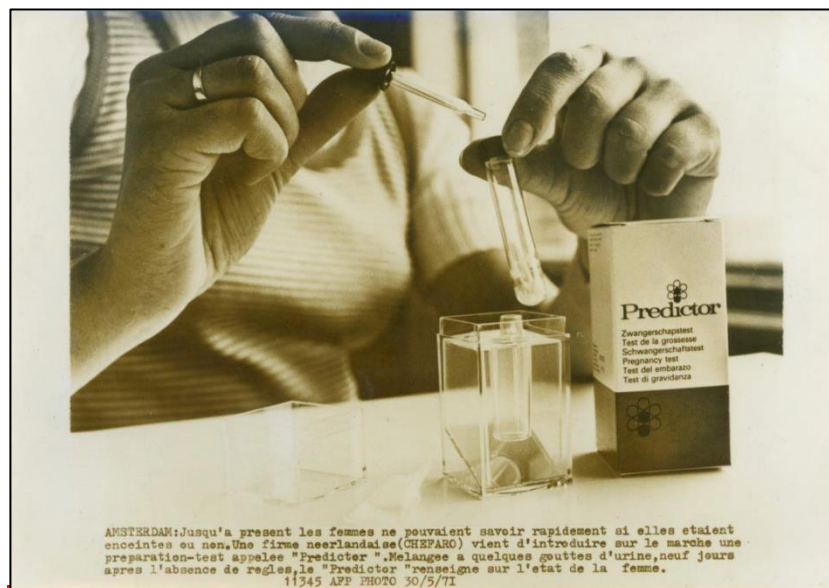




UCD Centre for the History of Medicine in Ireland

Seminar Series 2018 – 2019

5pm Thursday 11 April 2019
Room K114, School of History, UCD



Dr Jesse Olszynko-Gryn (University of Strathclyde)

**‘A woman’s right to know:
a history of pregnancy testing in Britain’**

Abstract: Today, home pregnancy testing is completely taken for granted. It is implicated in personal decisions and public discourses around all aspects of reproduction, from miscarriage and abortion to the biological clock and IVF. And yet, only three generations ago, women typically waited not minutes, but months to find out whether they were pregnant. In this presentation I will recover the contested rise of a little-studied technology, from around 1900 to the present day. I will show how the demand for pregnancy testing decisively shifted from doctors to women, first as patients and then as consumers, and work through the core argument of my book-in-progress, which seeks to explain the remarkable transformation of pregnancy testing from a taboo diagnostic service to a commonplace of everyday life.

Dr Jesse Olszynko-Gryn is a Chancellor's Fellow and Lecturer in History of Health and Wellbeing at the University of Strathclyde. His first book, *A Woman's Right to Know: Pregnancy Testing in Twentieth Century Britain* is in preparation with the Berkeley Series in British Studies for University of California Press. Lately, he has been studying and intervening in the unresolved controversy over the use and regulation of sex hormones in pregnancy. He has published articles and book chapters on the history of pregnancy testing, population control, science fiction, feminism, and technologies of contraception and abortion.