

SIMON TORRACINTA

Program in the History of Science and Medicine, Yale University
Center for the History of Political Economy, Duke University
Social Sciences Building, 419 Chapel Drive, Durham, NC
+1-857-707-2366
simon.torracinta@yale.edu

EDUCATION

2016–2023. Ph.D. History of Science and Medicine, Yale University.

Dissertation: “Economy of Desire: The Sciences of Human Wants, 1870–1950”
Committee: Joanna Radin (Chair), Deborah Coen, Samuel Moyn
M.A. (2018); M.Phil. (2019)

2012–2014. M.A. International History, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva.

2009–2012. B.A. (First Class), History, University of Oxford.

PUBLICATIONS

PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

2023. “Maps of Desire: Edward Tolman’s Drive Theory of Wants,” *History of the Human Sciences* 36.1. Winner of the journal’s Early Career Prize.

WORKING PAPERS

“The Paradoxes of Productivity.” *History of Political Economy* (invited to contribute).

“The Disappearance of the Economic Want? Interwar Entanglements of Economics and Psychology.” *History of Social Science* (invited to contribute).

EDITED VOLUMES

2021. “We Don’t Know, But Let’s Try It.” *Uncertainty*. Sheila Jasanoff *et al.* Ed. Joshua Cohen and Deborah Chasman. Cambridge: MIT Press. 132-155.

PUBLIC WRITING

2022. “Bad Economics,” *Boston Review* (March 2022). Review of *Thinking Like an Economist* by Elizabeth Popp-Berman, *Cogs and Monsters* by Diane Coyle, and *What’s Wrong with Economics?* by Robert Skidelsky.

2021. “The Low-Carbon Good Life,” *New Labor Forum* (June 2021). Review of *Post-Growth Living* by Kate Soper.

2020. “The Gadfly of American Plutocracy,” *Boston Review* (December 2020). Review of *Veblen* by Charles Camic.
2020. “The Peripeteia of The Gift,” *History of Anthropology Review* (October 2020). Review of *Gift Exchange* by Grégoire Mallard.
2020. “Extinction Event,” *n+1* (May 2020). On financing higher education.
2017. “Make Kin, Not Borders,” *The New Inquiry* (September 2017). Review of *The Economization of Life* by Michelle Murphy.

AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS & GRANTS

- 2022–23 Duke History of Political Economy Center Predoctoral Research Fellowship
- 2021 *History of the Human Sciences* Early Career Prize
- 2021 National Science Foundation Travel Grant, History of Science Society
- 2020 Princeton Library University Research Grant
- 2020 University of Chicago Robert L. Platzman Memorial Fellowship
- 2019 Duke Center for the History of Political Economy Young Scholars Grant
- 2019 Rockefeller Archive Center Research Stipend
- 2018 National Science Foundation Travel Grant, History of Science Society
- 2017–18 Overbrook History Fellowship Fund, Yale University
- 2017 History Pre-Dissertation Fellowship, Yale University
- 2016–17 A. Bartlett Giamatti Memorial Graduate Fellowship in the Humanities, Yale University
- 2016 LAHP Arts and Humanities Research Council Scholarship for Ph.D. in History, King’s College London (declined)
- 2013 Visiting Fellowship, École Doctorale, Science Po Paris
- 2012 Arnold Modern Historical Essay Prize (Best Thesis in History), University of Oxford
- 2012 Runner Up, Undergraduate Dissertation Prize, Society for the Study of French History

INVITED TALKS

- 2022 “The Disappearance of Desire.” Transforming Homo Economicus Workshop (École normale supérieure Paris-Saclay, December 2022).
- 2019 “Utility: Need and Satiation in the Affluent Society.” With the Yale Working Group on Globalization and Culture (Dartmouth University, May 2019).

CONFERENCES

PANEL ORGANIZATION

- 2021 *Working Theories: The Human Sciences and Motivation to Labor in the Twentieth Century*. Sponsored by the Forum for History of Human Science. History of Science Society. (New Orleans, November 2021).

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- 2022 “‘A Self-Contained Globule of Desire’: Wants in the Birth of Microeconomics.” Center for the History of Political Economy Workshop (Duke University, November 2022).
- 2021 “States of Desire: The Socialist Calculation Debate over Incommensurable Wants.” History of Economics Society (Utrecht, Netherlands, December 2021).
- 2021 “Time, Labor, and Motivation in Midcentury Economics.” History of Science Society. (New Orleans, November 2021).
- 2021 “Abstract Leisure-Time.” With the Yale Working Group on Globalization and Culture. Yale University American Studies Colloquium (June 2021).
- 2019 “The Moral Economies of Modernization: Eric Wolf’s Cold War Peasant Ethnography.” American Anthropological Association. (Vancouver, November 2019).
- 2019 “‘(Can’t Get No) Satisfaction’: Utility and Need in the Global 1970s.” Cultural Studies Association. (New Orleans, June 2019).
- 2018 “Two Sciences for ‘Man with a Capital-M’: Man’s Role and Anthropology in the Atomic Age.” History of Science Society. (Seattle. November 2018).
- 2018 “‘How do you know we’ll be alive then?’: Spaceship Earth, Cold War Man, and the Origins of the Anthropocene.” 53rd Annual Joint Atlantic Seminar for the History of Biology. (Princeton University, April 2018).
- 2017 “Science for Earthly Survival: The *Radical Science Journal* in the History of Science.” Knowledges in Contact: 6th Annual Natura Conference on Science and Epistemology. (Rutgers University, March 2017).

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

YALE UNIVERSITY

Instructor of Record:

Being Human since 1945 (scheduled Summer 2023)

This seminar traces the arc of the human sciences since 1945. Each session considers a different object of the human sciences—e.g. sex, race, primates, blood, brains—as they became salient for researchers seeking to get at the root of the human species. The course draws together developments in fields like primatology, cognitive science, genomics, human biology, demography, psychiatry, and neuroscience to understand the stakes behind claims to human nature and dreams of reengineering or liberation.

Teaching Fellow:

American Economic History (Spring 2021)
 Historical Perspectives on Global Health (Fall 2020)
 Making Climate Knowledge (Fall 2019)
 The World circa 2000 (Spring 2019)
 Media and Medicine in Modern America (Fall 2018)
 American Environmental History (Spring 2018)

MEDIA APPEARANCES

“For an Alternative Hedonism.” KBOO 90.7FM Portland. August 2021.
 “Higher Education in Crisis.” *The Dig* Podcast. September 2020.

LANGUAGES

English & French (native speaker); Spanish (fluent); German (working)

ACTIVITIES & SERVICE

Steering Committee, Forum for History of Human Science (2021–present).
Editor, *History of Anthropology Review* (<http://histanthro.org/>) (2018–present).
Coordinator, Yale Working Group on Marxism & Cultural Theory (2018–22).
Coordinator, Holmes Workshop in the History of Science and Medicine, Yale University (2018–19).
Member, Yale Working Group on Globalization and Culture (2018–21).
Graduate Affiliate, Trumbull College, Yale University (2018–19).
Associate Editor, *History of Anthropology Review* (2017–18).
Student Representative, Search Committee, Assistant Professor of International History, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva (2014).

REFERENCES

Joanna Radin (*Dissertation Chair*)

Associate Professor of History, History of Medicine, and Anthropology
Yale University
Sterling Hall of Medicine, 333 Cedar Street
New Haven, CT 06510
T: 203-785-4258
E: joanna.radin@yale.edu

Samuel Moyn

Chancellor Kent Professor of Law and History
Yale University
Yale Law School, 127 Wall Street
New Haven, CT 06511
T: (203) 432-1994
E: samuel.moyn@yale.edu

Deborah Coen

Professor of History and History of Science and Medicine
Yale University
Humanities Quadrangle, 320 York Street
New Haven, CT 06511
T: 203-436-8100
E: deborah.coen@yale.edu