

∞ *Café Scientifique* ∞

Tuesday, April 15, 2008

At **Poor Richard's Restaurant & Bookstore**

320/324½ N Tejon St, Colorado Springs

This Month's Topic:

“Helps in their own fields and gardens”: Early Modern women's ownership of English herbals

Dr. Rebecca Laroche, English Department, UCCS

Sixteenth and seventeenth century England saw the printing of several authoritative, vernacular herbals, comprehensive treatises on herbs and their medicinal uses. My research has shown that despite the sometimes indifferent treatment of women that occurs in the herbals, these treatises are often owned by gentlewomen. In my archival research undertaken across the United States and in parts of Britain, I have uncovered more than twenty-three examples of women from this period who have claimed such ownership. My presentation will give a brief assessment of the nature of these often beautiful books, share various images of women's inscriptions in these texts, and discuss the implications of this ownership.

Come early if you'd like to get something to eat. At 6:30 we'll take our drinks to Poor Richard's Bookstore for the Café meeting, which should be over by 8:00 pm.

There is no charge. Poor Richard's is generously providing the facility; and we buy our own food and drinks. It will be first come, first seated.

The Café Scientifique idea started in England a few years ago, based on the French Café Philosophique. In the Café Scientifique, people (often science buffs) come together in a friendly pub and hear an informal introduction to an interesting current scientific topic, led by an expert. After this there is an hour or so of questions and answers and general discussion. There will be opportunity for everyone to ask questions, and we welcome those that begin "This might be a stupid question, but..." These questions are invariably not stupid and often rather insightful.

The Colorado Café Scientifique is organized by an informal group of faculty from CU and other institutions up and down the Front Range, as well as science types from industry and government. We welcome your input, including ideas for speakers and topics. Bring them with you to the next Café. Questions? Contact Tom Huber (thuber@uccs.edu) or David Anderson (danderso@uccs.edu).