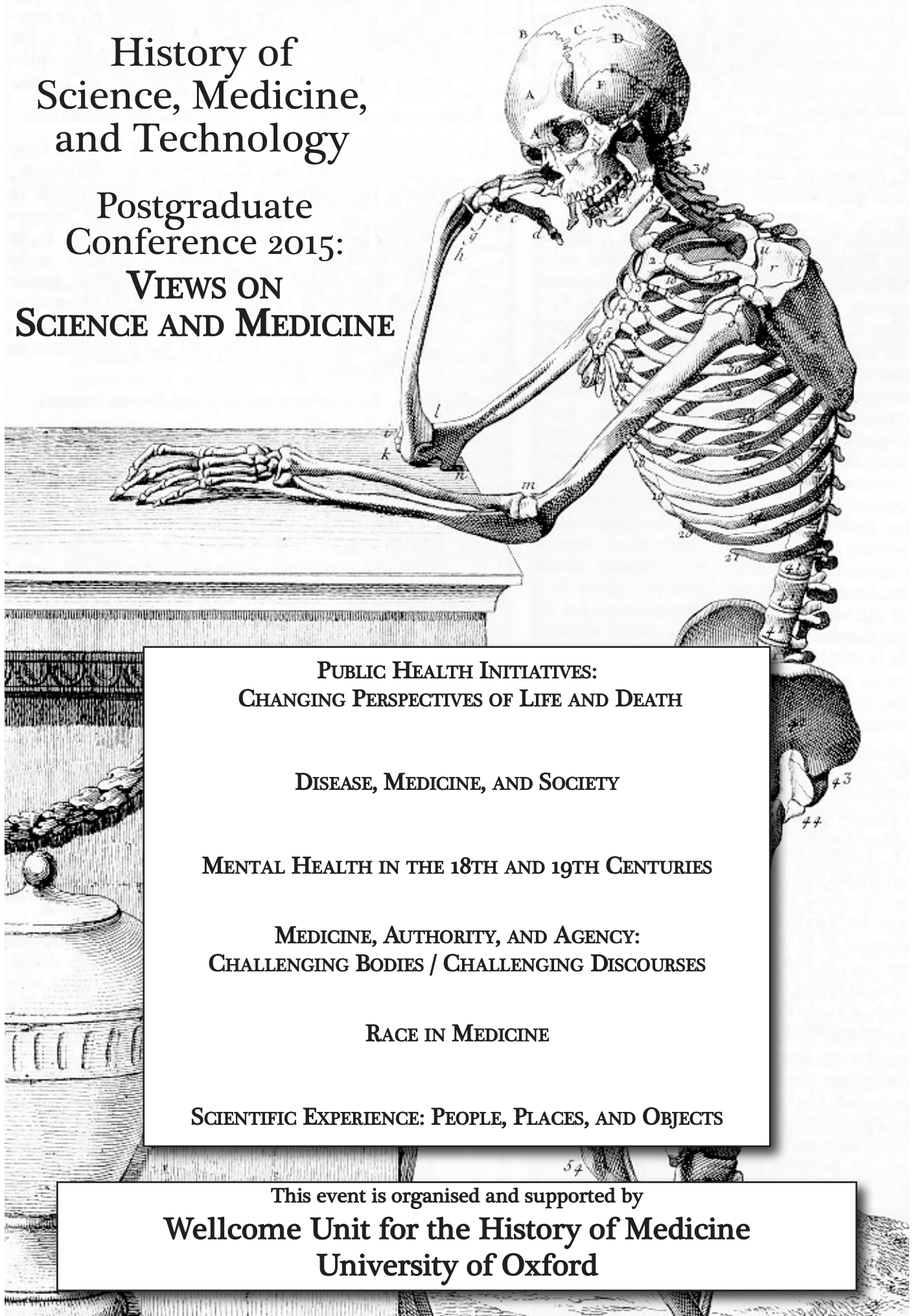


# History of Science, Medicine, and Technology

Postgraduate  
Conference 2015:

## VIEWS ON SCIENCE AND MEDICINE



**PUBLIC HEALTH INITIATIVES:  
CHANGING PERSPECTIVES OF LIFE AND DEATH**

**DISEASE, MEDICINE, AND SOCIETY**

**MENTAL HEALTH IN THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES**

**MEDICINE, AUTHORITY, AND AGENCY:  
CHALLENGING BODIES / CHALLENGING DISCOURSES**

**RACE IN MEDICINE**

**SCIENTIFIC EXPERIENCE: PEOPLE, PLACES, AND OBJECTS**

This event is organised and supported by  
**Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine  
University of Oxford**

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"Anatomy." The Encyclopedia of Diderot & d'Alembert Collaborative Translation Project. Ann Arbor: Michigan Publishing, University of Michigan Library, 2010.

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## **Views on Science and Medicine**

Upon matriculation at Oxford, we were enrolled in Methods and Themes courses in the History of Science, Medicine, and Technology. These courses were organised to introduce us to the various analytical lenses that would prove useful as we moved forward in our education. Each week required us to highlight different nodes in complex social, cultural, political, and economic networks that ultimately comprised the history that we were aiming to study.

This postgraduate conference is structured analogously: each paper brings different analytical lenses and methodological frameworks to bear on various topics in the history of science and medicine. Together, they survey not only different 'views on science and medicine', but also different 'manners of viewing'.

This conference, therefore, engages with historical questions of great thematic and temporal breadth. How did the nineteenth-century diagnostic profile of Anorexia Nervosa relate to broader cultural ideas about food and femininity? What can be made of the different engraving styles that appear on a fourteenth-century astrolabe? What was the connection between the West India Regiments and medical theories concerning race and climate at the close of the eighteenth century? What do the public writings of the American geneticist L.C. Dunn reveal about genetics and eugenics after World War II? This conference examines the history of science and medicine through the prism of these and other questions.

## Views on Science and Medicine

Postgraduate Conference  
11-12 June 2015  
History Faculty Lecture Theatre  
George Street, Oxford

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### Thursday, 11 June

- 09:30-09:40 **Opening Remarks: Mark Harrison**, *Professor of the History of Medicine, and Director of the Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine*
- 09:40-10:30 **Session One – Public Health Initiatives: Changing Perspectives of Life and Death**  
**George Head**, 'Reversal of death and duty to revive: resuscitation in the eighteenth century'  
**Kristina Carney**, "'Abortion doctors are always at risk": The history of abortion providers in post-Roe V. Wade America'  
*Chaired by: Mark Harrison, Professor of the History of Medicine, and Director of the Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine*
- 10:30-10:45 **Tea/Coffee**
- 10:45-11:55 **Session Two – Disease, Medicine, and Society**  
**Erica Read**, 'The British Documentary Movement, public health and social reform in the inter-war years'  
**Rachel Ross**, 'Filling in the gaps: Venereal disease in Britain, 1886-1914'  
**Rebecca Stieva**, 'A new perspective on the cholera epidemic of 1853-1854 in London, England'  
*Chaired by: Margaret Pelling, Senior Research Associate, Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine*
- 12:00-12:50 **Session Three – Mental Health in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries**  
**Steven Server**, 'Sic transit gloria mundi: Pitt, popularity, and the iconography of biliousness'  
**Edouard Gottlieb**, 'Understanding the seminal contributions of Philippe Pinel and Johan Christian Reil to the foundation of psychiatry or mind and body in Germany and France of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries'  
*Chaired by: John Lidwell-Durnin, Doctoral Student, Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine*
- 13:00-13:45 **Lunch**
- 13:45-15:15 **Session Four – Medicine, Authority, and Agency: Challenging Bodies/Challenging Discourses**  
**Rhea Sookdeosingh**, 'Anorexia Nervosa and discourses of femininity: Nineteenth century perspectives'  
**Kaitlin Lloyd**, "'[M]y most pronounced symptom was that I married him": Divorce through the language of madness, 1858-1900'

**Andrew Lea**, 'Freud's scalpel: Sex reassignment surgery, psychoanalysis, and the fusion of psychiatric paradigms'

**Ayesha Rasheed**, 'Bodies and biopolitics of the IRA hunger strikes in the twentieth century'

*Chaired by: Jennifer Wallis, Postdoctoral Research Assistant, Faculty of English*

15:15-15:30 **Tea/Coffee**

15:30-16:20 **Session Five – Race in Medicine**

**Michael Joseph**, 'Medical theory and Colonial reality in the emergence of the West India Regiments, 1793-1802'

**Caitlin Page**, 'Primitive protection: Polio as a case study in the rise and fall of medical racism in the USA between 1920 and 1960'

*Chaired by: Sloan Mahone, Associate Professor of the History of Medicine, Deputy Director of the Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine*

16:20-16:30 **Closing Remarks: Sloan Mahone, Associate Professor of the History of Medicine, Deputy Director of the Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine**

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## Friday, 12 June

09:30-09:40 **Opening Remarks: Pietro Corsi, Professor of the History of Science, Faculty of History**

09:40-10:30 **Session Six – Scientific Experience: People, Places, and Objects**

**Lynn Atkin**, 'An astrolabe's guide to its provenance: A study of an astrolabe at the Museum of the History of Science, Oxford'

**Julia Carr-Trebelhorn**, 'Natural intersections: The career of Alexandre Brongniart in context'

*Chaired by: Pietro Corsi, Professor of the History of Science, Faculty of History*

10:30-10:50 **Tea/Coffee**

10:50-12:00 **Session Seven – Scientific Experience: People, Places, and Objects**

**Melissa Alberts**, '"History as it is seen from the inside": L.C. Dunn and the eugenics movement'

**Robyn Haggard**, 'Archival or scientific? The role of natural history at the University Museum, Oxford, from 1946-61'

**Thomas Redpath**, 'Scientific biography, modernity, and Turing: A brief overview of the contemporary uses of the historical biography of science'

*Chaired by: Pietro Corsi, Professor of the History of Science, Faculty of History*

12:00-12:10 **Closing Remarks: Erica Charters, Associate Professor of the History of Medicine, Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine**

**George Head**

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**Public Health Initiatives: Changing  
Perspectives of Life and Death**

### **Reversal of death and duty to revive: Resuscitation in the eighteenth century**

This dissertation is concerned with the reconciliation of low rates of efficacy and the implementation of a professional resuscitation technique within an increasingly state-orientated philanthropic community. A sense of duty combined with the creation of a modern state which attempted to ensure that no man died needlessly, introducing the fear-instilling notion that death may not be as final as previously thought. I aim to find that a new cognitive approach, and interest through public lectures and the Royal Society, combined popularism with empiricism in a way that by-passed the usual elitist routes of the College of Physicians in favour of a resuscitatory autonomy: one of frequent paradigm shifts imbedded in social perceptions and cultural practices. This shall be achieved by studying the methods adopted, but also the experimentation on cadavers, animals and drowned victims that created new hypotheses based on the assumption that death could be reversed. The trouble in distinguishing apparent death from positive death, viewed primarily by the collection of questionnaires, will provide a good example of the enlightenment-based intellectual shift and its search for correlations and causal factors. The work of Charles Kite will be of paramount importance and the publications of the Royal Humane Society, originally founded as the Society for the Recovery of People Apparently Drowned will too be of use. Resuscitation mimicked the transition of eighteenth-century health philosophy in terms of data collection, analysis, and surveillance and protection of the 'whole' rather than the individual – forming part of the change from physician as a philosopher to one with legislative responsibilities.

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**Public Health Initiatives: Changing  
Perspectives of Life and Death**

**“Abortion doctors are always at risk”:  
The history of abortion providers in post-Roe V. Wade America**

Between 2001 and 2002 American physicians who provided both illegal and therapeutic hospital-based abortions prior to the 1973 Roe V. Wade abortion legalisation ruling were asked to share their abortion-related medical experiences. While all of the physicians interviewed shared each of their ‘galvanizing’ pre-Roe experiences, which ranged from ‘a woman who’d had 11 children and had self-aborted herself, because she couldn’t get a legal abortion’ to a young and pregnant woman who committed suicide after the physician ‘had just put too many obstacles in her way,’ the majority of the physicians also expressed their opinions on the state of legal abortion. These physicians claimed the period after legalisation as being ‘no different’ to pre-Roe America on the basis that ‘people get killed just for offering the abortion service.’ Describing the post-Roe landscape as ‘not pleasant,’ the physicians suggested ‘that a doctor isn’t more at risk now than he was, or she, when they were providing abortion during the illegal times.’ While both feminist and legal scholarship traditionally place Roe V. Wade as the starting point for the linear progression of abortion provision, a physician-centred history challenges this dominating narrative and suggests that Roe V. Wade was not a significant turning point in the professional and personal lives of American abortion providers.

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**Disease, Medicine, and Society**

**The British Documentary Movement, public health and social reform in the inter-war years**

The inter-war period in Britain has been characterised by social historians both as fearful and morbid, and as an age of progress and hope. Developments in science and medicine, and public perceptions of science and medicine have an integral role to play in both interpretations of Britain's inter-war mood.

This study combines analysis of the perceived role of science and medicine, and developments in public health policy with an equally important aspect in the cultural history of Britain during this period; developments in film as a tool of mass communication, and in particular, the birth and work of the Documentary Movement. Combining a deep-rooted belief in the necessity for social reform with new film production techniques, the Documentary Movement presented education through film as a key to social progression.

Although British inter-war social history and the cultural history of film have been the subjects of extensive study, the Documentary Movement often appears as a disparate and isolated history. By integrating social history, cultural history, and the history of public health, this study offers a reappraisal of the history of the Documentary Movement both as a social movement, and as a tool to analyse the relationship between public health policy and perceptions of the role of science and medicine. This is achieved through a chronological analysis of the work of the Documentary Movement, and their relationship with the government and scientists of the inter-war period, signposted by their films on the issues of nutrition and housing, two major public health policies of the inter-war governments.



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**Disease, Medicine, and Society**

### **Filling in the gaps: Venereal disease in Britain, 1886-1914**

Historians have said little about venereal disease (VD) in Britain between the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts (CDAs) in 1886 and the onset of the First World War in 1914. Contrary to what the absence of historiography may lead us to assume, concerns about VD in this period did not wilt. In fact, discussion was as fervent as ever in *The Lancet*, and it likewise continued to be a matter of Parliamentary debate. Hence, this paper will seek to account for this 28-year gap in the historiography. It will look at how the nation responded to the termination of the CDAs, and the prevalence of VD in both military and civilian realms thereafter. Also, it will seek to explain how new fears about imperial supremacy and racial degeneration in the early twentieth century translated into concerns about sexual health, and will argue that looking at VD in this period reveals a lot about larger state concerns.

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**Disease, Medicine, and Society**

### **A new perspective on the cholera epidemic of 1853-1854 in London, England**

Cholera is one of the most studied diseases of the nineteenth century. Its epidemic scale was the catalyst for many social, medical, and sanitary reform movements from the 1830s onwards and the disease was feared by the population because of its undignified, gruesome progression towards a painful death. The historiography of cholera encompasses many fields including medical history, social history, and political history yet there is a distinct absence of literature which combines statistical data with the social history of the disease. Many books have been published describing the assaults on London during the 1831-32, 1849, and 1866 epidemics and many scholars have examined John Snow's ground-breaking water theory of cholera transmission in 1854. Throughout all the literature there is an overwhelming lack of material which relies on statistical data to support arguments about cholera mortality throughout the century.

Using the *Weekly Returns of Births and Deaths in London* from 1840 till 1860, it is possible to derive mortality patterns in London, cholera's contribution to the death toll, and the geographic occurrences of disease during the 1854 epidemic. The *Returns* also indicate a fifteen-week epidemic period in which the textual notes identify mortality patterns that were the product of social interactions such as age, sex, and occupation. This information makes it possible to use statistical data to create a better understanding of the social character of the disease, thus producing a new perspective on cholera by examining it against a background of statistical data annotated with social history.

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**Mental Health in the Eighteenth and  
Nineteenth Centuries**

**Sic transit gloria mundi: Pitt, popularity, and the iconography of biliousness**

Is a diagnosis of mental illness only ever a means for the state to discipline and punish deviancy? Or can a symptomology be formulated by people outside of the state, in a bottom-up manner? This paper aims to offer an alternative to the Foucauldian paradigm of mental illness by examining nervous disorders in eighteenth-century England. It first explores the extent to which this new 'disease of civilisation', and other associated bilious disorders, such as gout, came to represent a 'badge of honour' for the community of elite sufferers, within the context of the growth of oligarchic Parliamentary politics, commercialization, and the cult of sensibility. This will serve as context for the analysis of popular prints depicting the famous Patriot Parliamentarian William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, notable for his lifelong biliousness. By examining cartoons and prints that feature Chatham, we aim to explore how the iconography of biliousness in this one politician, reveals how the culture surrounding mental illness during the period was less monolithic than existing historiography would suggest: We will see how Chatham's illness was either ignored or the object of sympathy during periods of popularity; we will also see that Chatham's illness began to acquire a more negative character once his popularity began to slip. This is an indication that, rather than reflecting the will of the state to suppress sufferers of mental illness, the iconography of nervous disorders could reflect the passing, worldly concerns of common people.

**Edouard Gottlieb**

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**Mental Health in the Eighteenth and  
Nineteenth Centuries**

**Understanding the seminal contributions of Philippe Pinel and Johan Christian Reil to the foundation of psychiatry or mind and body in Germany and France of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries**

The field of psychiatry was nascent and in flux during the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. Its theoretical and practical foundations were being developed, specialized journals began to be published and institutionalized methods of treatment were being implemented for the mentally ill. This paper takes specific interest in two major protagonists of the early history of psychiatry: Johann Christian Reil and Philippe Pinel. At the center of inquiry stand the ways in which these two figures influenced the field of psychiatry within the borders of their respective countries and beyond, by looking at their specific contributions and ideologies, as well as their impact, spread and influence. Moreover the importance of philosophical ideas in shaping the frameworks advanced by Pinel and Reil is analyzed, in order to highlight the extent to which the early stages of psychiatry were moulded by philosophical theories. This is of specific interest not only because of the tumultuous intellectual environment both experienced, with Reil living in the midst of German Romanticism and Pinel in post-revolutionary France, but also because both, as this paper shows, were part of the last band of philosophers active within medicine. The comparative study of the two does not only feature philosophy as an influencing factor but also looks at other key elements that influenced Pinel's and Reil's worldviews, as well as the way in which their ideas and frameworks travelled and the influenced the medical sphere of their time.

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**Medicine, Authority, and Agency:  
Challenging bodies/Challenging  
discourses**

**Anorexia Nervosa and discourses of femininity: Nineteenth century perspectives**

Anorexia in our times is widely familiar as both a psychiatric diagnosis and a pervasive cultural phenomenon. Yet as an historical subject it has received little scholarly attention, particularly compared with other 'female afflictions' such as hysteria, neurasthenia and female insanity. The existing scholarship has tended to offer analyses that are, in varied and complex ways, steeped in presentist assumptions about the diagnosis and the cultural factors productive of this behavior. With this in mind, this thesis is an attempt to analyse the diagnostic profile of Anorexia Nervosa, newly coined in 1873, in relation to the period's prevailing medical, cultural and experiential ideas about femininity, food and female illness. Using a diversity of sources, including medical journals and texts, beauty manuals and other advice literature, and woman's diaries, this project will undertake a discursive analysis that explores and emphasises the particular way Anorexia is defined, diagnosed and discussed in the nineteenth century. This presentation will provide an overview of the research project, drawing attention to sources, approach and the guiding questions of each section, and will also look in depth at one element: the medical culture of the nineteenth century. The ways in which the nineteenth-century medical discourse on female illness relied on Darwinian ideas of biological determinism to explicate the nature and diseases of woman, will be presented as a key to making intelligible the medical iteration of Anorexia particular to the nineteenth century. Here, and in the project overall, the aim is to offer an analysis of Anorexia Nervosa in the nineteenth century that privileges historical contingency over continuity.

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**Medicine, Authority, and Agency:  
Challenging bodies/Challenging  
discourses**

**“[M]y most pronounced symptom was that I married him”:  
Divorce through the language of madness, 1858-1900**

The paper explores the presentation of madness in Victorian divorce cases, making use of nineteenth-century civil law as a relatively unexploited source in the history of psychiatry. The Court for Divorce and Matrimonial Causes hosted negotiations between man and wife, lay and medical witnesses, and societal and legal views of marriage and madness. The focus of the paper is on women's participation in these discussions. Since the publication of Elaine Showalter's 'The Female Malady', scholarly attention has been drawn to the influence of cultural images of gender in shaping contemporary perceptions of female insanity. Nonetheless, the ability of individual women to engage with and utilise these ideas of madness remains largely unaddressed by secondary literature, at least outside the realm of literary studies. Through examination of Divorce Court records dating from 1858 to 1900, the paper finds evidence that women claimed to be suffering from mental disorders in order to substantiate their own petitions for divorce, or defend themselves against claims made by their husbands. However, by using insanity in this way, to a greater or lesser extent, these women sacrificed their agency. Through consideration of wives' intriguing courtroom use of the language of madness, the paper sheds new light on women's complex interactions with societal expectations of female behaviour at a time when spousal relationships were undergoing unprecedented public scrutiny and impressions of healthy marriage were changing, a process in large part due to the public exposure of domestic secrets through intimate divorce trials.

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**Medicine, Authority, and Agency:  
Challenging bodies/Challenging  
discourses**

**Freud's scalpel: Sex reassignment surgery, psychoanalysis, and the fusion of psychiatric paradigms**

In 1966, the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine became the first American medical institution to perform sex reassignment surgeries. Historians have conventionally argued that the clinical enactment of this medical procedure succeeded against the criticism of psychoanalysts and other dynamically inclined physicians. By this rendering, the history of transsexualism and sex reassignment surgery is representative of broader tensions between somatic and dynamic approaches to psychiatry and mental illness. This dissertation seeks to complicate this historical portrait—to reassess and reconfigure understandings of how different strains of psychiatric thought and practice interacted in the development of sex reassignment surgery. I argue that the clinical proliferation of sex reassignment surgery in the United States through the 1960s and 1970s arose out of an integration of psychoanalytic and somatic approaches to medicine—an integration that occurred at the level of both clinical practice and medical theory. In particular, I show that the necessity for collaboration in implementing sex reassignment surgery—a novel medical procedure with complex social, legal, and clinical dimensions—created ‘trading zones’ where psychoanalysts, surgeons, endocrinologists, and other medical practitioners interacted, exchanged knowledge, and coordinated the technical and theoretical aspects of treatment. This dissertation, therefore, considers the practices around sex reassignment as a kind of trading zone—an intermediate domain in which somatically oriented physicians (sex reassignment practitioners) and dynamically oriented physicians (psychoanalysts) collaborated and productively coordinated their actions.

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**Medicine, Authority, and Agency:  
Challenging bodies/Challenging  
discourses**

### **Bodies and biopolitics of the IRA hunger strikes in the twentieth century**

Hunger striking, a form of nonviolent political protest, allows those with few other means to powerfully leverage their bodies as platforms for political expression. In the UK and Ireland, various incarnations of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) have in particular used this method of protest whilst imprisoned in order to effectively seek greater political legitimacy and public support. However, while the political negotiations prompted by such strikes have been well documented by government sources and the global press, an exploration of views of the body itself during such times remains incomplete. In fact, as seen by the often highly calculated and well-advertised way in which these campaigns are conducted, it becomes clear that the hunger strikers being studied view and use the corporeal body as a uniquely powerful site for combining physical self-expression with ideals of politics and public service. Additionally, examination of both prisoners' personal papers and reports filed on them by journalists, medical professionals, and other authorities appear to demonstrate that those views to some extent actually evolve alongside the deteriorating body over the course of a strike. As such, these dynamic theories of body have poignant repercussions for the bioethics of prisoners' treatment and the biopolitics of their actions; in sum, creating an extraordinary, morally ambiguous environment that continues to present challenges for modern governments and medical professionals worldwide.



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**Race in Medicine**

**Medical theory and colonial reality in the emergence of the West India  
Regiments, 1793-1802**

'I am of the opinion that a corps of one thousand Men, composed of blacks and Mulattoes, and commanded by British Officers would render more essential service in the Country, than treble the number of Europeans who are unaccustomed to the Climate. And as the Enemy have adopted this measure to recruit their Armies, I think we should pursue a similar plan to meet them on equal terms'.

So wrote Lieutenant-General Sir John Vaughan, commander of the British army in the Windward Islands, in a letter to the Secretary of State for War, Henry Dundas, in December 1794. Insofar as the West India Regiments have been addressed in the historiography they have appeared in military histories which take Vaughan's reasoning for granted. The link between medical theory and the raising of these permanent slave regiments was, however, much more ambiguous than Vaughan's statement implies. Military medical practitioners lacked an orthodox opinion on the capacity of European troops to operate in the West Indian theatre, and in any case had no monopoly on medical theorising in the military environment. This paper will argue that analysing the regiments from the perspective of medical history yields a more precise picture of their formation. In particular, it will examine the extent to which the military commanders responsible devised their own medical theories to legitimise their calls for a measure which was considered at best undesirable, and at worst suicidal.

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**Race in Medicine**

**Primitive protection: Polio as a case study in the rise and fall of medical racism in the USA between 1920 and 1960**

From the end of the nineteenth century onwards, medicine was increasingly involved in the efforts of politicians and scientists to prove intrinsic biological differences between the races. In the USA this attempted to prove both that whites were evolutionarily superior to blacks, and that blacks were biologically suited to a life of menial labour in the South. To this end, medicine highlighted numerous diseases, perhaps most famously syphilis, endemic only in blacks, and explained this in terms of evolutionary differences in biology and behaviour. Unlike these diseases, Polio was believed to be a disease that exclusively targeted whites. It was reasoned that the primitive nervous system of black Americans protected against the disease. In the USA, this belief persisted long after science disproved it, and as Franklin D. Roosevelt's bid for re-election coincided with growing civil rights movements among African Americans and the disabled, Polio became an important political issue. When it was accepted that Polio did affect black Americans the response reflected the 'separate but equal' mantra of the day, including at the Warm Springs retreat founded by FDR. The belief that Polio predominantly affects middle-class children perseveres into the present. This paper, using African American newspapers as a key primary source, explores how Polio, with its status as an exclusively white disease, provides a neglected case study charting the rise and fall of medical racism through the eyes of the southern black communities most affected.

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**Scientific Experience: People, Places,  
and Objects**

**An astrolabe's guide to its provenance: A study of an astrolabe at the Museum  
of the History of Science, Oxford**

When it comes to astrolabes and other scientific instruments historians have focused on how these instruments were produced, how they functioned, and their role in society. Some research has been done on individual quadrants, astrolabes, and other instruments when they have been considered to have an unique history or feature. In Silke Ackermann and John Cherry's article 'Richard II, John Holland and Three Medieval Quadrants' there is a comparative analysis between three quadrants, and in consequence is able to determine the provenance of a previous unknown quadrant. In his article 'An astrolabe from medieval Spain with inscription in Hebrew, Arabic and Latin' David King dissects an astrolabe to determine its history and how different cultures had influenced it. The techniques used by these historians are the basis of the ones used to analyze an unstudied astrolabe acquired by the Museum of the History of Science in November 2014. This instrument has two different engraving styles, and hands, Gothic and italic. There will be a discussion on what differences can be seen, why these changes might have been made, where, and the context it took place in. This will be done in order to develop a history of the astrolabe which can demonstrate a further need to study scientific instruments rather than solely how they function and are constructed.

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**Scientific Experience: People, Places,  
and Objects**

### **Natural intersections: The career of Alexandre Brongniart in context**

Alexandre Brongniart (1770-1847), eldest child of Paris architect Alexandre-Theodore Brongniart, not only entered the privileged world of a prestigious family rooted in late-Enlightenment ideals, he also fulfilled the high promise his situation implied. Alongside his defining career as the head of the porcelain manufactory at Sèvres, Brongniart contributed to geological research, biology, taxonomy, and archaeology. Brongniart's 1811 geological work surveying the Paris Basin with his long-time colleague Georges Cuvier is well known as the first concise use of stratigraphical dating.<sup>1</sup> Brongniart also held teaching posts in mineralogy at the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle and the Ecole des Mines. His publications on ceramics were immediately recognized as a definitive foundational study of the field of ceramics. However, apart from the appreciation of specialists in the ceramic arts, Brongniart's impact on ceramic production, archaeology, and art history is less well understood. No critical discussion of Brongniart's life and contributions to both the arts and the sciences has yet appeared. I seek to address this omission by reconstructing major aspects of Brongniart's life and efforts. Within a case study that traces the cultural and social factors surrounding Brongniart's career, I will explore the transition from the broad focus of eighteenth century naturalism toward the individual, highly specialized scientific fields of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Another aspect of this study will look at the development of public museums. Lastly, I will look at the influence Brongniart's work had on others, including scientists, ceramists, archaeologists, and art historians.

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<sup>1</sup> Brongniart, Alexandre and Cuvier, Georges. Brongniart, Alexandre and Georges Cuvier. *Essai sur la Géographie Mineralogique des Environs de Paris*, Paris, 1811.  
Brongniart, Alexandre and Georges Cuvier. *Essai sur la Géographie Mineralogique des Environs de Paris*, revised and expanded. Paris, 1826.

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**Scientific Experience: People, Places,  
and Objects**

**“History as it is seen from the inside”\*: L.C. Dunn and the eugenics movement**

The centennial celebration of Mendel’s contribution to genetics in the 1960s spurred authors to write about the history of genetics thus far. One such author was American geneticist L.C. Dunn. In his *A Short History of Genetics*, Dunn took it upon himself to write the history of the field he had worked in for his entire career, but noticeably absent from his account was any significant discussion of the once popular eugenics movement. This exclusion does not come as a surprise; it has been well documented in recent works on the history of genetics that Dunn was vocal in his disapproval of eugenics. He has become a commonly used example of a geneticist against eugenics and his personal writings have been used as evidence to support this. However, close examination of Dunn’s public writings speaking to the future applicability of genetics illustrates that ideas about human betterment, core to the work of eugenics, through the application of genetics was not limited to the eugenics of the past. However, the changing public scrutiny on science due to the end of World War II, made how the argument was shaped all that more important. The purpose of this paper is to explore the public writings of Dunn, in light of his clearly anti-eugenics views, to examine how he was trying to shape the public perception of genetics and its use in his own time and for the future.

\*A quote from Conway Zirkle’s review of Dunn’s *A Short History of Genetics*. Zirkle, Conway, ‘Review’, *American Scientist*, 55, 1 (1967), pp. 108A – 109A.

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**Scientific Experience: People, Places,  
and Objects**

**Archival or scientific? The role of natural history at the University Museum,  
Oxford, from 1946-61**

The twentieth century witnessed dramatic changes within the life sciences. Historically, it has been argued that the propagation of the experimental method and sub-disciplines such as cellular and molecular biology came at the cost of natural historical methods of enquiry, and that a growing demand for laboratory-based work resulted in the neglect and closure of numerous university-based natural history museums. However, current literature has been challenging this received view, and more nuanced responses have illustrated how both natural historical methods and the museum remained prevalent in the life sciences of the twentieth century. This dissertation will examine the Department of Zoology based in the University Museum, Oxford (now the Museum of Natural History) during Alister Hardy's tenure as Linacre Professor of Zoology and Comparative Anatomy from 1946-1961. The work that took place in the zoology department, particularly by Hardy and Arthur Cain (Curator of the Zoology Collection from 1955-65), will be used to illustrate the combined role of natural historical and experimental methods of enquiry within contemporary research, and the role of the museum's collections as more than archives of type material. This will be compared with the public display and representation of the biological sciences by department staff within the museum, to establish whether, through them, the department may have contributed to the prevailing view of museums as relics left over from an archival natural history tradition, rather than as sites of contemporary scientific research.

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**Scientific Experience: People, Places,  
and Objects**

**Scientific biography, modernity, and Turing: A brief overview of the contemporary uses of the historical biography of science**

Scientific biography has once again become a serious presence within Britain. Within the last thirty years, these examples of popular history have increasingly emerged in areas from academia to media. A new pantheon of great national figures have, correspondingly, begun to appear in popular culture. These inspirational engineers and scientists are often linked to a prominent field of current innovation, previous (relative) disinterest, and current social concerns. This is immediately evident in cases such as those of Ada Lovelace and Alan Turing. However, literary use of the human side of the scientific is not novel. Authors from Conduitt to Tyndall emphasized the supposed virtuous qualities that had allowed individuals to triumph over difficulty through exploiting their inborn, practical talents. This populist sub-genre was arguably codified by Samuel Smiles. His seminal book *Self Help* (1859) was written with the hope of bolstering progress amongst working class men through personal emulation. As is appropriate for a neo-liberal, individualistic, attainment-focused age this type of positivist history has been vigorously resurrected, with a few changes. As I argued in my previous research concerning Brunel that the political concerns of the age must implicitly provoke this process, retrofitting, promoting, or discarding figures each time in line with societal needs. Furthermore, popular portrayals and uses would simply not exist without some end objective of their creator(s). Movies, statues, comics, commemorative events, digital material, and even popular books are all inescapably interpretive, shaping popular perception in different (yet somewhat intangible) ways. Established facts are frequently stretched around political beliefs and needs, a process aided by their often third-hand reception. Yet analysis of the underlying mechanics and competing, vested interests governing British scientific biography (both historically and presently) has not commonly advanced beyond rudiment, with the exception of Christine MacLeod's work. My research expands upon this mostly neglected area through the use of meta-textual case studies. The presentation will subsequently focus on the first chapter of my thesis. This chapter concerns perception across time of Turing and his posthumous portrayals and uses, with particular comparison to similar figures. A number of formats and perspectives (including negative uses) from across time will be examined, in order to illustrate the shifting political basis of the sub-genre.

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## NOTES

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