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UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI PARMA



STUDIO FIRMANO
PER LA STORIA DELL'ARTE MEDICA E DELLA SCIENZA

CSMBR
ONLINE
EVENTS



‘ASTROLOGUS
PRAEDICERE
POSSIT FUTURA
CONTINGENTIA? NEGO’

25
FEBRUARY
2025
5.00 pm CET

ASTROLOGY IN EARLY MODERN UNIVERSITY DISPUTATIONS

MICHELLE ARONEY • University of Oxford

The marginalisation of astrology—the protracted process by which a rich scholarly field migrated into the margins of European intellectual culture—is still not fully understood, despite renewed attention from historians. This lecture suggests that we can learn more about this important shift in the history of science by studying the evidence provided by university student disputations. Regular oral disputations were a basic facet of university pedagogy,

and the formal disputations required for graduation were typically public events. Records of the latter survive for many universities across Europe. A rich but still under-utilized vein of evidence, this data can shed light on the topics that were deemed of pedagogical interest as well as what interested students themselves. Valuable traces of oral culture, disputation records point to the role of education in intellectual and cultural

change but also show that in this period the university was not an isolated ivory tower, but its curricula both responded to and was impacted by local and pan-European events. We now know a great deal about how astrology was taught in medieval and Renaissance universities, but there is still much we don't know about the process whereby astrology was removed from its previous position in university faculties. The lecture will explore, in a series of case studies, how astrology figured in disputations in several early modern universities, ultimately disappearing from disputation literature over the course of the eighteenth century.

The event is free to attend but registration is required. Info at csnbr.fondazionecomel.org