



Events

New Books in Print

PHILLIP THURTLE

Comparative History of Ideas
University of Washington

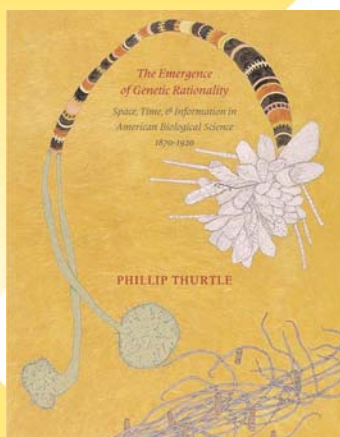
The Emergence of Genetic Rationality: Space, Time, and Information in American Biological Science, 1870-1920
(University of Washington Press, 2008)

Tuesday, April 8, 2008

4:00 pm

Communications 202

Reception to follow



Phillip Thurtle's recent book, *The Emergence of Genetic Rationality*, analyzes the moment just before the emergence of genetic rationality at the turn of the twentieth century to explicate the technological, economic, cultural, and even narrative transformations necessary to make genetic thinking possible.

In describing this historical moment, *The Emergence of Genetic Rationality* addresses primary texts that range from horse breeding manuals to eugenics treatises, natural history tables to railway surveys, and novels to personal diaries. It draws on the work of figures as diverse as Thorstein Veblen, Jack London, Edith Wharton, William James, and Luther Burbank. The central figure, David Starr Jordan—naturalist, poet, eugenicist, educator—provides the book with a touchstone for deciphering the mode of rationality that genetics superseded.

Phillip Thurtle is assistant professor in the Comparative History of Ideas program. He is co-editor (with Robert Mitchell) of *Data Made Flesh: Embodying Information* (2003), *Semiotic Flesh: Information and the Human Body* (2002), and of the book series *In Vivo: The Cultural Mediations of Biomedicine*. Thurtle's research focuses on identity and biology in the American eugenics movement, the use of new media in popular science, the material culture of information processing, comics and the affective-phenomenological domains of media, and the role of information processing technologies in biomedical research.