*), ranging from gardening utensils to surgical knives and mining implements.

Augustus was a practical ruler and one who devoted much of his long reign to mapping his domain and cultivating lucrative mining, forestry and agricultural industries in Saxony. He was also a patron of alchemy who worked in gardens, turned fine pieces of ivory and executed his own surveying projects. It was through his hands and intellect, not only his hereditary status, therefore, that he participated in the tuning of the Saxon landscape and populace and made understanding the primary commodity of rulership.

This study unites the histories of science, technology and art, and assesses how Augustus' tools acted within a network of mediums through which he cultivated the knowledge required to reign. Furthermore, as Augustus concerned himself with the objects of lowly work, I endeavour to define the blurred notions of early modern princely occupation.

### Act 1: Empire

*"Gimme! Gimme! Gimme!" (Mamma Mia!)*

**Nilanjana Dutta**

DPhil Candidate

*Kellogg College*

### **Exploring the trail: situating the bone business in Colonial India and Britain amidst the wider socio-economic and ethical dimensions (1930-1985)**

This paper, a veritable work in progress, aims to discuss the research work I intend to do and the manner in which I aim to go about it. As can be understood from the title, my research concerns the bone trading nexus between Britain and India in the colonial times, focusing on the time between 1930 and 1985. Not much exists on this subject, therefore this work aims to compile evidences of such a trade using a multitude of diverse sources such as newspaper sources, judicial sources, oral methodologies, as well as police records. In doing this work, I aim to bridge the economics of the trade with medical, religious as well as the ethical ambits. I seek to engage in an interdisciplinary project, delving deep into the idea of the empire as the morbid and illegal, aiming to therefore provide a succinct overview of the what my thesis proposes to establish and how it serves as an important contribution to the field of history of trade and medicine.

### Act 2: Environment

*"Strawberry Fields Forever" (Let it Be)*

**Tanya Zeif**

MSc Candidate  
St Cross College

### **From sacred groves to groves of academe: an environmental history of Oxford University**

This paper probes Oxford University's early history as an off-shoot of the medieval monastic tradition, attempting to understand the institution as a colonial entity steeped in a Judeo-Christian cosmology that largely displaced the beliefs of "pagan" people who worshipped the natural world. The focus here is on the medieval college garden as both metaphorically and materially relevant to an understanding of the world in which nature is both impermanent (the medieval garden is symbolic of the garden of Eden, a certain "heaven on earth" and model of what was to come in the Kingdom of Heaven) and teleological, serving human life above all else. By exploring the architecture of Oxford's earliest colleges and their gardens alongside early acquisitions of florigelia, texts which compiled excerpts of ancient writings (and which wielded nature-as-metaphor, meaning "a gathering of flowers," a bouquet of bits of knowledge rather than a dynamic, abundant eco-system of ideas...books were expensive to make!), we will better understand which forms of knowledge about nature were allowed within the cloistered walls of the early academy, and which were kept out.

### Act 2: Environment

*"Strawberry Fields Forever" (Let it Be)*

**Noé (Bertie) Royer**

MPhil Candidate

*Kellogg College*

### **Last epoch, and beyond: future and natural histories 1749-1845**

In 1749, Georges-Louis Leclerc, count of Buffon (1707-1788) published the first volume of his lifework *Histoire naturelle, générale et particulière, avec la description du Cabinet du Roy*, summarised in the supplement *Epoques de la Nature* (1788). He told a natural history: an enquiry into nature and a temporal narrative of the world. At the intersection of western mythologies and the rationalization of nature, Buffon reported a history of the universe, from Earth's creation to a finality he expressed in a seventh and last epoch of nature: human's epoch. Concomitantly to the French Revolution and the Enlightenment, declarations of history's end were portrayed in scientific modernity, from Buffon to Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859) and his *Kosmos – Entwurf einer physischen Weltbeschreibung* (1845). These narratives of history's end and beyond in natural histories between the eighteenth and the nineteenth century raised questions about the origins of these ideas, the influence of the prominent figures, the debates with tradition and other naturalists. Focusing on the ends of nature and time in natural histories, this paper explores how natural historians burst the limits of time in the future and participated in a cultural narration of human condition in time and in the cosmos.

### **Act 2: Environment**

*"Strawberry Fields Forever" (Let it Be)*

**Madeline White**

DPhil Candidate  
*Lincoln College*

### **Arranging unknown worlds: plant collection, information management, and British empire in the early-eighteenth century**

The du Bois Herbarium, a collection of nearly 14,000 botanical specimens pristinely preserved within the Oxford University Herbaria, is a unique relic of early eighteenth-century science. Compiled by English East India Company treasurer Charles du Bois between 1680 and 1740, the Herbarium is closely tied to leading figures of eighteenth-century botany, melding early British scientific and colonial histories into a single archive. Despite this exciting potential, the du Bois Herbarium remains one of the least explored collections of its kind, largely neglected after it was dismantled from its original binding in the 19th century. While long deemed archaic and impractical, this project argues that the du Bois Herbarium should instead be considered a vibrant scientific text, brimming with details about the inner workings of natural history and its ties with Britain's early colonial endeavours in India. Historians of science, medicine, and technology have demonstrated that the advancement of European science and the expansion of European empire is inextricably linked. Plants in particular have held an integral place in imperial exchange networks since the earliest European encounters abroad, and examining the disciplines of botany and natural history has proven especially potent in untangling these symbiotic bonds. The du Bois Herbarium, a scientific resource constructed through and alongside the mechanisms of the early British Empire, provides ideal and unexplored access to this critical topic in the history of science.

### Act 2: Environment

*"Strawberry Fields Forever" (Let it Be)*

**Yusuf Tayara**

DPhil Candidate  
Wolfson College

### **Astronomy in the Great Mosque of Damascus: towards a social history of Mamluk astronomy**

Between the late thirteenth and early sixteenth centuries, Syria and Egypt's Mamluk rulers instituted a range of practical reforms within those countries' religious institutions. Among them was the gradual introduction of the muwaqqit, or timekeeper, in the dominion's major mosques. In this paper I focus on the Umayyad Mosque of Damascus, one of the oldest continually used religious sites in the history of Islam. As an institution it has housed some of the Islamic world's most prominent theologians and religious thinkers. The mosque has also produced one of Islam's greatest technical astronomers, the muwaqqit Ibn al-Shatir (1304-75). I examine how the shifting political and social conditions of Mamluk Damascus came to bear on the astronomical practices of Ibn al-Shatir and his fellow timekeepers. I do so by taking a wider view of the Umayyad Mosque as an institution of technical and religious learning, and as a political symbol of Sunni Islam in a period of high political turmoil. My central contention is that the prevailing mosque hierarchies in the fourteenth century imparted a distinctively practical or folk-astronomical flavour to the writings of technical astronomers in the period. I conclude with some comments on the historiography of astronomy in the Islamic world, highlighting exactly why social histories of science in the Muslim world are generally lacking.

### Act 3: Memory and the Mind

*"Knowing Me, Knowing You" (Mamma Mia!)*

**Ffion Hughes**

MPhil Candidate

Exeter College

### **Le Dain in the sky with diamonds: competing perspectives on substance use at Canada's Commission of Inquiry into the Non-Medical Use of Drugs, 1969-1973**

This paper examines the Commission of Inquiry into the Non-Medical Use of Drugs, established in 1969 by the Canadian federal government. Tasked with investigating an apparent increase in illicit substance use, the Commission conducted years of public hearings, expert consultations, and intensive research before releasing its final recommendations in 1973. Although two Commissioners expressed conflicting minority opinions, the majority recommended a considerable – but partial – liberalization of Canadian drug policy. The Commission represents a key moment in Canadian drug history, but it remains thoroughly understudied. Drawing from published and unpublished Commission records, government archives, historical medical literature, and media coverage, this paper seeks to remedy this historiographical gap. It conceptualizes the Commission as a discursive arena, wherein Canadians of all stripes could express their views on addiction, drug users, and drug policy. Medical and lay community representatives advanced a diversity of arguments and policy prescriptions, each based on specific ideas about the medical and moral consequences of illicit drugs. The paper contextualizes these varied perspectives in their historical era, a pivotal moment in medical, political, and lay understandings of substance use disorder. Although the long-held view of addiction as a moral failure continued to hold sway, the late 1960s and early 1970s saw the rise of a new neurobiological model of addiction – as well as a seeming increase in casual, apparently non-addictive, drug use. As Commission records demonstrate, the symbolic meanings of illicit substances were likewise in flux. This paper concludes by analysing how Commission testimony impacted the body's Final Report, subsequent Canadian drug policy, and the lives of drug users themselves.

### **Act 3: Memory and the Mind**

*"Knowing Me, Knowing You" (Mamma Mia!)*

**Francis Benyah**

DPhil Candidate  
Mansfield College

### **Prayer camps, mental health and healing traditions in post-Colonial Ghana**

This project intersects the history of medicine and healing with the history of religion. In Ghana, healing traditions and practices at prayer camps or healing centres raise important questions about African healing systems and the role of religion in the modern-day practice of science and medicine. This study questions the methods previously used in treating mental illness and the influence that has had on contemporary and modern healing practices for mental health patients in Ghana. It will also address the extent to which prayer camps' institutionalised mental healthcare has had within the broader context of general healthcare practices in Ghana. This study seeks to unravel these issues through a combination of oral histories and archival research. The importance of religious healing and its legitimacy in the broader context of healing in Ghana will be discussed together with the associated challenges.

### Act 3: Memory and the Mind

*"Knowing Me, Knowing You" (Mamma Mia!)*

**Sami Alahmadi**

MSc Candidate

Exeter College

### Re-analyzing the historiography of Ottoman POWs in WW1

Much has been written on the experience of prisoners of war in the First World War and its intersection with health and medicine, from memoirs of soldiers being held captive to official reports on the conditions of these camps by national and international bodies. However, the majority of the existing literature on this topic relates to the events and records of activity on the Western Front. Indeed, the history and narratives taking place in the Caucasus Front and especially the Ottoman Empire is a scantily covered area. When looking specifically at the experiences of Ottoman prisoners of war, even less can be found. This is, in large part, due to the fact that most accounts of the Ottoman Experience are recorded in Turkish. The recently published memoir, "Seven Years in Siberian Prison Camps" written in Turkish by Dr. Yusuf Izzettin Bey, a medical officer serving in the Ottoman Army, and detailing his experience as a POW captured by the Russians, offers a detailed and longitudinal view into this topic. As a primary source, it provides a wealth of information and stands to broaden the literature and historiography of the Ottoman POW experience. Given the author's fluency in Turkish, this work will utilize Dr. Yusuf Izzettin's memoir to update and question or corroborate the information in the literature as well as analyze the accounts in the memoir in the larger context of this critical period in Ottoman history to gain insights into the nature of the themes and narratives being recorded for a more comprehensive historiography.

### **Act 4: Public Health**

*"A Spoonful of Sugar" (Mary Poppins)*

**Swathi Srinivasan**

MSc Candidate

*Trinity College*

### **Probing PEPFAR: a critical analysis of United States participation in South Africa's HIV/AIDS response**

Historically, US global health initiatives have not always been well-meaning, and even well-meaning initiatives have not always proven beneficial over time. As Imara Ajani Rolston suggest, this is perhaps a form of hegemonic benevolence. To understand the complicated nature of global health as it is practised by the United States, this study aims to explore the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), which is the "largest commitment by any nation to address a single disease in history" (US Department of State).

The many strides and successes of PEPFAR will be analysed, particularly with respect to its activities in the heavily HIV/AIDS-stricken nation of South Africa. However, the project's aim is to situate the program within the larger discourse of American imperialism as seen through seemingly benevolent global health programming. This involves an analysis of funds earmarked for US government-defined purposes, the pressure placed on local health systems, and interviews of PEPFAR policymakers, South African health officials, PEPFAR fund recipients, and other affiliated groups. Ultimately, the encouragement of empowerment versus disempowerment, as well as hegemonic versus supportive benevolence in US global health will be explored through the lens of HIV/AIDS funding in South Africa, particularly to explore whether such outcomes seem unique to the United States and/or to global health at large.

### **Act 4: Public Health**

*"A Spoonful of Sugar" (Mary Poppins)*

**Pierce Jones**

MSc Candidate  
Brasenose College

### **AIDS and London: a local history of community public health interventions**

The rapid spread of AIDS in the 1980s would have disastrous consequences for queer communities in the Western world who were often left without sufficient government healthcare support. AIDS killed tens of thousands of queer people, particularly gay men and people of colour, destroyed numerous community institutions and turned a culture which celebrated liberation into a culture of constant mourning. This paper will analyse the impact of the AIDS Crisis on the queer community in London. In particular, by looking at the archives of key organisations like Stonewall, the Terrance Higgins Trust and the London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard during the 1980s, I will illustrate how the queer community took public health into its own hands. By emphasising the role of community organisations and individual people in forming public health campaigns against AIDS in London, I hope to challenge dominant notions that public health lies in the domain of national states or international organisations. By telling the stories of the thousands of queer people lost to AIDS and silenced by stigma, I hope to demonstrate the utility of examining 'public health from below' at a local level alongside broader national public health campaigns.

### **Act 4: Public Health**

*"A Spoonful of Sugar" (Mary Poppins)*

**Antony (Tony) Hollingworth**

MSc Candidate

*Jesus College*

### **The introduction of a diphtheria vaccination programme during a time of war**

Diphtheria is an upper respiratory tract infection and in most cases is a mild or asymptomatic infection, though it can lead to death. In the 1930s it was estimated that 50,000 people developed the infection annually of which 3,000 would die mainly children. In May 1939, a Preventive Medicine committee under the auspices of the Medical Research Council (MRC) was set up and one of its objectives was to look at mass immunisation for diphtheria. When the Second World War started in September 1939 there had been concerns about the availability of beds for casualties, especially as the estimations of those wounded from air bombardment were great. There was an urgency to maintain bed availability, consequently there was an impetus for a vaccination programme to keep people out of hospital. In 1940 the Government started a powerful publicity campaign to encourage immunisation and at the same time began to distribute the immunisation material free to local authorities. The aim of this research is to assess how the Ministry of Health facilitated the introduction of a nationwide vaccination programme during a time of war, what driving forces were behind its implementation, the types of propaganda (for and against) used and the level of difficulties encountered in implementing the programme.

### **Act 5: Contesting and Shaping Science**

*"Sit Down You're Rocking the Boat" (Guys and Dolls)*

**Isabella Davis**

MSc Candidate  
St Cross College

### **Information overload: spectacularization and the proliferation of pseudoscience in the early 20th century**

This paper looks at what primary and catalytic aspects of our relationship with information changed in the beginning of the 20th century to create a modern information landscape wherein the appeal of pseudoscience so frequently trumps the appeal of science. The philosophy of Guy Debord's Society of the Spectacle and the framework for information storage as established in Ann Blair's Too Much To Know: managing information before the modern age, are used to present what I believe to be the specific changes in the production, consumption, and communication of information that occurred in the early 20th century. The shaping of our modern relationship with information is explored using the specific cases of Lysenkoism and New York City yellow journalism. This thematic research engages with those case studies to capture the nuances of 20th century pseudoscience as a form of misinformation. How this, in turn, aids our modern understanding of pseudoscientific cults and conspiracy theorists will be explored, together with how late-stage capitalist ideals may exacerbate the rising popularity of such theories. If the failing communication bridges between scientists and the public are to be mended, it is critical to investigate the foundations of this modern relationship, as influenced by information storage and dissemination and an evolving capitalist state.

### **Act 5: Contesting and Shaping Science**

*"Sit Down You're Rocking the Boat" (Guys and Dolls)*

**Danielle Grey-Stewart**

MSc Candidate  
Lincoln College

### **Co-production of Cold War science research and science policy in the United States through the lens of the National Science Foundation (NSF), 1969-1991**

The creation of the National Science Foundation in 1950 was indicative of the United States' goals for science and technology policy in the wake of WWII: institutionalizing support for research was essential to protecting the country's technological edge on the international stage. The NSF plays a huge role in dictating what research takes place in the United States, providing around 25% of all federal funding to basic research in American universities. This presentation will describe preliminary research on the mission and vision of the NSF from the mid-1970s to early 1990s, focusing on the relationship between the NSF's goals and those of the presidential administrations they served under. The frameworks of sociotechnical imaginaries and co-production developed by Professor Sheila Jasanoff, defined respectively as "collectively held, institutionally stabilized, and publicly performed visions of desirable futures, ... attainable through, and supportive of, advances in science and technology" and "how scientific ideas and beliefs ... evolve together with the representations, identities, discourses, and institutions that give practical effect and meaning to ideas and objects", will guide this study in elucidating the relationship between beliefs on technological competitiveness and the actions of funding institutions within American science and technology research.

### Act 5: Contesting and Shaping Science

*"Sit Down You're Rocking the Boat" (Guys and Dolls)*

Alexander (Alex) Aizenman

DPhil Candidate  
Pembroke College

#### **"In matters of science no other witnesses can be called": historicity, precedent, and the expert witness**

Most broadly my project is a survey of the origins and immediate aftermath of the expert witness' formal introduction. The expert witness, a novel individual, was legally empowered by virtue of his apparent knowledge, status, or vocational expertise to speculate on record, thereby informing the jury and judge of his opinion relating to the agreed facts of the case.

In this presentation I will engage with a fundamental hurdle in the production of legal history, that is, the reconstruction of courtroom happenings. As my project is set prior to the standardization of court reporting the most widely used sources are the idiosyncratic Named Reports; these independently written summaries of court proceedings and judgments vary wildly in the methods used and firsthand knowledge of the actual events they purport to cover. Importantly, a significant proportion of the contemporary historical literature on the nascent expert witness draws uncritically from the Named Reports. Using the landmark ruling in *Folkes, Bart., v. Chadd and Others* (1782) as a case study I demonstrate how and why the relevant report has been treated as a primary source despite being a post facto reconstruction over fifty years removed from the case it comprehensively summarizes. Addressing the broader methodological debates of legal history, I will join with the recent challenges to the merits of clearly distinguishing between "internal" and "external," as attention to historicity of sources ought to be the first and foremost concern.

### **Act 5: Contesting and Shaping Science**

*"Sit Down You're Rocking the Boat" (Guys and Dolls)*

**August Aalto**

MSc Candidate  
St Cross College

### **Lovelock and the rise of Gaia: historicizing scientific criticism of the Holistic Earth System hypothesis, 1969-1985**

This dissertation will explore the reception of the Gaia Hypothesis in the scientific community between 1969-1985. First published by the chemist James Lovelock in 1969, this hypothesis proposes that living organisms interact with the inorganic environment on Earth to form a synergistic and self-regulating holistic system that helps to maintain conditions that support life. Despite the popularity of Gaia today, it was not widely recognized in the scientific community when it was initially published, only receiving significant attention and criticism by the mid-70s. By analysing a diverse collection of scientific journal articles, magazine articles and books written by Lovelock, Doolittle and Dawkins among others, this presentation will describe preliminary research into the recognition, acceptance and criticism of Gaia in the scientific community, offering historical insight into this now-popular countercultural conception of the environment.

### **Act 6: Technology and Bodies**

*"My Favourite Things" (The Sound of Music)*

**Asmita Sarkar**

MPhil Candidate

Green Templeton College

### **A delicate matter: innovation, use and the X-Ray in India**

From 1897 onwards, two years after the discovery of X-Rays, medical practitioners in India, associated with the Indian Medical Service (IMS), began to make attempts to make use of X-Rays. However, despite an initial successful attempt in 1897, further endeavours to use X-rays in both civil and military settings resulted in a series of failures. These failures were attributed to climatic and other conditions that were special to India. These early failures convinced the IMS officials that for X-Ray apparatus to be successfully used in India, special modifications would be necessary for different parts of the country. In 1905, after the specifications of an X-Ray apparatus which could be used in field service in India had been determined, the government authorised the establishment of an X-Ray Institute in 1905 to instruct medical officers in civil and military employ in the working of the X-Ray apparatus. In my dissertation, I aim to explore these early failures and the attempts to determine the specifications of an X-Ray apparatus that would be suitable for India. I also aim to look at the role played by Indian assistant surgeons trained at the X-Ray Institute, coolies and orderlies, and electricians in facilitating the use of X-Rays in India.

### **Act 6: Technology and Bodies**

*"My Favourite Things" (The Sound of Music)*

**Hai (Sophia) Jeon**

MPhil Candidate

*St Catherine's College*

### **When warm bodies meet cold tools: conflicts surrounding water management technologies in South Korea (1972-1992)**

This project looks at state-driven water management technologies in Seoul and Busan through the conflicts that arose over their social effects. It asks: what is the significance of these technologies becoming strikingly diverse objects and the experiences for citizens of different social groups?

Previous works have identified that technological progress can become the grounds for the establishment of social order and subsequent dispute. I use qualitative methods including primary and secondary sources to investigate how the operation of water management technologies, ostensibly a neutral practice, produced different ambient conditions for everyday life in South Korea's two major cities during the 1970s to 1990s. It brings into focus how a natural resource such as water—through technological infrastructure, engineering, and bureaucracy that comprise the technical end of its management—have come to converge with the social networks and lived experiences that are as important to understanding episodes of flux in South Korea's modern urban history. I look to disrupt the narrative of a unilinear and inclusive national progress supported by state discourses of technological optimism by instead focusing on the on-the-ground conflicts that can provide a more multifaceted depiction of how urban development was perceived, felt, and experienced by different South Korean citizens. My research aims to capture the zeitgeist of two distinct decades, as episodes of conflict regarding water management technologies that are representative of individual South Korean citizens attempting to make sense of their world which was often caught between change and obduracy.

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**CAST**

**Name**

Aalto, August  
Aizenman, Alexander  
Alahmadi, Sami  
Benyah, Francis  
Biedermann, Andrew  
Davis, Isabella  
Dutta, Nilanjana  
Grey-Stewart, Danielle  
Hollingworth, Antony  
Hughes, Ffion  
Jeon, Hai (Sophia)  
Jones, Pierce  
Mullaney, Jane  
Royer, Noé (Bertie)  
Sarkar, Asmita  
Srinivasan, Swathi  
Tayara, Yusuf  
White, Madeline  
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