



HOS 903
French Science & the Paris Academy of Sciences
 Fall 2010
 3:30-5:30 M
 984 Memorial Library

Florence Hsia
 229 Bradley Memorial
 11:00am-1:00pm Th & by appt.
 262-3971
fchsia@wisc.edu

Robin Rider
 990 Memorial Library
 1:30-2:30pm Tu & by appt.
 262-2809
rrider@library.wisc.edu

course summary

This seminar explores science in France during the Old Regime with particular attention to the role of the Paris Academy of Sciences through weekly readings and presentations, workshops using digital resources and materials from Special Collections, as well as a final research paper. Possible approaches include genre and publics; dissemination and exchange; collecting, observing, and experimental practice; biography; relations with other Old Regime institutions; and the impact of the Academy in France, Europe, and in a transatlantic context.

course requirements

(a) You'll be asked to take turns leading discussion of assigned readings (the number of these will depend on the number of seminar participants). A typed summary/critique/reaction (1 page in length) should accompany your discussion.

(b) You'll present a preliminary prospectus & bibliography to the seminar on **Nov. 8**, be responsible for choosing shared readings related to your research for group discussion on **Nov. 15**, and make a formal presentation on **Nov. 29/Dec. 6**. Be sure to distribute any readings or paper drafts to seminar participants at least a week in advance of your presentation.

(c) You should complete 15-20 pages of prose writing in connection with this course – ideally a research paper which relates to the themes of this course, analyses two or more primary sources, and makes use of some conceptual and/or methodological insight gained through the readings. Such a paper may involve comparison of early modern materials with materials from your own period of interest. Other possibilities include a critical discussion of some historiographical issue in the secondary literature; two or more book reviews (situating the book with respect to existing scholarship and critiquing the author's use of source material); or a bibliographic survey in preparation for a prelim field. Please meet with us as early as you can in the semester to discuss how you propose to fulfill the writing requirement.

Grading will be based on class participation (25%), in-class presentations (~25%), and your written work (~50%). All of your written work is due on **Monday, Dec. 20**.

Sept. 13 **introductions**

Sept. 20 **historiographical perspectives**

- Lux, David S. "Societies, circles, academies, and organizations: a historiographic essay on seventeenth-century science." In *Revolution and continuity: essays in the history and philosophy of early modern science*, edited by Peter Barker and Roger Ariew. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1991, 23-43. Look for .pdf file in Learn@UW.
- Stroup, Alice. *A company of scientists: botany, patronage, and community at the seventeenth-century Parisian Royal Academy of Sciences*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990, 3-10, 46-64. [Available through eScholarship editions.](#)
- McClellan, James E. "The Académie Royale des Sciences, 1699-1793: a statistical portrait." *Isis* 72 (1981): 541-67. *Isis* is available through [JSTOR](#).
- Hahn, Roger. *The anatomy of a scientific institution: the Paris Academy of Sciences, 1666-1803*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971, chaps. 2-3, 5 (35-83, 116-58). Full view available through Google Book Search. Will shortly be on reserve at College Library.

Sept. 27 **archival sources**

- Demeulenaere-Douyère, Christiane. "Les sources documentaires conservées à l'Académie des sciences." In *Histoire et mémoire de l'Académie des sciences: guide de recherches*, edited by Éric Brian and Christiane Demeulenaere-Douyère, 55-106. Paris; New York: Tec & Doc, 1996. Memorial Library Reference Collection (2nd floor).
- Saunders, E. Stewart. "The archives of the Académie des sciences." *French historical studies* 10 (1978): 696-702. *French historical studies* is available through [JSTOR](#).
- Demeulenaere-Douyère, Christiane and David Sturdy. "Image versus reality: the archives of the French Academie des Sciences?" In *Archives of the scientific revolution: the formation and exchange of ideas in seventeenth-century Europe*, edited by Michael Hunter, 185-208. Woodbridge; Rochester: Boydell Press, 1998. Look for .pdf file in Learn@UW.
- Stroup, Alice. "Royal funding of the Parisian Académie royale des sciences during the 1690s." *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 77 (1987): 1-167. Available through [JSTOR](#) and Google Book Search – or see the issue title [Royal funding of the Parisian Académie royale des sciences during the 1690s](#) in MadCat.

Oct. 4 **published record**

- Watson, E. C. "The early days of the Academie des Sciences as portrayed in the engravings of Sebastien Le Clerc." *Osiris* 7 (1939): 556-87. *Osiris* is available through [JSTOR](#)
- Guerrini, Anita. "The 'virtual menagerie': The Histoire des animaux project." *Configurations* 14, no. 1-2 (2006). *Configurations* is available through [Project Muse](#).
- Holmes, Frederic L. "Argument and narrative in scientific writing." In *The literary structure of scientific argument: historical studies*, edited by Peter Robert Dear, 164–81. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991. Look for .pdf file in Learn@UW.
- McClellan, James E. "The mémoires of the Académie Royale des Sciences, 1699-1790: a statistical overview." In *Les publications de l'Académie Royale des Sciences de Paris (1666-1793)*, edited by Robert Halleux, et al., 7-36. Turnhout: Brepols, 2001. De diversis artibus; t. 52 = n.s. 15. Look for .pdf file in Learn@UW.
- McClellan, James E. "Specialist control: the publications committee of the Académie royale des sciences (Paris), 1700-1793." *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 93, no. 3 (2003): 1-101. Available through Google Book Search.

Oct. 11 **within & without**

- Young, Kathryn A. "Crown agent--Canadian correspondent: Michel Sarrazin and the Academie Royale des Sciences, 1697-1734." *French historical studies* 18, no. 2 (1993): 416-33. *French historical studies* is available through [JSTOR](#).

- Terrall, Mary. "Gendered spaces, gendered audiences: inside and outside the Paris Academy of Sciences." *Configurations* 3 (1995): 207-32. *Configurations* is available through [Project Muse](#).
- Safier, Neil. "Unveiling the Amazon to European science and society: the reading and reception of La Condamine's *Relation abrégée d'un voyage fait dans l'intérieur de l'Amérique méridionale* (1745)." *Terrae incognitae* 33 (2001): 33-47. Look for .pdf file in Learn@UW.
- Woolf, Harry. *The transits of Venus: a study of eighteenth-century science*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959. Will be available on reserve in College Library.

Oct. 18 **individual/collective**

- Guerrini, Anita. "Duverney's skeletons." *Isis* 94, no. 4 (2003): 577-603.
- Paul, Charles B. *Science and immortality: the éloges of the Paris Academy of Sciences (1699-1791)*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980, 1-27, 86-120, 134-55. One copy will be on reserve in College Library.
- Outram, Dorinda. "The language of natural power: the éloges of Georges Cuvier and the public language of nineteenth-century science." *History of science* 16 (1978): 153-78. Look for .pdf file in Learn@UW.
- Sturdy, David J. *Science and social status: the members of the Académie des sciences 1666-1750*. Woodbridge; Rochester: Boydell Press, 1995, xi-xvi, 169-213, 221-59, 260-77. Will be on reserve in College Library.

Oct. 25 **exact sciences & visual culture**

- Terrall, Mary. "Mathematics in narratives of geodetic expeditions." *Isis* 97 (2006): 683-99. *Isis* is available through [JSTOR](#).
- Shank, John Bennett. *The Newton wars and the beginning of the French Enlightenment*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008, chap. 1 (49-104). Will be available on reserve in College Library.

Nov. 1 **expeditions & networks**

- McClellan, James E., and François Regourd. "The colonial machine: French science and colonization in the Ancien Régime." *Osiris* 15 (2000): 31-50. *Osiris* is available through [JSTOR](#).
- Dew, Nicholas. "Scientific travel in the Atlantic world: the French expedition to Gorée and the Antilles, 1681-1683." *British journal for the history of science* (2009): 1-17. *British journal for the history of science* should also be available through Cambridge Journals Online: follow the link from [Find It](#).
- Safier, Neil. "Fruitless botany: Joseph de Jussieu's South American odyssey." In *Science and empire in the Atlantic world*, edited by James Delbourgo and Nicholas Dew. New York, NY: Routledge, 2008. Look for .pdf file on Learn@UW.
- McClellan, James E. "André Michaux and French botanical networks at the end of the Old Regime." *Castanea* 2, no. 2 (2004): 69-97. *Castanea* is available through [JSTOR](#).

Nov. 8 **preliminary prospectus & bibliography**

Nov. 15 **workshop – work-in-progress**

Nov. 22 no class meeting

Nov. 29 **presentations**

Dec. 6 **presentations**

Dec. 13 **prospects**

Dec. 20 written work due