

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910984645503321
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Titolo	Science and Immortality : The Eloges of the Paris Academy of Sciences (1699-1791)
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Berkeley : , : University of California Press, , 2018 ©1980
ISBN	9780520378476 9780520304048
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (219 pages)
Disciplina	509/.2/2
Soggetti	Eulogies Science Scientists - France SCIENCE / History
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di contenuto	Cover -- Title Page -- Copyright -- Dedication -- Contents -- Preface -- Acknowledgments -- Introduction: Science and Eulogy -- I: Form and Style -- 2: Attraction and Affinity: Fontenelle and Mairan -- 3: Generation and Taxonomy: The Secretaries' parti pris -- 4: Science and Utility: From Colbert to Franklin -- 5: Estate, Education, and Employment -- 6: Science and Morality: Ancient and Modern Sources -- Conclusion: The Moral Philosophers of Nature -- Appendix A: "Public" Éloges in the Chronological Order of Their Publication -- Appendix B: Condorcet's "Written" Éloges and Notices in the Alphabetical Order of Their Subjects -- Appendix C: "Public" Éloges in the Alphabetical Order of Their Subjects, by Class, with Their Dates of Publication -- Appendix D: Members of the Paris Academy of Sciences Not Eulogized between 1699 and 1791 -- Appendix E: Sources of the Éloges -- Appendix F: Three Sample Éloges -- List of Abbreviations -- Notes -- Bibliography -- Indexes.
Sommario/riassunto	From the eighteenth century until as recently as World War II, the natural scientist was depicted as a kind of moral superhero: objective, modest, ascetic, and selflessly dedicated to the betterment of

humanity. What accounts for the widespread diffusion of this myth? In *Science and Immortality*, Charles B. Paul provides a partial explanation. The modern ideology of the scientist as disinterested seeker after truth arose partly through the transformation of an ancient literary form--the commemoration of heroes. In 1699 Bernard de Fontenelle, as Secretary of the Paris Academy of Sciences, inaugurated the tradition of the *éloge*, or eulogy, in honor of members of the Academy. The moral qualities that had once been attributed to the idealized Stoic philosopher were transferred in the eulogies to the "natural philosopher," or scientist. The over two hundred *éloges* composed between 1699 and 1791 by Fontenelle and his successors--Mairan, Fouchy, and Condorcet--served as a powerful device for the popularization of science. It was the intention of the secretaries, though, not only to exhibit the natural scientist as a modern-day hero but also to present a truthful record of scientific activity in France. Paul examines the *éloges* both as a literary form that used rhetorical and stylistic devices to reconcile these two conflicting goals and as a collective biography of a new breed of savants--one that already contained the seed of the conflict between self-image and reality embedded in the modern scientific enterprise. A unique history of science in eighteenth-century France, *Science and Immortality* illuminates the record in the *éloges* of the professionalization of some sciences and the maturation of others, the recognition of their utility to society and the state, and the widening trust in science as the remedy to economic restriction and political absolutism. Paul's thorough catalog of the *éloges*, extensive bibliography, and translations of representative *éloges* make this book an essential source for scholars in the field. This title is part of UC Press's Voices Revived program, which commemorates University of California Press's mission to seek out and cultivate the brightest minds and give them voice, reach, and impact. Drawing on a backlist dating to 1893, Voices Revived makes high-quality, peer-reviewed scholarship accessible once again using print-on-demand technology. This title was originally published in 1980.

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