HSS in Utrecht

by Jay Malone

Back in 2013 when the Society first started planning a conference outside of North America, we naturally turned to Utrecht, the new site of our editorial office. Because HSS had never met outside the confines of Canada and the United States, we recognized that this would be an experiment; it was a way of altering the variables of our typical meeting to see what worked and what could be discarded as we sought to broaden our international stature. As plans unfolded, so did the variables; so much so that the 2019 conference was scarcely recognizable to those who faithfully attend HSS.

Time of Year

Since the early 1990s, when we stopped our occasional meetings with the American Historical Association in December each year, the HSS has almost always met in November. When we first considered meeting in Europe, we recognized that the majority of our attendees would be coming from North America, and we knew that a November conference would be difficult for those trying to juggle the conference with their classrooms and their jobs: a feat that our non-North American colleagues are somehow able to accomplish each year. We thought it would be nice to extend the
conference by a day, to allow more time for recovery from long flights and to give people more opportunities to connect, which would be difficult in November. We also wanted to use the facilities at the University, which would save us tens of thousands of dollars in A/V and WiFi costs, and which would not have been possible during the term (our A/V and WiFi bill for Seattle was just shy of $45,000 US). It would also give our delegates the opportunity to experience fully the largest university in the Netherlands and give delegates a sense of what HSS conferences used to be like when we regularly met on campuses.

But a particular challenge in holding a meeting in July is that many sister societies in the northern hemisphere hold summer conferences, and we did not want to interfere with those. We first confirmed that the European Society for the History of Science was not meeting (they convene in even-numbered years), and we also wanted to make sure that we did not overlap with the British Society. We tried to coordinate the timing with the ISHPSSB meeting in Oslo, which proved impossible, but we were able to synchronize the dates with the large quadrennial Division of Logic, Methodology, and Philosophy of Science and Technology, which met in Prague in early August. Those dates were perfectly aligned until I receive a panicked message from our local hosts to inform us that the Jehovah’s Witnesses would be holding an international congress in Utrecht over our dates and some 45,000 JW’s would be in town leaving no hotel space for miles around. We could not move later in August so we moved a bit earlier, to July (this change proved to have consequences).

Meeting Venue
Since there was no hotel in Utrecht that could hold our meeting and even the ones with a large number of sleeping rooms did not have conference space, we opted to use space at Utrecht University. Although there are advantages to everyone being in one location for the conference, there are also some obvious drawbacks to spending days in a large corporate structure. The advantages for the large hotel include free meeting space if we meet our sleeping block, and although we did not pay for university space, we did have to rent venues that could hold large crowds for the plenary, the distinguished lecture, and other popular events. These factors turned out to be significant in the post-meeting survey, with attendees commenting on how enjoyable it was to be free of a monolithic structure.

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Will Anyone Come?
Since 2/3rds of the HSS membership is located in North America, we worried a great deal about attendance. We had spoken to colleagues at SHOT and 4S, and they reported that their attendance for such meetings did not drop off. They told me that people who typically did not attend their conferences would come, which proved to be true in the case of Utrecht, as well. We saw the highest number of abstract submissions in many years, and our attendance not only outnumbered that of last year’s Seattle meeting, it approached in number the large conferences we held in Chicago and in San Francisco.

What, Me Worry?
One of the downsides of changing almost every variable associated with the annual meeting was that my 21 years of experience in organizing HSS were largely useless, which was a recipe for worry. But the angst was misplaced, in large part because the support provided by the Descartes Center led directly to a successful conference. (In our post-meeting celebration, Bert Theunissen, Director of the Descartes Center, chastised me lightly for that worry.) Here are a few things that we learned: participants liked being on a university campus, which should have not been surprising since anyone with a PhD must have some kind of affinity for a university setting. They also enjoyed not being in a big-box hotel, the lovely walks through Utrecht, the character of the meeting rooms, and much more.

Who Was There?
Some 340 attendees of the nearly 800 registrants filled out at least a portion of the survey. 314 rated the meeting as “Very Good” or “Good” with 15 ranking it “Fair” and 3 describing it as “Poor” (8 people skipped this question). As for why they attended, 31% said it was to network with colleagues and 30% replied it was to hear history of science scholarship. Registration data shows that 44% of attendees were at HSS for the first time. 65% of attendees were members. Because it is vital that we gather demographic data if we are to improve the Society’s diversity, we asked questions about gender, age, and employment: 42% of registrants were female, 38% were male, 14% gave no response, 4% preferred not to answer, and 0.3% were gender non-conforming. Trying to gather race and ethnicity data continues to be a challenge with over 27% either not responding at all or marking “prefer not to answer.” Of those who did, 59% responded White, 5% Asian or Asian American, 3% chose multiple options, 3% Hispanic/Latino/Spanish origin, 1% a race or ethnicity not listed here,” and 0.5% Black or African American.
The post-meeting survey featured an open field where those surveyed were invited to answer the following: Do you have any suggestions for us to pass along to the Descartes Center/Utrecht University team? One of the first comments to come through was this one: “This HSS far exceeded my expectations. Thank you, the hosts, for your incredible hospitality, for preparing every last detail, and for the delicious food, both at the receptions and in the break room. Everyone I have spoken to agrees that this HSS will go down in history!”

I’ve no doubt that this meeting will be long remembered, much like those who have been through any kind of “trial by fire” remember that experience… because Utrecht was hot. How hot was it? The temperature climbed above 100 degrees (40C) the first full day of the meeting, setting a record, and then broke that record the next day, creating a challenge for a venue where central air conditioning does not exist. The next comment hints at this challenge: “Unfortunately the heatwave was melting my brain and hence I was physically unable to participate as I intended to do. I think the local team did all what they could do.” One of my favorite comments was “Please install air conditioning hahahaha” We did rent portable air conditioners and fans (over $5,000 worth of equipment) but the rooms remained sauna like.

Gallows humor being what it is, some people commented that it wasn’t the hottest days of the last 100 years that we experienced, but rather the coolest days of the next 100 years. And here is where my worries are justified. In the US, we simply turn up the air conditioning when it becomes uncomfortable, but many of our colleagues in Europe and elsewhere have no such option at present. We must redouble our efforts for sustainable conferences and we will be working with attendees to foster this mind set.

Finally, a conference outside of our usual North American confines offered many financial challenges, and we relied heavily on sponsors and supporters to help us control expenses. I would like to recognize three in particular: the University of Notre Dame for its hosting of the Executive Office, the National Science Foundation for its support of travel grants for graduate students, independent scholars, and recent PhDs (SES-1656205), and Utrecht University’s Descartes Center. When I first started seeing the prospective costs for the meeting I began to panic, but Bert Theunissen said the expenses would not be a problem, and he has been true to his word. In the near or distant future, when you remember HSS in Utrecht, please also remember that the Descartes Center was central to any fond memory.
Editor’s note: The successful completion and defense of the PhD dissertation is one of the most important rites of passage in the academic life of many HSS members. The dissertation may become a book, a chapter, an article (or several), or nothing at all. But whatever the outcome, it leaves an indelible mark on anyone who has persevered through the rigors of the PhD and emerged on the other side. The International Union of the History and Philosophy of Science and Technology, Division of History of Science and Technology (IUHPST/DHST) has honored the discipline with their DHST Dissertation Prizes since 2005. As of 2017, competitions are held every two years and up to five historians of science and technology are recognized for outstanding doctoral dissertations. The Prize does not specify distinct thematic categories or time periods; submissions must be recognizable dissertations on the history of science or technology in any part of the world.

HSS congratulates the winners of the 2018 DHST prize for their hard work and success. This year’s competition pool included submissions in English, Russian, French, Spanish, and Portuguese on subjects as varied as the history of resins, human evolution, and Aztec epidemics. A complete list of this year’s Laureates and honorable mentions, with details about their dissertations and directors, is available on the DHST website.

Readers might find it useful to take a quick look there or in our own member news section to orient themselves before reading on.

This group of laureates and those of the 2020 competition will present their research at the 26th ICHST, to be held in Prague in July 2021. Come fall 2020, HSS members who have finished or will finish their dissertations between 26 September 2018 and 1 September 2020 should keep an eye out for details on the next round of the competition. Who knows, you too may win a trip to Prague! Meanwhile, although one would have to wait until 2021 to put faces to the names and ideas in these dissertations, here are some excerpts from online interviews with 2018 laureates Sandra Elena Guevara Flores, Emily Kern, and Marcin Krasnodębsk about their prize-winning work. All three were kind enough to answer the questions in English, even though they wrote their respective dissertations in Spanish, English and French.

In 1-2 sentences (neither of which should repeat the title) summarize the main argument or discovery of your dissertation.

Sandra: The main objective of my dissertation was to reconstruct the sociocultural entity of cocoliztli—in Nahuatl, the language of the Aztecs, a word meaning epidemic disease—which occurred in the New Spain (modern-day Mexico) between 1545-1548 C.E. The research highlights the fact that cocoliztli was neither an indigenous nor a Spanish disease. Rather, it was a colonial construction, resulting from the interaction between Spanish and Aztec medicines in a specific time and space.

Emily: In my dissertation, I traced the intellectual and cultural histories of the ‘out of Asia’ and ‘out of Africa’ hypotheses of human origins. By following these ideas from the Enlightenment through East African decolonization, the project demonstrates how geographical theories of human evolution were constructed and reinforced through beliefs about race, language, evolution, and the perceived centrality and importance of Asia and Europe and irrelevance of Africa in world history.

Marcin: Although largely forgotten nowadays, resin chemistry used to be a robust international academic discipline for almost half of a century. Its history tells us about a place of research on renewable materials in the context of constant competition with petrochemistry.

How did you find/choose your research topic?

Marcin: My research project was initially conceived as a rescue mission of the archives...
of the Pine Institute, a global research center in resin chemistry based in Bordeaux. The Institute existed for one hundred years but after its closure around 2010, its archives dating back to early 1900s came under threat of destruction. My supervisors, prof. Pascal Duris and dr. Jérôme Pierrel, identified the collection, which was stored in the basement of an old building at the campus of the University of Bordeaux, and secured funding from local authorities to study it. I was lucky to come in contact with them at the right moment to have a chance to work with these documents.

**Sandra**: My bachelor’s dissertation in biological/physical anthropology helped me. After studying *matlazahuatl* (in nahuatl “blue rash like a net”), another epidemic disease characterized by a skin rash that struck the New Spain from the sixteen to nineteen centuries in New Spain, I emphasized the fact that in order to properly understand the epidemiological situation of the Spanish viceroyalty, it was more than necessary to separate *cocoliztli* from *matlazahuatl*. After finishing my master’s degree, I decided to continue with *cocoliztli*. Dr Pardo, my PhD tutor, really helped me to focus on the disease from a sociocultural perspective, instead of taking a biomedical view.

**Emily**: In my first year of graduate school, I took seminars with Erika Milam on the history of evolution and with Michael Gordin on the global history of science. When I started looking for a dissertation topic, I really wanted to work on something that combined my interests in global history and the history of science. The history and politics of human evolution research and the way ancient hominins are invoked as collective, global ancestors at certain points in time had caught my interest, although narrowing down the topic to something manageable took some time. As my advisors, Erika and Michael were fantastic about pushing me to refine my arguments and focus at each stage of the project.

**Sandra**: I would highlight two aspects. The first aspect was the opportunity to work with and learn from researchers really committed to the study of ancient diseases and medicine. The second aspect I found the most rewarding was the opportunity to study indigenous codices and reconstruct the ideas and notions of a society that lived five hundred years ago.

**Marcin**: Two aspects deserve mention. First, access to an unexplored collection with files documenting the life of an institution over a period of one hundred years. Whereas most student historians work on the documents already described and treated by archivists, I got the opportunity to work with hundreds of boxes covered in decades-thick dust, with no description. While this process took much more time, there was a sense of adventure in unpacking these files, as I never knew whether the next box would revolutionize my narrative or provide a basis for another chapter. The second great thing about my work was its interdisciplinary nature. Understanding the scientific ecosystem surrounding resin chemistry is not just about the history of chemistry, but also about the history of the environment, life sciences, French and American science policy, and even about ethnobotany and international trade history. All these diverse disciplines, schools
of thought, and intellectual trajectories have to be taken together to understand the variety of questions I explored in my work.

What sort of unanticipated hurdles or challenges did you have to face on this journey? How did you meet or overcome them?

Marcin: Since the documents were stored in an old basement of a chemistry institute about to be decommissioned and demolished, there was a sense of urgency about my work. The basement was slightly flooded once, and throughout the entire duration of the project, we worked closely with local archivists to preserve the documents. Thankfully the project led not only to my dissertation but also to the successful transfer of the documents to the National French archives.

Sandra: When I started my PhD studies, my idea was to study cocoliztli from a biomedical perspective. In other words, I wanted to identify the pathogen. Dr Pardo changed my mind when he challenged me to study the disease as it was experienced and understood within its original context. My difficulty was to forget about disease as a biomedical and biological entity, and approach it as a social construct.

Emily: For about a week in 2017 (about five months before I was due to submit), I was pretty sure I’d lost all my organized archival documents because of a software fault, which I discovered while traveling internationally for a big conference. However, I had backups of everything saved in both an external disk and in the cloud, which took things from “potentially catastrophic” to just somewhat annoying. Fortunately, the software issue was resolved a week later, so I didn’t have to reorganize from scratch!

What or where has life after the dissertation brought you?

Sandra: Currently I am a lecturer at three universities, teaching such subjects as the history of medicine, gender and sexuality, human evolution and forensic anthropology at the National Autonomous University of México (UNAM), the National School of Anthropology and History (ENAH), and the International Academy of Formation in Forensic Sciences. Additionally, I work as a researcher in a group that in 2018 commemorated the 500 anniversary of the arrival of Hernan Cortés to México. Finally, I am a member of a research group that focuses on disability and inclusive education at UNAM.

Marcin: After a postdoc project on the history of photonics at University of Bordeaux, and another one on the environmental history of south-western France at IRSTEA, I am currently embarking on another project at the University Paris Saclay. I will be studying the history of industrial chemistry in the second half of the 20th century in France, with a focus on the major research center in Aubervilliers. In particular, I am interested in the social embeddedness of the center and its role in reshaping the industrial panorama of Aubervilliers, a city that was at the heart of ‘the red belt’ ruled by the French Communist Party for more than fifty years.

Emily: I’m currently a postdoctoral research fellow on the New Earth Histories project, led by Alison Bashford at the University of New South Wales, where I’m working on turning my dissertation into a book and making plans for the next project. It’s been a huge treat to get to live some place as beautiful as Sydney with lots of wildly interesting wildlife, and it’s great getting to be a part of the lively history of science community in Australia.
Any advice for a new PhD student embarking on a related topic?

Emily: This advice is not topic specific: first, back up all your files. Also, find a community of friends who will read your material and tell you when it needs more work and when it is done.

Marcin: As I mentioned before, my dissertation is strongly interdisciplinary, a feature often appreciated by my peers, supervisors, and colleagues. I am convinced that this approach was the only one to capture the specificity of resin-related research and the challenges it faced in the twentieth century. After a slightly erratic search for postdocs after my defense—which led me in very different directions such history of physics and environmental history—however, I realized that the interdisciplinarity is not always an asset. Academic positions still tend to favor the more traditional disciplinary divisions such history of chemistry, technology, or the life sciences. I often felt at a disadvantage when competing with my colleagues with narrower but more focused backgrounds. This might seem counterintuitive because many funding schemes encourage interdisciplinarity. In my experience, however, considering the scarcity of positions, sticking to a single discipline appears to be a safer bet for early stage careers. My advice to young scholars, therefore, would be to 'play it safe' and build through their dissertations an easily readable professional identity.

Sandra: You must love your topic. If you don’t love it, you will suffer throughout your studies because you have to live with it. Most PhD students decide to study just because they cannot find a job. But if you don’t appreciate your topic and don’t want to become a researcher, your doctoral studies will feel like your worst nightmare come true.

Just earned your PhD in the history of science? Congratulations! Here’s a free e-membership to HSS.

Leaving the student world can present challenges.

The HSS would like to recognize your signal achievement by providing a free electronic membership (one year) to those who graduated in 2018 or in 2019.

Please go to https://subfill.uchicago.edu/JournalPUBS/HSSpromotion.aspx for details.
Editor’s note: Since 1958, Pfizer Inc., has sponsored a book award at HSS, which stipulates that the winning book must be principally a history of science, appropriate given that we are a society for precisely this community. The 2018 award winner was Anita Guerrini’s *The Courtiers’ Anatomists: Animals and Humans in Louis XIV’s Paris* (*The University of Chicago Press, 2015*), which brings to glorious life, science in the time of the famed Sun King of France, Louis the Fourteenth. Details of what caught the prize committee’s eye appear on a separate page in the HSS website. Here, we invited Anita to share some thoughts and insights with us.

Please give our members your personal version of what this book is about—something other than what Amazon or the Pfizer Award announcement has already told us.

I wanted to write a book about how important animals were to the practice of the New Science—both as experimental objects and as subjects of study in natural history. Originally, I wanted to do a pan-European book on this topic but that turned out to be too huge a project, and the French material was both really interesting and not written about much. Along the way, Paris became a major character in the book as well, and I spent time walking around the city and figuring out where places were—the site of the Church of the Holy Innocents, for example, is completely erased and is now part of the Les Halles/Pompidou Center complex. The places where dissection took place became very important to me and that’s why I included two maps in chapter 1.

To most lay-people, Louis XIV’s court is the stuff of high adventure—*The Three Musketeers* and *The Man in the Iron Mask* come to mind. How much of that spirit did you find in the course of your research. And how much of it makes its way into scholarly books such as yours?

D’Artagnan, the leader of the three musketeers, actually makes a couple of appearances in the book. In 1661 he arrested the government minister Nicolas Fouquet—who had been the patron of the anatomist Jean Pecquet—and a dozen years later he died at the siege of Maastricht, at the same time as the anatomist and surgeon Louis Gayant; I open chapter 5 with d’Artagnan’s death. I tried to convey the lively cultural life of Paris; my favorite scene in the book is when the Perrault brothers and Charles Le Brun, the court artist, attend the opera on a January evening in 1674. But I also tried to convey the everyday violence and brutality of seventeenth-century urban life, and how that violence intersected with the practice of human and animal dissection. I’m not sure that is high adventure, and the wars and spying that Dumas chronicles do take a back seat in my work. But the intrigues surrounding Louis XIV’s court are certainly in there.

The relationship between humans and animals appears to be subject of enduring interest for you, evident not only in *The Courtier’s Anatomists* but also in your older book, *Animal and Human Experimentation*. What do you find particularly compelling about this particular subject?

When I started to write about the history of animals in early modern science—my first article on that was in 1989—there was very little in the historiography that focused on the animals themselves. They were mentioned only in passing, as instruments. I wanted to understand how animals came to be so important in early modern science, how people felt about dissecting live animals, since most people did not believe Descartes’s claim that they could not feel pain (in fact, I’m not sure even Descartes believed that), and what people learned from them. The intersection of natural history, including the discovery of all kinds of animals previously unknown in Europe, with the kind of experimentation introduced by Harvey has fascinated me for a long time. All these cool new animals, let’s cut them up and see what makes
them tick. That was the Paris Academy’s project from the 1660s to the 1690s. Perrault and Co., speculated a bit about habitat and what he called *moeurs* or way of life, but these animals had been wrested from their natural settings and brought to Versailles or Vincennes where they lived distinctly un-natural lives, mostly rather short.

They did learn a lot about these animals, so much so that Buffon and Daubenton simply copied passages from the Academy’s *Histoire des animaux* (1671-76) in Buffon’s *Histoire naturelle* (1749-88).

What about this book do you personally find memorable?

It was so much fun to write. Once I figured out what it was about, or as I tell my students, once I found the story—and that took a few years—it just flowed. Also there were so many great personalities, including Claude Perrault the late bloomer, Pecquet the alcoholic genius, Charles Perrault the operator (in the sense of manipulating careers), the crafty Colbert. And of course Joseph-Guichard Duverney, the most brilliant anatomist of his era.

Looking back what aspect did you find the most challenging or difficult?

Reading seventeenth-century handwriting! The minutes of the Academy are, amazingly, all available online (thank you Gallica), but the handwriting of the secretaries and amanuenses over the years ranged from beautiful to impenetrable. In addition, both Duverney and Claude Perrault had atrocious handwriting.

It had been four years now since the book was published, and a little over a year since the Pfizer award. What insights can you share about the book’s trajectory? What’s next in the pipeline for you, especially now that you’re retired?

It has received some very nice reviews, for which I’m grateful, and it is continuing to sell, if at the usual snail’s pace of academic books. I like to think it’s brought more attention to dissection as a central activity of seventeenth-century science, and to the role of Paris as a site of science. So much attention has been given to London and the Royal Society, and so I hope my book has served as a bit of a corrective.

Next in the pipeline? Retirement for me, as for many of my cohort, means more time to write. I always have many smaller projects, mostly on environmental history and the history of food. My next book project is on early modern discoveries of fossil bones that were for a time considered to be the bones of human giants. It’s about storytelling, language, national identities, and the intersections of anatomy, archaeology, and paleontology. There is also some material about actual human giants. This will be pan-European, with material from France, Britain, the Netherlands, Italy, and Germany, stretching my linguistic abilities to their limits and beyond. There’s even a bit about North America near the end.

What do you think the award committee’s stipulation that the Pfizer award be focused on history of science—while topics in medicine or technology are by no means out of bounds, the prize does focus on the scientific aspect of...
these fields—does for the discipline? Do you think that such an action is a good thing or too restrictive?

I think the answer to this depends on what you think about disciplinary boundaries. History of medicine and history of technology certainly overlap with history of science, but they also have their own distinct historiographies. So I tend to think that focusing on science is justified (and I see my hedging language here, because I’m not quite certain). Of course there is the age-old question of “what is science?”

What is your advice for someone embarking on their first book?

Don’t be discouraged. I would be embarrassed to reveal how many times my first monograph on the Scottish physician George Cheyne was rejected by publishers, but let’s just say it took six years from when I finished it to when it appeared. But then someone recently came up to me at the HSS meeting in Utrecht and told me what a great book it was. So, believe in yourself and your project. But don’t reject criticism, either. I have had some great external readers over the years and they have given me good advice, and the ones who did not like something forced me to see my work in a different way.

My Job In Five Objects by Kristen Frederick-Frost

Editor’s note: The diversity of professional homes for historians of science is beautifully illustrated by historian of science Kristen Frederick-Frost, a curator in the Division of Medicine and Science of the National Museum of American History at the Smithsonian, as she takes us on a fascinating tour of some of the stuff that makes up her day job.

As a curator of Modern Science at the National Museum of American History, I want to say my day starts and ends with amazing objects. The reality is a bit less exciting, as I am more likely to greet the day with an attack on my inbox or an obligatory meeting than I am with a trip to the storeroom. What I can say with certainty is that the reason why I am a curator starts and ends with amazing objects. They are my entrée to the study of a humbling, complex, and fascinating world, one characterized by change and continuity over time. When asked to describe my job, my knee-jerk reaction was just to outline the four areas for which I am evaluated—research, exhibition, collections work, and service. But that is not really enlightening, so I thought I would turn to the collection I help curate to help make it a bit more real for the HSS community.

Davisson-Germer Apparatus

According to the museum’s records, this apparatus was the one that Clinton Davisson and Lester Germer used in 1927 to demonstrate that electrons can behave like waves. But interrogate the object and you get a different story, one that doesn’t fit with the written record. To make a long story short, the original apparatus blew up shortly after collecting the Nobel-worthy data and this apparatus is likely a precursor to that work. This fact is all the more interesting, because the information about this early work is not readily available.

I prefer material-centered research because I can pull out information that can’t be found in the publications or archival material. You can look at an object and engage with a period in time without it being mediated by another person’s words; there’s different baggage to deal with, but I will save that for another time. Certainly, conducting research that utilizes the written record is critical, but I find a raw honesty in the stuff of science that is as beautiful as it is destabilizing.

Davisson-Germer Apparatus, PH.320414
Celluloid Billiard Ball
This 1868 celluloid billiard ball gets a lot of attention, in exhibits and in the press. The narrative that it is often charged with revolves around early plastics and the dawn of the material age. This November, it will help us tell a different story—one about ivory. Thousands upon thousands of elephants died to meet the U.S. demand for ivory billiard balls, hair combs, and piano keys. But the switch to synthetic alternatives, like the ball above, was driven more by money than a concern for wildlife. The National Museum of American History’s upcoming exhibition, Elephants and US: Considering Extinction, will explore the history of consumption of ivory products in the U.S. and its role in the decline of the species.

Box of Organoarsenic Compounds
In 1945, the same year of its donation, this box of organoarsenic compounds was put on display at the Smithsonian. It includes several vials of Lewisite, a chemical weapon that was developed by the U.S. in the First World War. To say that it is problematic to exhibit this object today would be an understatement. Not because we have new understandings of the capabilities of this deadly chemical and its derivatives, but because our understanding of acceptable risk has undergone a drastic shift in the last seven decades.

Curation goes beyond adding and subtracting objects to an exhibition or a collection. It goes beyond interpreting and re-interpreting these objects in various research products. It is fundamentally about caring for these objects and the people that interact with them, from museum patrons to collections managers. When running up against the deceptively simple question “Is this thing safe?”, the curator is on the front line. With unique or unusual hazardous materials, historical context and research is a precious resource that industrial hygienists and science advisors use to help us evaluate risk. And with a collection as old as ours here at the Smithsonian, there is no shortage of unique hazards or legacy issues awaiting study.

Celluloid Billiard Ball, CH.334572

My Job In Five Objects, cont.

Box of organoarsenic compounds, CH.318500

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Larson Polygraph, MG.322715.01

**Larson Polygraph**

You are looking at one of the most requested objects from the Division of Medicine and Science in the last few years. John Larson developed this “cardio-pneumo-psychograph” in 1921. Dubbed the “lie detector” in the press, this polygraph and the instruments modeled after it had a profound impact on American law enforcement, forensic science, popular culture, and the legal system. Members of the press, other museums, researchers—there is a diverse group of people who share an interest in contextualizing dishonesty, a very popular topic these days.

My job is to facilitate access to a collection that is held in the public trust. It could be as simple as bringing objects out of storage for a Skype session with K-12 teachers, or as complicated as embarking on a multi-year effort to have a beloved object stabilized and conserved so that people can come see it again, as is the case with the Larson polygraph. The Smithsonian collection belongs to all of us. Please use it.

(More object records are available online every day. [http://collections.si.edu/search/](http://collections.si.edu/search/))
Catherine Abou-Nemeh (Victoria University of Wellington) replaced Prof. Stephen Gaukroger as editor of Springer’s book series, *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science*, in June 2019. Springer Press and the editorial board members thank Stephen for his unwavering dedication and stewardship of the series over the past years.


Warwick Anderson (University of Sydney) published an updated edition of *The Collectors of Lost Souls* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2019) with an extensive afterword. The first edition was awarded the William H. Welch Medal of the AAHM, the Ludwik Fleck Prize of 4S, and the NSW Premier’s award for General History.

He has also published with James Dunk, Tony Capon and David S. Jones, “Human Health on an Ailing Planet,” in *The New England Journal of Medicine* 381 (2019): 778-82. This is a historical article on medical responses to climate change.

Lydia Barnett (Northwestern University) published *After the Flood: Imagining the Global Environment in Early Modern Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2019).

Joe Bassi (University of Texas at El Paso) was elected a fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society. Also, he will be a visiting fellow this fall and winter at Clare Hall of Cambridge University.

Peter Bowler (Queen’s University Belfast) is working with the University of Chicago Press in preparing a second edition of his and Iwan Morus’ *Making Modern Science: A Historical Survey* to appear in mid-2020. All chapters in this new edition have been updated to include references to recently-published research and two new chapters on ‘Science and Empire’ and ‘The Calculation Revolution.’

Luis Campos (University of New Mexico and HSS secretary) was appointed as Regent’s Lecturer at UNM, a special honor bestowed by the university on selected tenured faculty members in recognition of their accomplishments as teachers, scholars, and leaders both in university affairs and in their national professional communities.

Tamara Caulkins (Central Washington University) teaches classes at the William O. Douglas Honors College of Central Washington University including “Sites for Science: A History of Laboratories” and, with biologist Fabiola Serra, a co-taught course called “The Nature of Beasts: Animals in History and Science.”

In July, she gave a talk to the Centre for the Humanities & Medicine at the University of Hong Kong on “Understanding Nature through Graphic Representations: Maria Sibylla Merian and Alexander von Humboldt in the Long Eighteenth Century.” [She has written about her experience in Hong Kong on her blog.](https://www.historyofscience.org/)

H. Floris Cohen (Utrecht University) was honored by the King of the Netherlands and is now a member of the Ridder in de Orde van de Nederlandse Leeuw (Knight in the Order of the Dutch Lion). The honor
is given to persons who have distinguished themselves by exceptional achievement in the arts, in the sciences, and in innovation. The Ridder in de Orde recognizes Floris’s service as Editor of the History of Science Society, his many years of teaching, and his numerous publications. (Photo by Desiree Capel)

Frederick “Fritz” Davis (Purdue University), R. Mark Lubbers Chair in the History of Science, is now Head of the Department of History.

Jim Endersby (University of Sussex) has been appointed visiting professor of the history of science at Gresham College, London. His first series of free lectures (which will be live-streamed and then available on YouTube) will be on Utopian Gardens.


Jim Fleming (Colby College) is an invited guest speaker at MIT’s annual PAOC (Program in Atmospheres, Oceans, and Climate) retreat in the mountains of western Massachusetts. PAOC is a subset of graduate students, postdocs, researchers and faculty in the Department of Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Sciences at MIT. The theme of this year’s retreat is History of Climate: Climate’s Current and Historical Impact on Cultural, Political, and Social Development. Jim will be discussing his work, including Historical Perspectives on Climate Change, The Callendar Effect, and Inventing Atmospheric Science.


Scott F. Gilbert (Swarthmore College) received the Service Award for Education and Outreach from the Pan-American Society for Evolutionary Development Biology.

He also published:
• “Developmental symbiosis facilitates the multiple origins of herbivory” in Development and Evolution (July 2019)
• With Barresi, Michael J.F. Developmental Biology, 12 ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019).

He is now retired and living in Portland, Oregon.

Member News, cont.


Shireen Hamza (Harvard University) had the opportunity to participate in a teacher’s institute in Washington D.C. called “The Global Enlightenment,” where she gave a talk about teaching a more global and just history of science. The audience of fifty secondary school teachers who regularly teach courses on World History were incredibly engaged and deeply informed. The institute was organized by Dr. Susan Douglass, a giant in the realm of curricular reform, who is now developing an open-access resource for teachers on the topic. She is looking for more academics who are interested in collaborating with teachers on this project, and would no doubt welcome participation from more historians of science. Hamza, too, would love to connect with others who are doing this work.

Past projects that Dr. Douglass has worked on:
- *World History For Us All*
- *Indian Ocean in World History*
- *Our Shared Past in the Mediterranean*

Bert Hansen (Baruch College of CUNY), professor emeritus of history, published two articles about art and the history of science and medicine:

Hans J. Haubold (United Nations) would like to place a reminder that 70 years ago, A. Einstein celebrated his 70th birthday and that at this occasion in 1949, a book was published that offers the unique opportunity to encounter one of the greatest minds of all time: *Albert Einstein: Philosopher-Scientist*, ed. Paul Arthur Schilpp, Evanston, The Library of Living Philosophers, 1949.

The book contains Einstein’s only existing autobiography, his “Autobiographical Notes” are among the most outstanding intellectual reflections ever written. Additionally, 25 contributors, among them Niels Bohr, Max Born, Wolfgang Pauli, and other luminaries, discuss some critical aspect of Einstein’s work to which Einstein replies in a final chapter of the book.

Einstein signed a limited edition of 760 numbered copies of this book with “Albert Einstein 49” on the flyleaf. A limited number of copies have been used as presentation copies from the series editor Paul Arthur Schilpp and contain inscriptions on the title page. In our copy, Number 34, dated September 17, 1968, New York City, it reads, “To two fine artists: Mary Louise and Kees Kooper with the deep appreciation of Madelon and Paul A Schilpp.” Kooper was a professional Dutch violinist and concertized with his wife as the Kooper-Boehm Duo. What happened to all the signed copies of the book? While some hold pride of place in museums, libraries, and scientific institutions, many others are unaccounted for.

Parts of the book have already become classics, for example where Einstein discusses his views of quantum mechanics, including the Einstein-Podolski-Rosen Paradox. Already in this book, Einstein critically analyses, with a view to the contributions
of Bohr, Born, and Pauli, the situation of two quantum-mechanically entangled systems. While that critique can hardly be upheld today, entanglement became the central concept in quantum information and quantum computation. Only recently the weird quantum effects of entanglement were experimentally observed with neutrinos traveling over hundreds of miles between neutrino facilities in Illinois and Minnesota. Readers of the book will enjoy the opportunity to encounter the arguments and excitement of the greatest minds of all time that can still be the source of enlightenment today.

Vanessa Heggie (University of Birmingham) published Higher and Colder: A History of Extreme Physiology and Exploration (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019). She was interviewed about this book by Michael F. Robinson for his podcast Time to Eat the Dogs, which has been syndicated to the New Books Network.

Marieke Hendriksen left her postdoc position with the ERC ARTECHNE project at Utrecht University on 1 October in order to take up a position as a researcher with the Humanities Cluster of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) in Amsterdam.

Andrew J. Hogan (Creighton University) was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure in the Department of History. Hogan has also received a joint appointment as Associate Professor in the new Medical Humanities Department in the Creighton University School of Medicine.

Eduard Kolchinsky (Russian Academy of Sciences) was elected a full member of the Academy by the Council of the International Academy of History of Science on 25 May 2019 (according to the results of the elections held in November 2018). During the Academy’s 90-year history, this is the first time that a historian of biology from Russia was nominated for a full member.


Ramunas Kondratas (Vilnius University Museum) was elected President of the Lithuanian Association for the History and Philosophy of Science. Currently, he is also serving as the President of the Association of the History and Philosophy of Science of the Baltic States. He was one of the organizers of the 29th Baltic Conference on the History of Science, which was held at Vilnius University on 19–21 September 2019.

Antoine Leveque (Université Paris 7) will be presenting brand new material at the New York History of Science workshop on 6 December 2019. His presentation will be about the uses of the (Cartesian) Coordinate System for the Advent of Moneytheism: A History of Neuro-Economy.

This presentation will be held at the Gallatin Center of New York University where he has worked as an adjunct lecturer teaching a class of Engineering Ethics at the Tandon Polytechnic School of Technology.

After having successfully defended his PhD dissertation at Paris 7 in January 2017, he is now working on a 250-page English version of his work “Racial Equality in Science (1750-1885).” He is currently looking at tentative post-doctoral positions and scholarships in Denmark.

Annette Lykknes (Norwegian University of Science and Technology) and Brigitte Van Tiggelen (eds.) published Women in their Element: Selected Women’s Contributions to the Periodic System (Singapore: World Scientific, 2019).
This year we celebrate the 150th anniversary of Dmitri Mendeleev’s publication of the Periodic Table of Elements. The collective volume *Women in their Element* takes the opportunity of the anniversary to offer a fresh perspective on the history of the periodic system, one that spotlights some of the many women who have contributed to the history of the periodic system and to the history and knowledge of the elements. The aim of the book, however, is not to replace heroes with heroines; rather the stories of women’s contributions are used to shed light on the multifaceted character of scientific work centered on elements, and on the articulation of individual and sometimes almost imperceptible, but nevertheless crucial, steps within the greater scientific endeavor. By spotlighting women’s work, the editors aim to reveal a fuller picture of the nature of science and all the people involved in the scientific enterprise, from unpaid assistants and technicians to full professors and leaders of the laboratory.

The book consists of 38 chapters, each one featuring one woman or a group of women, and one or more elements—or work that has been important for the structure of the periodic system or our knowledge about atoms. The articles are scholarly informed, yet accessible in style, and target professional historians of science as well as historically interested, science-curious audiences. The volume benefits from a breadth in expertise, from the fields of chemistry or physics, history of science or science education, or from the practices as Wikipedians or activists. An extended introduction offers a history of chemistry with women’s contributions embedded.

The chapters include pre-periodic table contributions as well as recent discoveries, unknown stories as well as more famous ones. The main emphasis is on work conducted in the late 19th century and early 20th century, however women working on elements or discussing the nature of some of them in early modern times are also included, as are late 20th century and early 21st century figures.

**Margaret Marsh** (Rutgers University) and Wanda Ronner published *The Pursuit of Parenthood: Reproductive Technology from Test-Tube Babies to Uterus Transplants* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2019).


**Staffan Müller-Wille** (University of Exeter) will join the University of Cambridge as University Lecturer in History of Life, Human and Earth Sciences in the Department of History and Philosophy of Science in January 2020.

and published Memelihara Jiwa Raga Bangsa: Ilmu Pengetahuan, Kesehatan Rakjat dan Pembangunan Indonesia di Zaman Soekarno (Jakarta: KOMPAS, 2019). Neelakantan is an independent scholar based primarily in India.

Don Opitz (DePaul University) published:

- “On, onward still, by Science urged, the Endeavour speeds her way” in *Endeavour* 43, nos. 1-2 (March-June 2019): 1

Jessica Otis and Lincoln Mullen (George Mason University) of the Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media were awarded a $324,773 Level III Digital Humanities Advancement Grant from the NEH for their new project, DataScribe. DataScribe will be an open-source software module for Omeka S that allows scholars to take historical records that have an inherent data structure—including bills of mortality, probate records, and census tables—and transcribe them into datasets that can be computationally analyzed or visualized. DataScribe will help scholars tap into large collections of historical sources that are not yet available in digital form.


Seth Rasmussen (North Dakota State University) launched a new history of chemistry book series with Springer, entitled *Perspectives on the History of Chemistry*. He will serve as Series Editor for this new series, which will publish hardback books of 150-450 pages on historical subjects covering all aspects of chemistry, alchemy, and chemical technology. For more information and to submit book proposals, see here.

Neeraja Sankaran (HSS Newsletter editor) will be an International Visiting Fellow Centre for History and Philosophy of Science (HPS) at the University of Leeds for one semester commencing in January 2020.

Recent publications include:
- “Macfarlane Burnet: The Concept of Self” in *Inference: International Review of Science* 4, no. 4 (July 2019)

David N. Schwartz (Independent Scholar) wrote a biography of Enrico Fermi, *The Last Man Who Knew Everything: The Life and Times of Enrico Fermi, Father of the Nuclear Age* (Basic Books, 2017), which was translated and published in Poland as *Enrico Fermi. Ostatni człowiek, który wiedział wszystko. Życie i czasy ojca ery atomowej* (Copernicus Center Press, 2019). He visited Krakow and Warsaw to talk
about the book in late May and will be speaking about the book in Boston at the IDEA Boston Festival on November 2.

Jonathan Seitz (Drexel University) received two awards from Drexel University, the Hornum Award for Teaching Excellence and the Lindback Foundation Award for Distinguished Teaching. He was also promoted to (full) Teaching Professor in the Department of History.


Geert Somsen (Maastricht University) is involved with a new research project that started on 31 May 2019, “The Scientific Conference: A Social, Cultural, and Political History.” Funded by the EU’s humanities scheme HERA, it involves a collaboration of four European partners: Sven Widmalm (Uppsala), Jessica Reinisch (Birkbeck), Charlotte Bigg (Centre Alexandre Koyre) and Geert Somsen, three postdocs and a PhD student. The project will run for three years and investigate the phenomenon of international scientific conferences in the 20th century. It will consider aspects of setting, ritual, geopolitics, and social inclusion and exclusion. The HSS annual meeting in Utrecht (July 2019) featured a presentation session of first results.


Frank J. Sulloway (University of California, Berkeley) published Darwin and His Bears: How Darwin Bear and His Galapagos Islands Friends Inspired a Scientific Revolution (Amsterdam: Rubinstein Publishing, 2019).

Frank J. Sulloway’s Darwin and His Bears is being published by Rubinstein Publishing (Amsterdam) for the benefit of the Charles Darwin Foundation, to celebrate the foundation’s 60th anniversary. The Darwin Foundation supports research and conservation work by the Charles Darwin Research Station in the Galápagos Islands. Thanks to the generosity of the COmON Foundation in the Netherlands, which is partnering with the Darwin Station in its conservation efforts, 1000 copies of the book in English and another 1000 copies in Spanish have been donated to the Darwin Foundation. These copies will be used for fundraising and to promote the Darwin Foundation’s mission in the Galápagos. A Dutch-language version of the book is also available.

Darwin and His Bears interweaves the story of how Darwin became an evolutionist, as a result of his famous Galápagos visit during the Beagle voyage, with other pivotal moments in his life and scientific career. The story also incorporates key developments in evolutionary theory since Darwin’s time, as well as ongoing conservation efforts in the Galápagos to save these islands from invasive species. Darwin and His Bears is intended
Member News, cont.

for young and old readers alike, and is dedicated to distinguished evolutionary biologist and conservationist Edward O. Wilson whose theories of island biogeography are given prominence in the book. For additional information (or copies) contact Renee Monroe, Chief Development Officer at the Charles Darwin Foundation (renee.monroe@fcdarwin.org.ec).


David R. Topper (University of Winnipeg) published A Solitary Smile: A Novel on Einstein (Beeline Press, 2019).


Alain Touwaide (University of California, Los Angeles) received the Edward Kremers Award from the American Institute of the History of Pharmacy (AIHP). The award honors the memory of Edward Kremers (1865-1941), a pioneer of American pharmaceutical education, distinguished American historian of pharmacy, and one of the founders of the Institute. The Award is given for a specific original publication, or a series of related publications, written by a citizen of the United States, pertaining to historical or historico-social aspects of pharmacy, and exhibiting the highest standards of research, interpretation, and presentation. Touwaide was nominated on the basis of his large body of published work on materia medica and pharmaceutical practice in Antiquity, Byzantium, the Arabic world, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance.

Jessica Wang (University of British Columbia) published Mad Dogs and Other New Yorkers: Rabies, Medicine, and Society in an American Metropolis, 1840-1920 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2019).


Richard Yeo (Griffith University) contributed to a recent volume, John Locke: Literary and Historical Writings, edited by J. R. Milton, in collaboration with Brandon Chua, Geoff Kemp, David McInnis, John Spurr, and Richard Yeo (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2019). He worked (with John Milton) on a section that will be of interest to members of the Society: Locke’s anonymous publication of his ‘Méthode nouvelle...’ in the Bibliothèque universelle et historique of July 1686 in which he explains the method of note-taking used in many of his notebooks, including those containing medical and scientific information. The volume includes printed editions of the various manuscript versions of this article.
In Memoriam

Neale Wheeler Watson
16 June 1934 – 9 June 2019

A personal remembrance by William C. Summers

Neale Wheeler Watson, a devoted friend and supporter of the history of science, died at his home at Sagamore Beach, Cape Cod, Massachusetts on June 9, 2019 at age 84. Neale was known to many in our community as the owner and force behind Science History Publications, an important source of both original and classic scholarship in history of science and technology. He was a constant presence at HSS meetings for many years, presiding at his table in the book exhibits, always entusiastic and always ready with a friendly story or some gossipy tidbit. For all these efforts and actions, the HSS recognized him with its Outstanding Service Award in 2015.

Neale was a bon vivant, with friends all over the world. His initial formality and façade of reserve masked a life of adventure and self-confidence. I did not know him in his youth, but occasionally was treated to glimpses of these early years when he was a young international entrepreneur in Saigon, Beirut, Toronto, and Montreal, among other far-flung venues. It was said that he even, briefly, joined a Bavarian touring theater company. He represented several major publishing firms, including McGraw-Hill, American Elsevier, and Harcourt, Brace and Jovanovich. In 1972, he established Neale Watson Academic Publications, Inc. in New York City, with a focus on publishing books and journals in the history and philosophy of science, medicine and technology.

Neale formed a strong bond with the Royal Swedish Academy of Science and published several volumes in the history of Swedish science. At the centennial celebrations of the Nobel Prize in 2001 he attended the awards ceremony and banquet. He sponsored the annual Neale Wheeler Watson Lecture Series in Stockholm, and the annual series of six Seminars on the Material and Visual History of Science, held in cities throughout Europe.

I first met Neale in the mid-1980s when I was president of the Beaumont Medical Club at Yale, of which he was a devoted member. He was a true Yale alum, devoted to his college in his own, curmudgeonly way. Always ready when the Beaumont Club’s treasury needed a bit of help, he recalled fondly his hours spent in the Medical Historical Library under the watchful eye of the masters of the collection, Madeline Stanton and Elizabeth Thompson. I surmised that it was his acquaintance with this magnificent book collection and with history of science and medicine that focused his eventual engagement with both the publishing industry and our field.

To me, Neale was something of an “international man of mystery.” His travel schedule astounded me, as did the international spread of his list of friends. There was hardly a historian of science whom Neale did not know, and about whom, after a drink or two, he would proffer an opinion. Our (his and mine) usual routine at HSS meetings would start with a greeting at his book exhibit table, a word or two as the state of academic politics at Yale, and immediately an agreement as to when we would meet at the bar. A known connoisseur of martinis, Neale seemed most at home with a glass in his hand. The conversation flowed broad and wide, but always I suspected that I, like many of his friends, knew only a small part of this complex and interesting man. I, and many others in our community, will miss his contributions, his wit, and his sincere devotion to history of science, medicine, and technology. Requiescat in pace.
In Memoriam

Robert Young
26 September 1935 – 5 July 2019

Remembering Bob Young’s influence on a young philosopher by Michael Ruse

My thinking about Darwin and his importance was formed by and has persisted from a year (1972-1973) that I spent at Cambridge University attached to the Department of History and Philosophy of Science. I like to joke that I rarely agree with the opinions of the Marxist scholar Robert M. Young, and he never agrees with mine, but I still think that his was the most original mind that turned to the study of Darwin.

(from Acknowledgements to The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Darwin and Evolutionary Thought, 2012)

Bob Young—as the historian of science, Robert Maxwell Young, was universally known—was born in Texas in 1935 and died earlier this year, on July 5, 2019. He was a practicing historian of evolutionary biology for less than a quarter of his more than fifty-year career in the history of science. Yet, it is hardly an exaggeration to say that he was, and remains, one of the most innovative and influential people in the field. I can unambiguously say that Bob Young was by far the most important person in my own development as a historian of science, and that his influence colors almost all work that Michael Ruse does to this day.

Young came to Darwinism at a good time and in a good place. For the first hundred or so years after the publication of the Origin of Species in 1859, it seems not unfair to say that most that was written on Charles Darwin and his theory of evolution rarely reached the standards of professional historical writing. It was not until the 1950s that the history of science started to get professionalized. Those trained in the field realized that archives had to be opened up and consulted. Work done on the subject had to locate itself in the historical corpus generally, not looking upon Darwin rather like the Archangel Gabriel come to earth for a few decades in the nineteenth century. Professional historians turned their interests towards Darwin and his theory.

At Cambridge Young was perfectly placed to take advantage of the new winds, as one might call them. In major respects he did to the full, although somewhat paradoxically he never ever walked out of the back of his college, crossed Queen’s Road and took the elevator to the Manuscripts Room of the UL, to look at any of its holdings. He used to claim that no one had to date looked at most of the published material, so why bother yet with the unpublished material! What he did bring to the field was a super-keen intelligence, an ability and willingness to look at huge amounts of said published material, both around the time of Darwin and later, and a Marxist ideology that demanded that everything be put in social context. This context was particularly appropriate for Darwin, for had not Marx, in 1862, written to Engels: “It is remarkable how Darwin rediscovers among beasts and plants the society of England, with its division of labour, competition, opening up of new markets, inventions, and the Malthusian struggle for existence.”

This willingness led to a huge burst of creative activity, with articles pouring forth, and then—almost as quickly as they had begun—five or six years later, an abrupt end. Possibly, because Young thought he had all that he had to say. He could see younger scholars coming along who did go to the archives and the like, and that was just not his style. Possibly, because he was already starting to move on to other topics and other fields. Possibly, as noted above, because he was starting to feel disconnected from the style of English—especially Cambridge—academic life. I “left academic life in disgust at the corruption, opportunism, and hypocrisy of certain colleagues

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and patrons.” (I confess the people in HPS always struck me as rather mild, friendly people. But then, as the radio program warned us: “Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men? The Shadow knows!” Apparently, Bob Young did too.)

Since everything about Bob was personal—“corruption, opportunism, and hypocrisy”—let me explain how I got involved and why it made such a difference. I was trained in the 1960s as a philosopher of science. A small group of us—notable leader, David Hull—had turned to biology for subject material, mainly on the excellent grounds that not much had been written on the subject, and this existing work was pretty awful. The 1960s was, of course, the decade of Thomas Kuhn’s *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. I don’t think any philosopher—and, to be honest, not many historians—agreed with his thesis about paradigms and the non-rational nature of their change, but Kuhn did have a huge effect on many younger philosophers of science. We agreed with him entirely that, in order to do good philosophy of science, you had to do history of science. No longer was it good enough just to grab a couple of popular accounts and get on with the job. You had to do history as seriously and as well as the historians. Naturally, given that it is the strong belief of every philosopher that we are the brightest people on campus, this was a challenge rather than a threat. Especially, those of us trying to create a modern philosophy of biology were much inspired to turn to the history of the subject, and what juicier topic could there be than Darwin and his Revolution?

My first sabbatical was in 1972—I then worked in Canada—and what more obvious destination for one so fired up than to make my way to Cambridge. Obviously, on the one hand there was the prospect of working in the Darwin Archives. For me, no less, was the other hand, the prospect of interacting with Bob Young. Why Bob Young? For five years I had been reading the Darwin literature—his own writings, the five volumes of letters published by his son, the works of his contemporaries like Thomas Henry Huxley and Alfred Russel Wallace, and then a huge amount of secondary material. By 1970, younger professional historians were coming on line—Peter Vorzimmer and Sandra Herbert for instance—and other historians like Bob Olby were making related contributions. So I was getting comfortable in the field. Young for me, however, was something special. His writings simply were inspirational. He made you think, he challenged you, and he changed your perspective.

I won’t say I wanted to sit at Bob Young’s feet. I am pretty Oedipal about these sorts of things—I am quite convinced that a major reason why I am not a Christian is because I couldn’t worship another human being. But I did want to learn from Bob Young. So Cambridge it was. As it happens, although Bob was welcoming, he was already transitioning out of his job, so he was not always the easiest of people to be around. But I learnt enough, and as I said in my quotation at the beginning of this essay, with the added attractions of Martin Rudwick—still the most brilliant historian of geology we have ever had—with Roy Porter—a graduate student (or something of that nature) but without doubt the most self-confident person I have ever known—the embryologist Sydney Smith, who knew just an incredible amount about Darwin—and add in a couple of philosophers like Mary Hesse (much interested in metaphor), I was in heaven. (Actually, I am not too big on God either. He reminds me too much of my late headmaster. Instant dislike on both sides.)

Why was it that Young had this nigh mesmeric effect on me? Let me focus on what I think was his major and best paper, a long essay published in 1971 in the *Monist*: “Darwin’s metaphor: Does nature select?” The paper is on the revolution brought about by Darwin’s *Origin*. Although there is a reference to Kuhn, the discussion is not set in a particularly philosophical context. It is noted that Kuhn is interesting, but his thesis is brushed aside (without comment) as not very relevant to the Darwinian case. Young focuses on the state of play before the *Origin*, the state of play...
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after the *Origin*, and the central metaphor of the *Origin*—natural selection—a phenomenon modeled on the breeder’s practice of artificial selection—and how that played out in what happened—or did not play out in what happened.

Straight off, you can see why a philosopher like myself was going to be so excited. Nearly fifty years later, rereading his seminal article on natural selection, I can still understand fully my excitement. It really is an impressive piece of work, and its pretensions at least are major. Once we understand the social context of Darwin’s thought—the British social context of Darwin’s thought—all else falls into place. We see why it was that people after the *Origin* became evolutionists and yet, almost to a person—including Darwin himself in certain respects!—rejected or more accurately, supplemented natural selection. There was gold in them, that hills, and Robert Young was the man who found it and mined it. That the gold then turned out to be dross, if anything, adds to the credit of Robert Young.

I hope you can see why the thinking of Bob Young has been so important to me and to others. He may not have always been right, but he was always interesting, and that is more valuable. And that is why I mourn his passing but celebrate his life.

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HSS News

HSS Amicus Curiae Policy

The History of Science Society does not endorse or submit amicus curiae briefs on general political or social issues. There are, however, times when issues arise that affect scholars in our discipline, or historical scholarship on science, that demand our consideration. If the Executive Committee believes the Society should join an action, it will make a recommendation to Council in the form of a motion. A majority of the Council members must approve the motion for it to be approved.

HSS Editorial Offices: New Addresses

The Society’s editorial offices have completed their transition from Utrecht to the United States. The main office is located at Mississippi State University:

History of Science Society Editorial Office
Department of History
208 Allen Hall, Mailbox H
175 Presidents Circle
Mississippi State University
Mississippi State, MS 39762

The Book Review Office address, where all books for possible review should be sent is

*Isis* Book Review Office
Consortium for History of Science, Technology and Medicine
431 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106-2426

The email address for the editorial office is *IsisJournal@history.msstate.edu*
History of Science, Technology, and Medicine in China

The Chinese anthology of outstanding history of science, technology, and medicine articles, that appeared from 1990 to 2015, has been published by Tsinghua University Press. The HSS and several other societies participated in selecting the articles for this volume, and the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science oversaw the process. The anthology is part of the Press’s new history of science series.

Ombudsperson for the HSS

The History of Science Society (HSS) is seeking an ombudsperson to help the HSS with its Respectful Behavior Policy. We are grateful that Sally Gregory Kohlstedt agreed to serve as our first ombudsperson. Her term will expire in June 2020, and she is happy to discuss the position with those who are interested.

We envision the ombudsperson, subject to Council approval, to be a volunteer HSS member who receives inquiries and complaints relating to HSS’s Respectful Behavior Policy. A full description of the position will appear in a future Newsletter. Those who would like to learn more should contact HSS Executive Director Jay Malone at jay@hssonline.org.

HSS Council Early Career Representative—Call for Nominations and Voting Information

Beginning in 2020, the History of Science Society council will include an early career representative (ECR), serving a three-year term (2020-2023). The successful candidate will represent graduate student and early career interests, provide an early career scholar’s perspective to other council members, and keep the early career and graduate community abreast of relevant HSS policies and initiatives. This is a non-voting council position. For more information about HSS council please see, https://hssonline.org/about/governance/.

The HSS Graduate and Early Career Caucus (GECC) is facilitating the call for nominations for this position and subsequent election. All graduate students and early career members of HSS in good standing are members of GECC and eligible to vote in this election. We invite any interested individuals to nominate themselves for this position or have others nominate them.

Interested candidates or those interested in nominating others should keep the following in mind:

- Candidates must be a graduate student or early career member of HSS in good standing at the time of the election.
- For the purposes of this position, “early career” is defined as “having received a PhD within the last five years.” Nominees for the position should either a) fit this description when they are nominated (i.e., have received a PhD in the last five years, even if they will be more than five years past graduation by the end of the position term of 2023), or b) be current graduate students who are within a year of completing their degree.
- Nominees can nominate themselves, or they can be nominated by others. All nominees must be seconded.
- All candidates are required to write a candidate statement (no more than 300 words), which will be posted on the GECC website (https://hssgecc.wordpress.com/)
- This position is not a GECC officership and no current GECC officers are eligible to run.

All nominations must be submitted and seconded by 15 November 2019. Voting will take place through the GECC website from 25 November through 6 December 2019. Both nominations and seconds should be submitted via email to hss.gecc@gmail.com. Please also email this address with any questions or concerns.
Get ready for New Orleans!

After the HSS meeting in Utrecht, I had a chance to spend a few days in Amsterdam. While wandering around the Spiegelkwartier District, I happened upon the Bourbon Street Blues Club and thought, “Ah, a segue for the 2020 meeting.” So pull out your calendars and mark 7-11 October 2020 for our joint meeting with SHOT, the first conference with our colleagues in almost 10 years. Unlike the 2011 meeting in Cleveland, we will be in the same hotel, the Sheraton on Canal Street, just a few short blocks from the actual Bourbon Street.

And although early October is still hurricane season, the weather we faced in Utrecht, with temperatures that soared to 100 F (40 C), suggests that we have paid our dues to the weather gods, and we will see clear skies in the Crescent City.

Finally, 2020 will mark at least two important anniversaries: the 75th year after the end of WWII and the 15th year after Hurricane Katrina. Although HSS meetings do not have themes, such occasions can offer inspiration.

I hope to see you in the Big Easy.

Jay

HSS Announces New Independent Scholar Award

Thanks to the generosity of Virginia Trimble, a long-time HSS member, we are pleased to announce the Edward Gerjuoy/John Michell Independent Scholar Award (you may read more about Gerjuoy here and Michell here).

The award, which will begin in 2020, will highlight an independent scholar’s work at the HSS annual meeting. The gift from Dr. Trimble is for a permanent endowment of the award. Each year, the HSS program co-chairs will take special notice of submissions by independent scholars, which will include those individuals whose institutions do not consider these scholars to be working historians. (As a research scientist with a deep interest in the history of science, Dr. Trimble hopes that this award will stimulate interest among scientists.) The Society, wishing to simplify the submission process, will base the award solely on the abstract (no CV required).

The program co-chairs will determine the winner, who will be identified in the HSS program and who will receive $500 US.

We are grateful to Dr. Trimble for her support in recognizing this important area in the history of science (you may learn more about her work by perusing the article, reprinted here, announcing her winning of the Gemant Award for Championing the Social Perspective of Science, offered by the American Institute of Physics). Dr. Trimble received her B.A. from UCLA (in astronomy and physics) and her PhD in astronomy from the California Institute of Technology in 1968, at a time when Cal Tech only admitted women under “exceptional circumstances” (“exceptional” typically meant women admitted with their husbands or students who came with new faculty from other schools. Trimble was admitted without the involvement of a husband or faculty member, coming to the institution on a full Woodrow Wilson Fellowship.

Raffle Winners for the Post-Meeting 2019 Survey

Thank you to all who responded to our Post-Meeting Survey for HSS 2019 in Utrecht. The gift card raffle winners are Paul Mitchell and Katherine Reinhart, chosen randomly from the respondents. Congratulations!
September 2019 issue of *Isis* (Volume 110, no. 3) published

HSS members may view the table of contents and access articles via this link. In addition to its usual line up of articles, critiques, and reviews (of both books and websites) this issue features a special “Focus” section on computational history and the philosophy of science.

Request for Newsletter Title Suggestions

There has been some talk about giving this Newsletter of ours a catchier, more memorable title that moreover, represents who and what we are as a society. Since it is a newsletter for the people, I thought the people should have a say in what its title should be. So members, do email your suggestions and ideas to me at sankanet@gmail.com. Anything that arrives by 30 November will be considered. We will put the various suggestions to an internal vote and come up with a shortlist in the January 2020 edition, and let everyone vote on it and reveal the winning title in the April 2020 issue.

HSS and SHOT

*By Jay Malone*

HSS members may recall the short survey that we sent out in May, asking members to list the groups with which you would like more interaction. The top choice, by far, was SHOT, followed by the Society for Social Studies of Science, American Historical Association, the British Society for the History of Science, and PSA. Council has been urging me to coordinate more meetings with SHOT and the survey reaffirmed that HSS members wish for that association, as well. So I am looking forward to the co-located meetings with SHOT in New Orleans next year 7–11 October and then, again, in Mérida, Mexico in November of 2021 (exact dates to be determined).

I am also happy to announce that I have learned from past co-located meetings and that history will not be repeating itself... I hope. Long-time members may recall that the last time we met in New Orleans was in 1994, a joint meeting with PSA and 4S. The hotel, a property with some challenges, was in a sketchy part of town and several members told me years later that they did not feel safe at night. For 2020, we will be in the Sheraton on Canal Street, in the middle of the tourist district and a block away from the French Quarter. Safety is my number one concern for our conferences and this location meets that concern (the weather gods permitting). Incidentally, members may be interested in learning that one web site ranked Mérida, a place I did not know existed before last year, as the **25th safest city in the world**.

This learning from the past extends to co-located meetings. HSS has met with SHOT multiple times over the years but not without some challenges. The last co-located meeting was in 2011, in Cleveland, a less than desirable arrangement in which we were in two hotels and the weather proved miserable. Before that, we came together in 2005 in Minneapolis, this time in the same hotel, and that meeting was a bit smoother but trying to coordinate the meeting space proved daunting. This was to be expected because there had been a gap of some 15 years from the last meeting, the 1991 conference in Madison.

If you ask people about SHOT and HSS, there is the inevitable discussion of past friction, a point that, thankfully, seems to be dulling over time. But part of that tension can be traced to the first HSS meeting I ever attended, the joint meeting in 1987, in Raleigh, NC. Several images stick in my memory from that conference: Jim...
Moore giving what is possibly the best talk I’ve ever heard at HSS, on why Darwin “gave up” on Christianity; losing power in the convention center shortly after his talk and groping my way to the exit where we re-convened on the lawn outside; and watching Ed Grant, past president of HSS, placing tattered bits of lettuce on his plate at the joint dinner, the only remaining edible portions of a buffet that looked like it had been attacked by those on the edge of starvation (members still point to that experience whenever I mention the possibility of a buffet at HSS). Simply put, joint meetings can be difficult.

When I tell hotel managers that we are meeting with another group, they give me a frozen smile, because such meetings can be a challenge. One group will always feel that they are receiving inferior rooms, sub-standard food, coffee break dregs, and they end up entertaining all sorts of perceived slights. I will work closely with my SHOT colleagues to try to avoid such perceptions, but it will not be easy. These co-located meetings deepen and broaden the workload in the Executive Office. Just organizing the site visit for New Orleans required herculean efforts to bring everyone to the table.

But, and this is important, the extra work is worth it because it allows us to interact with our colleagues, giving us exposure to ideas we would have missed had we met by ourselves. Also, more of us come to these co-located meetings. For example, when HSS met alone at the Bloomington meeting in 1985, we saw a fairly predictable attendance of 380. When we gathered with SHOT the following year in Pittsburgh (along with PSA and 4S) attendance shot up 43%, to 584. And then, the following year, in Raleigh, the numbers increased again, to 668, which was probably the largest-ever HSS meeting up to that time (and which helps explain the difficulty organizers faced when trying to plan for buffet dinners). Finally, an increasingly important point is that by meeting with SHOT we will dramatically cut the carbon emissions had we met separately. The sustainability of HSS meetings is high on my list of priorities, and I believe that the extra work that New Orleans and Mérida will create will not only bring intellectual benefits, it will be a gift to our planet. I hope to see many of you in the Crescent City and in the capital of the Yucatan.

What To Do With Somewhat Rare Publications?

I recently heard from a member who had a question. He is in the process of downsizing, which includes finding a place for several runs of journals. In some cases, he has the first issue of these journals, which probably are not rare enough to warrant use of an antiquarian book dealer but are perhaps rare enough that some would find them of value. It occurred to me that there are probably other members who are in a similar situation and I told him that I would put a notice in the Newsletter. So, if you found a good solution for your journal runs, please let me know.

Jay Malone (jay@hssonline.org)
AAAS Annual Meeting: Envisioning Tomorrow’s Earth

The scientific endeavor has been at the forefront in developing innovations which have improved life on Earth in immeasurable ways. Now, life on this planet is facing new challenges from both nature and the built world, and scientific application is our best tool with which to react. By drawing on our current understanding of the world, and bravely experimenting with forward-thinking visions, the scientific community needs to respond with discoveries and developments to help solve many pressing problems.

The science of the next generation—from AI and robotics to gene editing to clean energy—and the policy and social implications of it must be explored. This Annual Meeting celebrates the scientific position on appreciating and addressing the future of planet Earth by considering and collaborating with advances across disciplines, and the ways in which scientists are building networks with policymakers and the public to work more effectively and best take advantage of the many new developments that science and technology is introducing at an ever-increasing pace.

Some research that may be addressed include:

- Within the agriculture-water-energy nexus, the developments that are needed to provide sufficient and higher quality, sustainable food for an ever-growing population;
- The science and technology that combat the risks of increasing air and water pollution;
- Biology at the molecular, cellular and organism levels, and how discoveries in this area may lead to further human well-being;
- How data from blood samples and advances in medical imaging can improve medical diagnostics, prognosis, and treatment;
- Determining the value and means of maintaining natural ecosystems and biological diversity in a changing planet;
- Changes in extreme weather events, preventative actions, and the possibilities and limitations to adaptation strategies;
- Prospects to improve urban living and mobility;
- The science of the next industrial revolution—automation, robotics, artificial intelligence—and the how to mitigate the social disruption of displaced workers.

Section L for the History and Philosophy of Science is pleased to announce that students presenting posters at the February 2020 annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) meeting are eligible for up to $400 in travel support. Section L will prioritize students who are either presenting on the history and/or philosophy of science or in the Science in Society category.

This portal for submitting poster abstracts is open until 17 October 2019. Undergraduate and graduate students can enter the student poster competition.

AAAS is the world’s largest multidisciplinary scientific society and a leading publisher of cutting-edge research through its Science family of journals. The meeting will be held 13-16 February 2020 in Seattle, Washington.

Contact Melinda Gormley at mgormley@uci.edu with requests and questions.

New Leadership at AAAS

The American Association for the Advancement of Science has announced that Rush Holt has stepped down as Chief Executive Officer. Former CEO Alan Leshner is serving as Acting CEO while the AAAS’s Board of Directors conducts its search. News of Rush’s retirement can be found here.
The International Commission for the History of Women in Science

The biennial meeting of the International Commission for the History of Women in Science, (ICWHS) an official commission of the International Union for History & Philosophy of Science, was held in Greater Tel Aviv on 17–20 June 2019. The Open University and Tel Aviv University served as the local host institutions for the meeting.

As befits its 2019 location in the all too often war-embroiled Middle East, the meeting organizers cleverly selected the relevant but also historiographically original theme of “Gender & Science in War & Peace.” The talks covered the role of women scientists in wars throughout the twentieth century from World War I to the present day. The almost two dozen speakers came from over half a dozen countries, including the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, India, Israel, Slovenia, Spain, UK, and US. After Israel, which supplied about half of the speakers, the maximum number of participants came from Czech Republic. A complete program is available here.

Two remarkable features of the meeting this year were the significant presence of male speakers and its temporal proximity to the annual meeting of the Israeli Society for the History, Philosophy, & Sociology of Science, held a day earlier at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute. This thoughtful planning by the commission’s chairperson Nurit Kirsh, director of the Biological Thought Program at the Open University, who is also the co-Chair of the Israeli HSS, enabled several speakers to attend and present talks at both meetings.

Despite the gracious hospitality of the local organizing committee, it was difficult to gauge whether the meeting came to the attention of local students and faculty other than those on the program. Although the program included a nice balance of junior and senior scholars, there is little record of previous interactions, such as invitations to give guest lectures, between members of the Commission which include leading international scholars in gender & science and Israeli programs in the history of science. It is to be hoped that this well-organized international meeting held in Greater Tel Aviv will stimulate more frequent contacts between local universities and the international community of scholars in gender & women in science.

This article was shared by Pnina Abir-Am, Resident scholar, WSRC, Brandeis University and the sole living founder of the ICWHS to have attended the meeting.
Diseases of Modern Life: Nineteenth Century Perspectives Database Launched

The ERC-funded project Diseases of Modern Life: Nineteenth Century Perspectives at the University of Oxford is pleased to announce the launch of its database for researchers. The database contains a list of over 3000 references, gathered together by researchers on the project. The majority of these are primary sources, with a small selection of secondary sources which provide historical context, from seven of the thematic strands explored by the project: Finance and Speculation, Diseases of Professions and Occupations, Addiction, Climate and Health, Education and Overpressure, Nervous Diseases, Technology and New Inventions. Primary sources range from newspaper and journal articles to printed books, from across the long nineteenth century. The entries will be helpful for research ranging across nineteenth-century medicine, science and culture. It can be accessed online or downloaded for full functionality here. Please share this far and wide!

— Sally Shuttleworth (University of Oxford), Principal Investigator

Ischia Summer School on the History of the Life Sciences

The 16th Ischia Summer School on the History of the Life Sciences took place in June this year, once again on the lovely island of Ischia in the bay of Naples, courtesy of the Naples Zoological Station. Twenty-seven early career scholars and nine speakers vigorously interrogated ideas about life and death from the early modern period to today, with a brief dash at Antiquity. The theme led us to engage with the way that doctors and researchers in the European tradition, explored the ambiguous boundary between life and death as expressed not only in the human body, and in definitions of death, in ageing, and in forensic pathology, but also in culture and literature, and on the cellular level, in cell immortality, decomposition, stem cell physiology, and cancer research. Life and death have generally been understood as opposites; we paid special attention to the various ways in which they have been opposed or united. Participants came from universities in Norway, Sweden, Mexico, Canada, USA, UK, Italy, Germany, and Australia: the image shows one of the seminar sessions. Despite the gloomy potential of our theme the meeting was extremely buoyant and blessed by beautiful surroundings, good food, and sunshine. An introduction to the topic and the programme are available here.

The directors of the school are Nick Hopwood (University of Cambridge), Janet Browne (Harvard University), Staffan Müller-Wille (University of Exeter), and Christiane Groeben (local organizer, formerly Stazione Zoologica Anton Dohrn, Naples). The event was supported by the Thyssen Foundation, the NSF, George Loudon, and History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences. The next school will take place in 2021.

Consortium for History of Science, Technology and Medicine

The 2018-2019 Annual Report of the Consortium for History of Science, Technology and Medicine, which summarizes the past year’s activities of the Consortium is now
available online. The consortium brings together educational, cultural and scientific institutions to promote public and academic understanding of the history of science, technology and medicine. Prominent activities and programs include fellowships for researchers, events for academics and for the public and the provision of online resources for teaching, learning and research. Originally established in 2007 as a regional collaboration of eleven institutions in the Philadelphia area, the Consortium began to extend its reach in 2014 and now boasts a membership of some 27 institutions in the United States, Canada & the United Kingdom. HSS is the only professional society that is a member.

American Institute of Physics (AIP) to Confer Gemant Award to Virginia Trimble for Championing the Social Perspective of Science

The AIP announced that astronomer Virginia Trimble, professor in the department of physics and astronomy at the University of California, Irvine, and staff astronomer and member of the advisory board for the Las Cumbres Observatory in Goleta, California has been selected to receive the 2019 Andrew Gemant Award, an annual prize recognizing contributions to the cultural, artistic and humanistic dimension of physics. The award includes a cash prize of $5,000 and a grant of $3,000 to further the public communication of physics at an institution of Trimble's choice.

The Gemant Award recognizes Trimble's lifelong successes in the physical sciences and “for taking the broader view of how physics and astronomy is accomplished, creatively engaging physical scientists and the public throughout her lifetime, and commitment to establishing science within the social perspective.” The committee did not pinpoint one single achievement in granting this award, but rather, chose Trimble for the depth and breadth of her works that, for decades, has inspired scientists, piqued the curiosities of people, and permeated the world science psyche.

“We are extremely honored to present Virginia Trimble with this year's Gemant award,” said AIP CEO Michael Moloney. “Dr. Trimble has devoted much of her life to exploring the historical and cultural side of physics and astrophysics. Her knowledge and professionalism are highly regarded in the international science community, and she is a most deserving recipient of this award.”

“I am deeply honored and grateful to be a recipient of the Gemant award,” Trimble said. “More specifically, I am deeply grateful to the colleagues who took the trouble to organize the nomination, which is by no means a trivial task.”

While Trimble's widely popular work in astrophysics and astronomy is well known, her time at UCLA as an undergraduate student opened her world to many other disciplines, which gave her a unique insight into how the science of the stars related to many moments in history, and her writing often draws connections between scientific ideas and ideas from literature and the arts.

“Much of my recent work has been in history of science,” she said. “Many historians of physics and astronomy were trained as historians. Others of us are aging astrophysicists, etc., who find that things we remember as ‘current events’ are now regarded as ‘history’ (discovery of quasars, pulsars, the microwave background). The two communities are surprisingly different in ways of writing and speaking of their work and in choosing what to emphasize.”

Trimble was presented with the award on Thursday, Oct. 3, at an event for the Lyne Starling Trimble Science Heritage Public Lecture Series at Caltech. Funded by a generous donation from Virginia Trimble, the lecture series is named after her late father, Lyne Starling Trimble, who held patents for a number of color-reproduction systems and was an innovative chemist.

Read the full article about the 2019 Gemant Award here.
Dispatch from the National Humanities Alliance

Editor’s note: The state of the humanities is a matter near and dear to HSS, seeing that much of what we do falls under this umbrella. It therefore behooves us to keep ourselves in the know about advocacy efforts on its behalf. At the forefront of such efforts is the National Humanities Alliance (NHA) which recently launched a quarterly column for scholarly societies such as ourselves. Beatrice Gurwitz, deputy director of the NHA, offers an overview of the role that humanities advocates have played in securing continuing support from Capitol Hill as well as ideas for engaging Members of Congress in-district. She also invites scholarly society members to reach out if they would like to collaborate on these efforts.

A Moment to Take Stock (and Keep Advocating) by Beatrice Gurwitz

For three years in a row, the Trump administration has called for the elimination of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) and other humanities funding streams. In both 2017 and 2018, thanks to robust advocacy from the humanities community, the Republican-controlled Congress rejected the administration’s efforts and passed increases for the NEH and several other humanities programs. This year, we are seeing support on Capitol Hill for even greater increases for the NEH and other humanities programs. The possibility of these increases is partly a result of the Democratic takeover of the House, but that isn’t the whole story—a Democratic majority has not always meant proposed increases for the humanities. Support for the NEH has grown on both sides of the aisle, largely as a result of our collective efforts to showcase just how valuable the humanities are to communities around the country.

In March, Humanities Advocacy Day participants urged Members of Congress to sign on to letters requesting increased funding for humanities programs, resulting in significant bipartisan support. In the House, a record-breaking 175 representatives, including 11 Republicans, endorsed a $12.5 million increase for the NEH, significantly higher than the incremental increases of $2 or $3 million over the past four years. A letter in the Senate, asking for the same increase, also received a record-breaking 44 signers (all Democrats). A record-breaking 106 Members of Congress, including 7 Republicans, signed another letter requesting a $44 million increase for the Department of Education’s international education programs (Title VI and Fulbright-Hays). This was a particularly ambitious request for programs that have not received increases for years.

More recently, the House passed funding bills that included significant increases for our priorities. In addition to passing the $12.5 million increase for the NEH and a nearly $17 million increase for the Department of Education’s international education programs, the House has passed increases for the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Smithsonian, the National Park Service’s historic preservation programs, and the National Historical Publications and Records Administration, the grant-giving arm of the National Archives.

The Senate has yet to release its appropriations bills. While we know there is bipartisan support for humanities programs there as well, we are less likely to see increases of the same magnitude in the Senate’s bills. The House, Senate, and White House are currently re-negotiating caps for FY 2020 spending that were put in place nearly a decade ago under the Budget Control Act of 2011. Without renegotiated caps, FY 2020’s overall spending limit would be significantly lower than FY 2019’s. The House appropriations bills assume increased caps, and while the Senate bills will also likely assume increased caps, their assumptions will probably be somewhat lower than the House’s. In the end, the House might need to adjust the numbers in its appropriations bills downward if a final agreement sets caps lower than it is hoping. And if the House, Senate, and the President cannot reach an agreement, we may be heading to another government shutdown or a continuing resolution that maintains funding at FY 2019 levels.
History of Science Society Newsletter

News from the Profession, cont.

While much remains to be seen, this is a moment to recognize the success of the humanities community’s efforts. In recent years, advocates have sent hundreds of thousands of messages to Members of Congress on behalf of the NEH, IMLS, NHPRC, and Title VI and Fulbright-Hays. We have also deepened research into the impact of federal funding and supported grantees in communicating their impact to local and national policymakers. We have organized in-district meetings that bring Members of Congress together with grantees from their districts so that they can hear first-hand about the impact of the humanities in their communities. (Interested in working with us on one of these meetings? Let us know). And we have hosted briefings for Members of Congress and their staff that bring grantees to Capitol Hill to showcase their work. In June, for example, we were joined by the hosts of the BackStory podcast, who held a live show in the Russell Senate Office Building on “The Divided States of America,” which offered staffers a look at the importance of humanities research to understanding our contemporary moment.

This is also a prime moment to think about ways in which you can engage Members of Congress when they are home for August recess. Our district advocacy guide offers tips on scheduling a meeting with Members of Congress and for inviting them to events in the district. Offering a Member of Congress or their district staffer a behind the scenes tour of a special collection, a new exhibition on campus, or inviting them to visit an NEH-funded summer program are just a few examples of the efforts that have been successful in engaging Members of Congress across the country. Campus government relations officers are great partners for this kind of outreach, and we are always happy to help and brainstorm as well.

As a postscript to Dr. Gurwitz’s important message, it is worth mentioning that Jay visits Capitol Hill every year in his capacity as HSS Executive Director to argue for continued support for the humanities. During his last visit in March 2019, he met with Indiana senator Mike Braun, see photograph below.

US National Endowment for the Humanities Awards
$29 Million for Humanities Projects

The NEH announced awards for 215 humanities projects in the United States. The grants are for humanities research, education programs, cultural preservation, films, exhibitions, and virtual reality projects. The awards are augmented by $48 million in funding from state humanities councils. Some project that may be of interest to HSS members are as follows:

Fayetteville, Arkansas
University of Arkansas, Fayetteville
Outright: $160,000 [Institutes for School Teachers]
Project Director: Sean Connors
NEH Grant Awards and Offers, August 2019
Project Title: Remaking Monsters and Heroines: Adapting Classic Literature for Contemporary Audiences
Project Description: A two-week institute for 30 K-12 educators on Frankenstein, Cinderella, and adaptations of these classic texts.
San Jose, California
San Jose State University Research Foundation
Outright: $184,624 [Institutes for School Teachers]
Project Director: Susan Shillinglaw; William Gilly (co-project director)
NEH Grant Awards and Offers, August 2019
Project Title: John Steinbeck: Social Critic and Ecologist
Project Description: A three-week institute for 28 K-12 educators to study the writing of John Steinbeck.

Washington, DC
Association of American Medical Colleges
Outright: $392,928 [Cooperative Agreements and Special Projects (Education)]
Project Director: Alison Whelan
Project Title: The Fundamental Role of the Humanities and Arts in Medical Education
Project Description: The planning for and creation of a monograph, curricular and evaluative resources, and faculty professional development opportunities for integrating the humanities and arts into education in the medical professions.

Chicago, Illinois
Newberry Library
Outright: $124,989 [Seminars for School Teachers]
Project Director: James Akerman; Kathleen Brosnan (co-project director)
Project Title: Mapping Nature Across the Americas
Project Description: A four-week seminar for 16 K-12 educators to study mapping as a lens for understanding the history of the Americas.

Madison, New Jersey
Drew University
Outright: $39,245 [Collaborative Research]
Project Director: Paul Kadetz
Project Title: Tracing the Historical and Cultural Trajectories of Antimicrobial Resistance in China (1920 to the Present)
Project Description: A scholarly workshop and conference in preparation of an edited volume on the history, causes, and effects of antibiotic resistance in China during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Seaside, California
University Corporation at Monterey Bay
Outright: $74,989 [Media Projects Development]
Project Director: Meghan O’Hara
Project Title: Tektite Revisited: NASA’s Forgotten Underwater Mission
Project Description: Development of an eighty-minute documentary on the Tektite Program, an experimental underwater research station operated by NASA in the U.S. Virgin Islands between 1969 and 1970.

New York, New York
Futuro Media Group
Outright: $500,000 [Media Projects Production]
Match: $100,000
Project Director: Charlotte Mangin
Project Title: Unladylike 2020
Project Description: Production of 26 animated short documentary films about little-known Progressive Era women who achieved success in science, business, aviation, journalism, politics, medicine, exploration, and the arts.
News from the Profession, cont.

New York, New York (cont.)

**Intrepid Sea-Air-Space Museum**
Outright: $127,000 [Institutes for School Teachers]
Project Director: Lynda Kennedy
Project Title: The Cold War through the Collections of the Intrepid Museum
Project Description: A two-week institute for 25 K-12 educators on the history and technology of the Cold War era.

**Jennifer Vanderbes**
Outright: $60,000 [Public Scholar Program]
Independent Scholar
Project Title: The Gatekeeper: Dr. Frances Kelsey and the Unlikely Heroes Who Foiled the Greatest Pharmaceutical Scandal of the Twentieth Century
Project Description: Research and writing leading to a nonfiction book on the 1960s scandal surrounding the German-made sedative thalidomide, which has been linked to birth defects in some 10,000 babies worldwide.

**Joan & Sanford I. Weill Medical College of Cornell University**
Outright: $15,000 [Preservation Assistance Grants]
Project Director: Nicole Milano

Project Title: Preserving the History of America’s Second Oldest Hospital
Project Description: The purchase of preservation supplies to rehouse the medical center archives of New York Presbyterian Hospital, the second oldest hospital in the United States and chartered in 1771 by King George III of England. The archives contain over 1,500 linear feet of materials including records of Aaron Burr, who served as a member of the Board of Governors; Alexander Hamilton, who supported the Lying-In Hospital of the City of New York; Dr. David Hosack, the personal physician for Hamilton and Burr; early illnesses and epidemics; and nineteenth-century medical and surgical casebooks.

Plan Ahead
Future HSS Meetings

**2020**
New Orleans, LA: 7-11 October
Co-located meeting with SHOT

**2021**
 Mérida, Mexico: November (dates to be determined)
Co-located meeting with SHOT