MIT HASTS Common Exam List

Version of 10 June 2008

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The committee compiled this list of 125 works by examining as many past HASTS student exam bibliographies as could be found, paying special attention to readings that appeared again and again. The list means to replace Field 1 of the general exam, described as follows in the HASTS Student Handbook:

Field 1: Each student selects one of the following three general areas for examination: social and cultural perspectives on science and technology; history of technology; or history of science.¹

The list covers all three areas. Some faculty may wish, in their individual administrations of the list, to add or subtract a few texts to align it with their own expertise and sense of the literature. The list intersects, though does not replace, lists in environmental history, history of medicine, and social theory, other areas of Program strength.

To deliver fully on the promise of having an MIT flavor, the list includes one element (book or article) from each HASTS faculty person writing about science and technology.

The list is organized as a chronological bibliography, the purpose of which is to help students build an intellectual history of the interdisciplinary conversation that is HASTS. Appendix 1 lists works by HASTS graduates, Appendix 2, readers and review articles. The works in these appendices are not part of the 125 works mentioned above.

Citations, when possible, are to the original publication. Citation style follows the reference-list entry format described in the 15th edition of The Chicago Manual of Style, with four simplifying exceptions: book and journal titles are not italicized, article and book titles are rendered in Title Case, cities of publication are eliminated, and University Presses are indicated only by the name of the school. This minimalist style makes the list easier to scan.

¹ Other fields as follows:

Field 2: Treats a field of history or the social sciences. This examination probes the student's mastery of a field of history (e.g., Imperial Russian and Soviet history) or a field of one of the social sciences (e.g., theory and method in the study of culture).

Field 3: This part, tailored to each student, examines the range and depth of understanding of the history or social study of a particular science or field of engineering (e.g., the history of modern biology; the social study of information technologies). This exam ordinarily anticipates the area of the student's doctoral dissertation.
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Wiener, Norbert. 1948. Cybernetics: or Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine. MIT.


Nye, David. 1996. American Technological Sublime. MIT.


Thompson, Charis. 2005. Making Parents: The Ontological Choreography of Reproductive Technologies. MIT.


APPENDIX 1: WORKS BY GRADUATES OF HASTS


Botelho, Antonio Jose Junqueira. 1990. The Professionalization of Brazilian Scientists, the Brazilian Society for the Progress of Science (SBPC), and the State, 1948-60. Social Studies of Science 20(3): 473-502.


APPENDIX 2: REVIEW ESSAYS, READERS


