

The antecedents to PowerPoint presentations: The slides of the Marks-Hirschfeld Museum of Medical History

Recently lead CI Martyn Jolly visited Dr James Nixon, curator at the Marks-Hirschfeld Museum of Medical History in the University of Queensland School of Medicine.



James looks after two significant sets of slides. The first collection comes from Dr John Bostock, and is an integrated set of teaching slides and index cards. The slides still have their original cross-referenced index cards, filed in their original index box, and were used for psychology lectures to medical students between 1945 and 1955. Although politically very conservative, educationally Bostock was very innovative. As demonstrated by this set he was a pioneer in using images, often cartoons, and short, graphic

‘bullet point’ texts, often typed onto coloured cellophane for projection. Looking at his carefully filed set of lecture slides sixty years later, with their accompanying index cards, we were reminded of today’s PowerPoint slides which routinely integrate text and image. This set is an intact example of early innovative teaching materials in Australia.

The second collection is from Herbert John Wilkinson, who in 1936 became foundation Professor of Anatomy at the University of Queensland. Before coming to Queensland, Wilkinson had been lecturing in Anatomy in Adelaide. In 1931 he had joined an extensive anthropological expedition to Cockatoo Creek in South Australia’s north. (For more information see Philip Jones, *Images of the Interior: Seven Central Australian Photographers*, Wakefield Press, 2011) The majority of Wilkinson’s slides were donated to Queensland Museum, and are discussed in our



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Spotlight on the Museum of Queensland, above, but the ones that remain at the UQ, although suffering water damage, document in extraordinary detail ceremonial practices such as penile sub-incision, tooth extraction, and vein opening.