

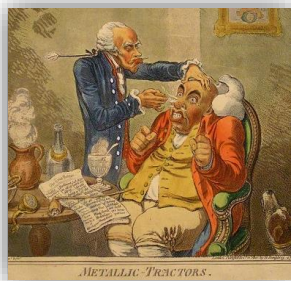
## Beyond the Cutting Edge... Quackery & Medicine in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century

We are familiar with the disturbingly common medical practice of Bloodletting used in the past, but eighteenth century medicine was also a time of innovation...however many of the new curative wonders, though based in real science, were of dubious merit. Mesmerism, Perkinism, and Galvanism were to be the miraculous remedies that could replace the doctor's blades. But were they real medicine or rank quackery?



The new science of Electricity spawned Electro-physicians, like London's Doctor James Graham, who claimed that electricity could cure all ills... and even provide a spark to one's love life! Followers of "Galvanism" felt that electric shocks could revive the dead and they conducted experiments on corpses. This would eventually inspire Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*.

Animal Magnetism was the controversial medical fad touted by Dr. Franz Mesmer in salons of 1780's Paris. Marie Antoinette and the Marquis de Lafayette were Mesmerized!

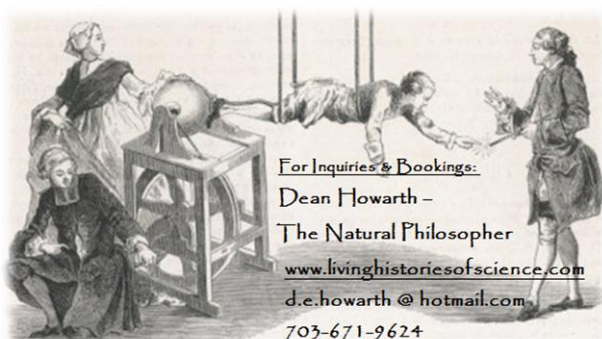


In America, Elisha Perkins touted the curative power of his Metallic Attractors, a simple device based a hybrid of Galvanic and Mesmeric principles that could be purchased for home use. Even Washington was enticed to buy a set of "tractors".

### The Natural Philosopher, Dean Howarth

incorporates a large collection of scientific apparatus including Electrostatic Generators, Leyden jars, Magnets, and quack medical instruments akin to those used in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Based on his experience as a veteran science educator and

collaborator with museums and historic sites, Mr. Howarth uses these replica instruments and props to engage and entertain audiences by recreating experiments and sharing the stories of "cutting edge" science including Mesmer's séances and electro-medicine whereby guests can judge for themselves as to the magical curative powers.



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