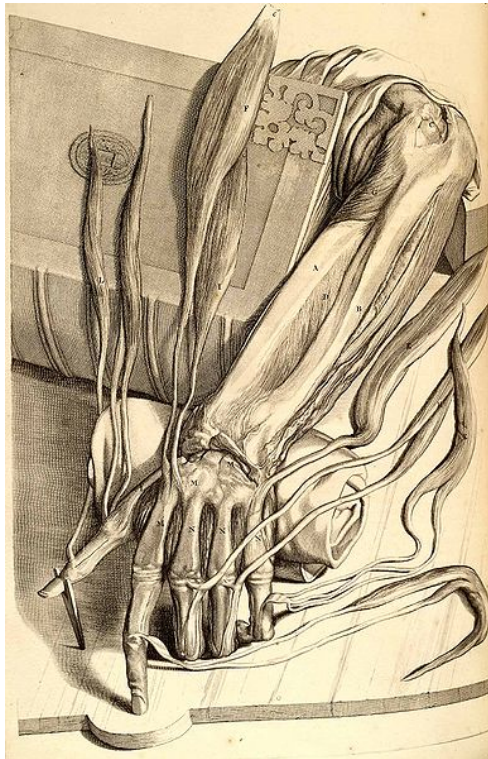


The Renaissance Studies Program
“*Techné*: Intersections of Theory and Practice in Renaissance Culture”
Series
Presents a lecture by

LYLE MASSEY

*The Epistemic Image: Picturing Knowledge in Early
Modern Sciences of the Body*

6:00 p.m., Monday, September 24, 2012
Maple Room
Indiana University Union



First printed in 1543, Andreas Vesalius's *De humani corporis fabrica* challenged centuries of assumptions about human anatomy. One reason that the book was so persuasive to generations of physicians and anatomist was that the beautiful, folio-sized plates depicting the dissected body established the very idea of a normative canon of knowledge. Presenting an ideal composite of observations taken from interactions with multiple bodies, the plates embody a Renaissance episteme that Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison have called “truth-to-nature.” This approach to representation remained hegemonic until it was challenged first by the Dutch anatomist and surgeon, Govard Bidloo, in the late 17th century, and then by the English man-midwife, William Hunter, in the 18th century. Bidloo and Hunter rejected the very idea of the normative picture and instead published anatomical pictures that focused on the individuated act of dissection and on the hand, as-it-were, of the anatomist himself. This lecture will explore how and why this shift from the normative to the manual illuminates aspects of the relationship between picturing and vision in early modern science.

Lyle Massey is Associate Professor of Art History and Visual Studies at the
University of California, Irvine

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