

Contents

Scribal Abbreviations — VII

Tables and Illustrations — IX

Acknowledgements — XI

Preface: Networking the Age of Curiosity: Unmasking the Myth — 1

1 Original Sin or Secret of Happiness? An Introduction to Curiosity — 6

- 1.1 The Age of Curiosity — 8
- 1.2 Organisation of This Volume — 19
- 1.3 Text Selection — 23

2 “The Thinking Animal”: Lovejoy’s History of Ideas — 27

- 2.1 Curiosity in Lovejoy’s History of Ideas — 29
- 2.2 Criticism of Lovejoy’s History of Ideas — 35
 - 2.2.1 Foucault’s Archaeology: Against a Teleology of Ideas — 36
 - 2.2.2 Skinner: Objections against Teleology and Proleptic Imagination — 41

3 Methodology of the Study — 46

- 3.1 A New History of Ideas as Neural Network — 47
- 3.2 The Neural Network as Analogy for the History of Ideas — 59

4 Curiosity: Origins of the Debate — 66

- 4.1 Etymology and Definitions of Curiosity — 67
- 4.2 Progress-Oriented vs. Personal Curiosity in Roman Antiquity — 81
- 4.3 The Decline of Piety? Early Christian and Patristic Commentaries on Curiosity — 85

5 Curiosity Across Different Media — 92

- 5.1 Francis Bacon’s Philosophical Contributions to the Debate in Neo-Classicism: Curiosity as the Virtue of Kings in *The Advancement of Learning* (1605) — 98

5.2	Cabinets, Collections, and the Loss of Innocence: The Impact of Sir Thomas Browne on the “Culture of Curiosity” — 106
5.3	“Some Share of Curiosity, I Will Not Say Scepticism”: David Hume, <i>An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> (1738) as Philosophy of Curiosity — 116
5.4	Curiosity in the Periodical Essay — 125
6	Agents of Curiosity and the ‘New Science’ — 162
6.1	The <i>Virtuoso</i> and Public Curiosity in Shadwell and Butler — 165
6.2	The <i>Voyeur</i> as Epistemological Paradox — 175
6.2.1	Voyeurism in the Works of Jonathan Swift — 176
6.2.2	Voyeurism and Rites of Passage in Pope, <i>The Rape of the Lock</i> (1712) — 189
6.3	The Agent as Victim of Curiosity: George Lillo’s <i>Fatal Curiosity</i> (1736) — 201
6.4	The Scientist as Agent of Curiosity: Samuel Johnson, <i>Rasselas</i> (1759) — 210
7	Secret Chambers, Hidden Chests, and the Mysterious Self: Objects of Curiosity in Romanticism — 222
7.1	“Alcohol of the Imagination”: Curiosity as Addiction in William Beckford’s <i>Vathek</i> (1786) — 223
7.2	Transgressions of Space: Forbidden Rooms and Hidden Secrets in Bluebeard Narratives — 241
7.3	The Locked Chest: Psychological and Political Cabinets of Curiosity in <i>Caleb Williams</i> (1794) and <i>The Iron Chest</i> (1796) — 247
7.4	The Fast and the Curious – The Role of Curiosity in the Gothic Heroine’s Grand Tour of the Mind — 257
7.5	“One Might As Well Live Among the Savages”: The Individual as Object of Curiosity in Joanna Baillie, <i>Rayner</i> (pub. 1804) — 271
8	Conclusion: Legitimacy of Curiosity in the Eighteenth Century and Beyond — 278

Works Cited — 289

Dictionaries, Thesauri — 312

Index — 313