

## **SCIENCE STUDIES NETWORK**

A research network and colloquium funded by the Simpson Center for the Humanities, 2007-2009.

### **Organizers:**

Alison Wylie (Professor, Philosophy)  
Stephanie Malia Fullerton (Assistant Professor, Medical History and Ethics)  
Celia Lowe (Associate Professor, Anthropology)  
Philip Thurtle (Assistant Professor, CHID and History)  
Simon Werrett (Assistant Professor, History)

The University of Washington has a well-deserved reputation for its nationally ranked strength in a range of sciences but, by contrast with peer institutions of similar profile, it has no comparably ambitious interdisciplinary program in science studies. This is not for want of accomplished science studies scholars in a number of fields, many of whom have developed interdisciplinary initiatives (speaker series and discussion groups, research clusters, interdisciplinary courses and curricular tracks). Our aim is to create a forum in which these colleagues can explore common interests in a sustained way, and assess the potential for joining forces in developing science studies at the University of Washington.

In Fall 2007 we will initiate a two year program of bi-weekly colloquium meetings that will bring together faculty and graduate students who represent three overlapping constituencies of interest in science studies at UW: **History and Philosophy of Science**, **Cultural Studies of Science**, and **Ethics, Equity, and Science Policy**. This is intended to catalyze an inclusive research network, building on the interest and momentum generated by the Science Studies Speaker Series sponsored by the Simpson Center in 2003-2005. In addition we have two further goals: to foster topic-specific research clusters and externally funded collaborative research projects; and to explore the potential for establishing an interdisciplinary program in science studies that integrates dispersed course offerings and expands on the success of the existing major in History and Philosophy of Science.

### ***The Colloquium***

In the initial meetings of the colloquium, in Fall 2007, colleagues working in each of the three areas identified above will be invited to give work-in-progress presentations on the state of play in their fields. We expect these sessions to generate a roster of topics for cross-field discussion in subsequent meetings. "Democratizing science" is one such topic that took shape in the process of developing the *Science Studies Network* proposal: it brings together questions about the role of science in democratic institutions, scientific accountability in democratic contexts, and the salience of democratic ideals (deliberative process) as a model for the practice of science.

### ***Collaborative research project development***

Several projects have already begun to take shape, or are in progress, that we expect to be nodes in the *Science Studies Network*. These include two conferences that have been funded for 2007-2008, as well as projects on *The Participation of Ethnic Minorities in STEM Fields* (Ginorio), *Science in Transnational Context* (Lowe; Anagnost and Thurtle). The conferences in prospect are:

- *10<sup>th</sup> Annual Philosophy of Social Science Roundtable* (local organizer, Alison Wylie): the Roundtable brings together an international group of scholars interested in theoretical, epistemic, methodological, and normative questions that arise in, and about, the social sciences (March 7-9, 2008).
- *Expanding Interdisciplinarity from Campus to Communities: Exploring Innovation in Collaborative Research* (organized by Kelly Fryer-Edwards and Alison Wylie): a working conference on the implications of community based participation for research design and results (May/June 2008).

### ***Curriculum and program development***

Our point of departure will be a review of existing Science Studies courses and programs at UW (Fall 2007), and of models for programs in Science Studies that have been instituted elsewhere (Winter 2008). With these resources in hand we will establish a planning group to design an interdisciplinary curriculum in Science Studies for UW. We expect to convene a retreat for Fall 2008 to assess what has been learned in the first year of this process and to formulate plans for moving forward.