Call for Papers:

Modernity and the Gut

Keynote speaker

Professor Jean Walton, University of Rhode Island

27-28 April 2023

Concerns about gastric disorders have been around for centuries, but anxiety surrounding the gut intensified with the development of modernity. The rise of sedentary living and industrialised food processes deepened the chasm between what was perceived as a healthy gut and the status of people's digestive systems. Often viewed as out of time with the frantic pace of urban working life, the gut has been characterised as a victim of modernity and yet the processes associated with it —consumption, absorption, disassembly, and waste— were closely allied to the project of modernism. Today's scientists also note that the lifestyle changes caused by the agricultural and industrial revolutions have profoundly altered the ecological relationships and disease patterns of populations, notably the diversity of our gut bacteria. In this conference we explore the relationship between the digestive system and modernity including dedicated sessions on the gut and literary modernism.

We invite papers of 15-20 minutes by speakers from any discipline (including history, literary studies, philosophy, art history, sociology, psychology, anthropology, geography, microbiology, biochemistry, immunology, bacteriology)

- Please send an abstract of around 200 words to elsa.richardson@strath.ac.uk by 16 January 2023. Abstracts should be framed with a view to addressing an audience made up of both specialists and non-specialists and should include the proposer's contact details (email).
- We also encourage proposals for complete panels (of 3 or 4 speakers). These should include the names and e-mail addresses of all speakers, and those of the proposed session chair. As well as an abstract for each speaker, proposals should contain a brief outline of the rationale and motivation of the proposed panel. One individual involved should be clearly designated as the proposer with overall responsibility for the proposed session.
- We are also keen to encourage other formats which might include (but are not limited to): pre-circulated materials, performance or creative practices, project-based sessions, lightning talks, non-academic partnerships.

Possible themes

- Modern temporalities and the gut
- Early understandings of gut microbes
- Changing understandings of space and the gut

- Modern science and new understandings of the gut itself
- Modernist writing and the digestive system
- Changing concepts of emotions and the relationship with the gut
- Human-animal relations
- Circadian rhythms and the digestive system
- Gut disorders and sleep deprivation
- Gut conditions as a disease of civilization
- Gut health and media

We especially invite applications from postgraduate students and there will be some funding available for PGR travel from within the UK. Please note: this will be an in person conference.

Organised by: **The Scottish Gut Project**
https://scottishgut.wixsite.com/project
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