

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR c18 STUDIES
International Seminar for Early Career Scholars - Call for Papers

The International Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (ISECS) invites applications from scholars in all fields of eighteenth-century studies within the context of a one-week **International Seminar for Early Career Eighteenth-Century Scholars**.

This annual event now has an established reputation for promoting intellectual and social engagement between scholars from many countries. In 2014, the meeting will take place in Manchester, UK, and will be co-sponsored by the British Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (BSECS) and the University of Manchester with its John Rylands Library, a Victorian masterpiece which will provide the Seminar venue. Other scholarly bodies in Manchester which may provide support include the People's History Museum; the Museum of Science & Industry; Chetham's Library; the Portico Library; and the Whitworth Art Gallery. The programme will include a reception, a dinner, a guided tour of Manchester and a visit to Quarry Bank Mill, 'one of Britain's greatest industrial heritage sites'.

The International Seminar will be held from **Monday 8 Sept. to Friday 12 Sept. 2014** in Manchester, UK, directed by Prof. Jeremy Gregory (President BSECS: University of Manchester) and Prof. Penelope J. Corfield (Vice-President ISECS: Royal Holloway, University of London). This year, the theme of the International Seminar will be:

C18 Arts of Communication: in manuscript, in print, in the arts, and in person

Framing the issues:

'Dear Sir, If you think the word 'Sir' at present necessary, then I cannot object to it ... - but it appears cold and & seems to place one at an uncomfortable distance'.

[letter to tradesman father from medical student son, Edinburgh, Sept. 1781]

It has long been known that the formal advice manuals and etiquette books published in such numbers in the eighteenth century were not taken literally by all readers. Instead, a dynamic and fluid art of inter-personal communication was evolving. Literacy levels were rising and access to all forms of media were spreading (just as today new social media are dramatically extending and changing forms of participation). The result was a simmering tension between formal/ informal styles; between public/ private modes; and, as a result, scope for innovation.

This International Seminar will address questions relating to the evolution of the art of communication, both following conventions and yet also breaking them. The focus falls especially upon contemporary awareness and innovations in the style and purpose of communication in different media – and the shared role of recipients, whether reading letters and books, viewing art, hearing music, or greeting/ talking in person. Was there a clear trend for change? If so, how should scholars characterise it? It is not enough to refer loosely to the advent of 'Modernity' (a slippery term with too many meanings). But if not that, then what?

- 1. Manuscript communication, including letters:** Discussions here can draw upon recent studies of the spread of intimate letter-writing among all classes of society. In literature, there are also famous novels narrated via the medium of epistolary communication. Among European scientists/intellectuals, letters formed a key means of establishing informal networks, fostering a context favourable to scientific and technical innovation. In all these contexts, changing styles of greeting (as in the quotation above) offer one relevant theme to consider as well as other authorial choices in modes of communication.

2. **Printed communication, in newspapers, broadsheets, books:** In recent years, there has been a huge growth of scholarly interest in the history of book-publishing and book-selling. With that, there is scope for more focus upon new styles in print communication, such as specialisation for different markets (eg. the recently-studied children's literature). Readers' responses are relevant here, as shown in the history of reading newspapers; as are authorial appeals to implied readers, demonstrated in the history of literary erotica.
3. **Communication by sound and sight in the arts:** Tensions between traditional formulas and innovation, which often recur in the arts, merit fresh attention in the C18 context. In music, there was a gamut of evolving styles from formal compositions to popular songs (and the overlap between them). In the visual arts, there was a similar range from 'high art' to casual sketches and to illustrated manuscripts, as evidenced by William Blake.
4. **Communication in person, including the arts of greeting:** Alongside formal encounters, there was a negotiated intimacy, seen in this period by, for example, the rise of the egalitarian handshake. Themes of interpersonal communication have relevance for C21 film and TV representations of eighteenth-century social encounters - which tend to reproduce courtly manners, underestimating more casual semi-public/domestic styles.

Submission of proposals. The seminar is limited to 15 participants. The proposals (approx. 1.5 pages long, single-spaced) should be based on an original research project (e.g. a doctoral dissertation or post-doctoral project) that deals with one of the aspects mentioned above. The format of the seminar gives each participant a solo-session, with a **40-minute presentation** followed by a further **20 minutes of questions/discussion** directed at the paper.

Preference will be given to scholars who are at the beginning of their academic career (PhD or equivalent in or after 2009). The official languages are French and English.

Applications should include the following information:

- * short curriculum vitae with date of PhD (or equivalent)
- * list of principal publications and scholarly presentations
- * brief description of the proposed paper (approx. 1.5 pages long, single-spaced)
- * ONE letter of recommendation

Lodging and travel: Accommodation will be provided free on site, with free breakfast, lunch, and evening meals, including Conference dinner. Travel costs will also be met, if participants are unable to obtain travel funding from their home institutions. PLEASE NOTE: The organisers will book both travel tickets and accommodation.

Publication: The Seminar papers are usually published by Honoré Champion Éditeur (Paris) in the series 'Lumières internationales'. In addition, any later studies based upon the John Rylands Library Special Collections can be considered for publication in *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*: for full information see www.library.manchester.ac.uk/rylands/.

Deadlines: The deadline for submission of proposals is **Friday 14 March 2014**. Applications should be sent preferably by email, with details in file attachments, or by post (if email unavailable) to Prof. Jeremy Gregory, for consideration by himself and Prof. Corfield:

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