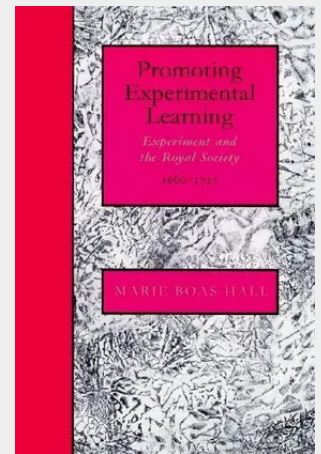


Promoting Experimental Learning

Experiment and the Royal Society, 1660 1727

In spite of all that has been written in the past decades about the first half-century of the Royal Society's existence, no one has so far examined just what took place at the Society's weekly meetings nor how far they fulfilled the expressed aim of promoting 'experimental learning'. Students of the early Royal Society have often taken its aim to have been fully expressed in the writings of such Fellows as Boyle, Hooke and Newton, aware that Hooke especially performed very many experiments at the meetings between 1662 and 1703, while he and others wrote about the necessity of doing so. This study attempts to analyse the content of the meetings in detail in order to discover how far and in what manner the aims of the Society were fulfilled in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. This book for the first time explores the practices of the Society's Fellows, and shows how these altered between 1660 and 1727.

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