

# International Society for the History, Philosophy, and Social Studies of Biology NEWSLETTER

Fall 2003

Twenty-eighth Issue

Volume 15, No. 2

## President's Semi Annual Report, December 2003

The 2003 meeting in Vienna was a tremendous success. With 114 sessions and 350 presenters from 42 different countries, ISHPSSB 2003 in Vienna was the largest in our society's history. For many participants, this was their first ISHPSSB meeting, and I hope that they will join us again in Guelph in 2005 or Exeter in 2007.

Under Rob Skipper's direction, the Program Committee assembled a rich collection of sessions and papers. It was wonderful to have such a variety of papers to attend, even if it made choosing which to see and which to miss all the more difficult. True to our society's interdisciplinary nature, the program presented an array of intellectual perspectives. Indeed, this disciplinary diversity was the theme of the first plenary session. The second plenary session, which concerned Stephen Jay Gould's *The Structure of Evolutionary Theory*, also encouraged a diversity of opinions and stimulated discussion long after the last presentation. Managing so many sessions and presentations was a huge undertaking, and the members of the Program Committee are to be commended for their effort.

It would be nice to think that the prospect of an ISHPSSB meeting alone is enough to entice 350 people to congregate in July, but, of course, our setting in Vienna made this meeting irresistible. The University of Vienna offered an exceptional venue. Our setting at the Altes KH supplied well-furnished meeting rooms and well-stocked beer



*Vienna Rathaus, site of a welcoming reception for ISHPSSB members. Photo by Douglas Allchin.*

gardens in its courtyard. The reception at the Rathaus and the banquet at a heurigen were both wonderful events and highlights of an already memorable meeting. Our local hosts from the Konrad Lorenz Institute were superbly organized, gracious under pressure, and very generous. The Society owes special thanks to Astrid Juette, Werner Callebaut, Gerd Müller, Eva Karner, and the students from the KLI.

Thanks are also owed to everyone who served on a standing committee for the past two years. Every committee must

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have two council members on it. For this and many hours of other service, I'd like to thank our out-going council members, Jane Maienschien, Gregg Mitman, and Lenny Moss. Lindley Darden will now assume the duties of Past-President having set a high standard for thoughtfulness and organization during her term as President. Thank you Lindley! We owe a special debt as always to the diligence and expertise of Keith Benson as Treasurer and Chris Young as Secretary. I have quickly discovered how much we benefit from Keith's and Chris's commitment and indispensable good humor. Keith and Chris were re-elected to their respective posts.

I'm very pleased to welcome Joe Cain, Kathy Cooke, and Phil Sloan as newly elected Council members. They join Ana Barahona, Christiane Groeben, and Hans-Jörg Rheinberger on the ISHBSSB Council. Our new student representative is Vivette Garcia Deister. She replaces Terence Sullivan. Our new president-elect is Garland Allen. Lynn Nyhart was elected as Program Chair. I'm looking forward to working with everyone on the Council to make our next meeting as successful and enjoyable as our last.

Our next meeting will be in Guelph, Ontario in Canada at the University of Guelph. *Please mark your calendars for July 13-17, 2005!* David Castle from the Department of Philosophy at the University of Guelph will be our host and will be chairing the Local Arrangements Committee. Preliminary information about the next meeting is posted on the society's webpages. Look for more information about the meeting and the program on the web and in future issues of this newsletter.

The University of Guelph is a medium sized university about 75 kilometres (46 miles) from Toronto. David has promised us a relaxing venue for a conference complemented with an engaging array of activities and local points of interest. The city of Guelph itself is a short walk from campus and offers a diverse collection of restaurants and pubs. It is not too early to start thinking about joining us in 2005. Lynn Nyhart and the Program Committee are already planning for another outstanding array of presentations. Your next chance to attend an ISHPSSB meeting will be in 2007 when we meet in Exeter, England.

Congratulations to Kevin Elliott, winner of the 2003 Marjorie Grene Prize. To encourage even more graduate students to submit papers as good as Kevin's, the Council voted in Vienna to increase the monetary award associated with prize to \$500. Unlike previous awards associated with the Grene Prize, the new sum does not have to be applied to travel to an ISHPSSB meeting.

Since the Vienna meeting, I have been busy with a number

of ISHPSSB-related tasks. First, the society's eight standing committees have been reconstituted. A list of their new chairs and members is included in this newsletter. I'm extremely grateful to everyone who was willing to serve on these committees. If you have a question or concern about a particular committee's activities, please contact me or the committee's chairperson. Second, Roberta Millstein has graciously agreed to serve as our webmaster. Working



*A view of Vienna from the tower of the Cathedral of Saint Stephen. Photo by Chris Young.*

with myself and Chris Young, Roberta has arranged for ISHPSSB to use the domain name, <[www.ishpssb.org](http://www.ishpssb.org)>. In addition, our webpages have been redesigned to ease navigation and help us convey more information to you. In the future, we will update our online membership forms to use an online payment service, such as Paypal, for electronic registration and membership charges. This type of service could save the society money, simplify the Treasurer's duties, and reduce security concerns about our webforms. If you have questions or comments about the webpages, please contact me or Roberta.

One of the reasons we have redesigned the webpages is that over the next two years we are going to be striving to make the operation of the society more transparent. For many years ISHPSSB has been struggling with issues of institutional memory. We have been fortunate that so many past officers continue to be involved in the society and are available for consultation. However, rather than struggle to reconstruct important procedures from year to year, we are going to try to use the society webpages as a site to create some continuity. As chairperson of the Operations Committee for the past two years, I began compiling an Operations Handbook for the society. This handbook includes our By Laws and descriptions of current practices. It will be made available online, with job descriptions for the society's officers and an archive of motions passed by the Council and in the General Business meetings. Most of this material should be posted

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# Greene Prize Winner Recognized in Vienna

At each ISHPSSB meeting, the coveted Marjorie Grene Prize is awarded to the best graduate student manuscript based on a presentation at the previous ISHPSSB meeting.

It is very appropriate for ISHPSSB to name this prize in Marjorie Grene's honor. Not only does her work in the history and philosophy of biology exemplify the strong spirit of interdisciplinary work fundamental to ISHPSSB, but she played a central role in bringing together diverse scholars of biology even before the formation of the Society. She has been a valued mentor to many members of the Society and a long-standing inspiration to all.

The Grene prize committee received a number of excellent

submissions this year, and so had a difficult choice to make. However, after much deliberation, we are very pleased to announce that this year's winner is Kevin Elliot, a graduate student at Notre Dame. Congratulations, Kevin!

Kevin's paper "Error as Means to Discovery" is an original contribution to recent work on the role of error in the discovery process by such luminaries as our own outgoing president, Lindley Darden. Kevin focuses on the earliest stages of the discovery process, showing how various aspects of "error probing" affect the trajectory of that process with a detailed analysis of the anomalous phenomenon of "chemical hormesis." The article is currently forthcoming in *Philosophy of Science*.

by next summer. I hope that it will make the operation of the society smoother and more open.

Before we meet again in Guelph two important issues arising out of the Council meetings in Vienna will be addressed. First, the volume of papers in the Vienna program spurred the Council to consider the question of whether or not papers proposed for our meeting should be judged in some manner. In consultation with other ISHPSSB members, I drafted a set of paper acceptance guidelines for discussion by the Council and membership in Vienna. They were enormously successful at generating discussion. While some suggestions within the paper guidelines were widely accepted, others were extremely controversial. Especially problematic was the issue of judging the intellectual quality of submitted abstracts. Because paper acceptance guidelines could have long-lasting effects on ISHPSSB, we decided to use the input we had received and charge the Program Committee to

revisit this issue before the 2005 meeting. As chair of the Program Committee, Lynn Nyhart will be directing the society's effort to address the value, scope, and possible formulation of paper acceptance guidelines. Putting together our meeting program is a significant job in itself. I am extremely grateful to Lynn and the Program Committee for their willingness to consider this important issue. Look for more about paper guidelines in future newsletters and at the General Business meeting in Guelph.

In Vienna, a second significant issue was raised as a motion by Lenny Moss. One of the most important features of ISHPSSB is its international scope. Lenny and the Council would like to encourage greater international participation at meetings and in the governance of the society. In order to promote better international communication, Lenny suggested that we consider a system of regional representatives. These representatives would serve as liaisons to members in designated portions of the world. The Council generally agreed on the value of Lenny's proposal and passed a motion to explore the idea of regional representation. I have asked Christiane Groeben, as Chairperson of the Membership Development Committee, to engage her committee with this proposal and report to the Council at the next meeting. If you would like to contribute your thoughts regarding this issue, please contact me, Christiane, or anyone on the Membership Development Committee.

Your comments are always welcome. Please feel free to get in touch with me or any member of the Council. Contact information for the Council is posted on the ISHPSSB website and printed on the back page of this newsletter. I can be reached at Michael R. Dietrich, Department of Biological Sciences, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH 03755. <Michael.Dietrich@Dartmouth.edu> (603) 646-1389. I look forward to hearing from you!



Mike Dietrich, ISHPSSB President, and Roberta Millstein, ISHPSSB webmaster, enjoy the venue in Vienna. Photo by Chris Young

## *Minutes of the General Business Meeting*

18 July 2003

*Lindley Darden*, presiding

33 members in attendance

*Agenda item:* Motion to suspend the rules

A motion to suspend the rules was passed.

*Agenda item:* Announcements and introductions

A public thanks was made to the Program Committee, chaired by Rob Skipper (See Fall 2001 ISHPSSB Newsletter for members).

Local Arrangements Committee members were thanked, including Gerd Müller, Werner Callabaut, Astrid Juette, Eva Karner, and the students from the KLI.

Council was thanked.

Members who served in the 55 committee positions of the society were thanked.

At the conclusion of the meeting, incoming president Mike Dietrich thanked Lindley Darden.

Judy Johns Schoegel offered a suggestion that this business meeting be better advertised to members in attendance in Vienna as the "General Membership Meeting," rather than a business meeting. As listed, many had assumed it was not open to the general membership of the society.

*Agenda item:* Reading of the minutes of the 2001 meeting at Quinnipiac

A motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes was passed.

*Agenda item:* Reports from committees and officers

*Program Committee*

Rob Skipper reported that the Vienna meeting included 114 sessions, with 350 participants from 42 countries.

*Membership Development Committee*

Jason Robert (for chair, Todd Grantham) reported that the committee had worked to make ISHPSSB better known by producing a flyer and advertising at meetings, including the 4S/HSS/PSA meeting in Milwaukee in 2002. Jay Malone (HSS) had helped in this effort. A flyer is still available on the ISHPSSB website for members to download and distribute at their institutions and at meetings they attend. The committee suggests that advertisements

be placed in relevant journals, and that mailing lists of graduate programs in appropriate fields be obtained for direct mailing of society information.

*Marjorie Grene Prize Committee*

Pam Henson reported on several suggestions from the committee for addressing problems including the low number of submissions and the varied quality of submissions for the prize. Changing the prize to an award for the best presentation would help address the quality of writing issue, but raises new logistic challenges for judging. To make the prize more visible, several suggestions, including deadline adjustments, email reminders, tracking of graduate students, and including a flyer in the program material. Some clarification of the expectations for papers, as well as an increase in the prize amount could also help increase submissions. A more visible and prestigious awarding of the prize would also help. Some of these recommendations were implemented in Vienna. [Secretary's Note: Council voted on Saturday to increase the prize from \$200 for travel to the next meeting to \$500, which could be over and above any travel award. The committee thanked other members for their input.]

*Student Advisory Committee*

Vivette Garcia-Deister coordinated the distribution of a survey for student members. [Results, as of November 1, 2003 are as follows: Out of 27 students who filled out the questionnaire in Vienna, 14 joined ISHPSSB because friends or advisors urged them to do so, 9 have been members for more than 2 years and have attended previous meetings, 16 joined the Society recently (presumably in 2003), and only 2 were non-members. A total of 18 students (of the group surveyed) presented a paper in Vienna. Those who did not present a paper were: 2 non-members, 5 recent members, and 2 older members. Fourteen students said they would definitely attend future meetings, 9 said they would depending on the location, and 4 said they would attend only if presenting a paper. There are 133 student members of the society, representing 20 different countries.]

*Treasurer's Report and Student Travel Report*

Keith Benson reported that student travel requests for ISHPSSB meetings in the past have come from 14-16 students, and have generally all been funded. For the Vienna meeting, the treasurer received 87 requests, 62 of them coming by May 1, 2003. Registration for the meeting is expected to bring in between \$25,000 and \$30,000, which should compare favorably with the expected budget for the meeting.

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## *Secretary's Report*

Chris Young reported that actual membership had not been tracked until very recently, due to the society's tradition of requesting membership renewals only casually and sporadically. Numbers of members in good standing, as of the Vienna meeting, were at an all-time high (405) compared with two years earlier (318). Biennial membership drives, initiated by the Secretary, will be held in the fall after each meeting, in an attempt to get those who did not attend the meeting to renew. In other business, no requests to host an ISHPSSB-endorsed off-year workshop have been received. The deadline for summer 2004 workshops is October 31, 2003.

### *Committee on Education, Steve Fifield*

The purpose of the Education Committee is to foster interactions and provide resources that support ISHPSSB members' efforts to promote the constructively critical analysis of science among students, practicing scientists, science studies scholars, and the wider public. To pursue this goal at the Vienna meeting, the committee organized the pre-conference workshop "Biology and Society Programs: Preparing Students for Biology in Social Context." At the workshop, twenty-five participants and five presenters enjoyed a stimulating and valuable day-long conversation. The committee also solicited paper and session proposals related to biology education. Due in part to these efforts, the Vienna conference included papers that examined biology education in contemporary and historical contexts, and from diverse interpretive perspectives.

### *Nominations Committee*

Dick Burian announced the successful completion of voting for new officers for the society. Continuing Council members include Ana Barahona, Christiane Groeben, and



*Dick Burian, past ISHPSSB President, and Anne McNabb, longtime ISHPSSB supporter. Photo by Chris Young.*

Hans-Jörg Rheinberger. Newly elected members of Council will serve through 2007 and include Joe Cain, Kathy Cooke, and Phil Sloan. The newly elected president-elect is Gar Allen. Mike Dietrich becomes president, and Lindley Darden becomes past-president. Lynn Nyhart was elected as Program Chair. Re-elected to their posts were Keith Benson and Chris Young, treasurer and secretary respectively.

### *Agenda Item:*

#### *Program Guidelines*

Council presented a list of proposed guidelines that might be adopted by the society to assist future program chairs in limiting the size of the program. The perceived need for limitations arose with the Vienna meeting, where an unprecedented number of submissions led to unprecedented numbers of concurrent sessions and speakers. Concerns that so many papers can overwhelm an audience and that standards for quality may not be met were met by opposing concerns that the society remain as inclusive as possible. Previous and current program chairs testified that attempts had always been made to include all legitimate proposals. In a few cases, proposals that seemed outside the scope of even the broadest ISHPSSB interdisciplinary boundaries were returned with suggestions for making the proposal more suitable to this audience. Since Council planned to vote on these guidelines at its next meeting, no action was requested.

### *New Business:*

In order to prevent Council from taking action on the guidelines, a motion from the floor (Eli Gerson) requested that the guidelines be submitted to the general membership for approval before being put into effect. A vote on this motion revealed that a quorum no longer remained in attendance at the meeting. The spirit of the motion, that the issue deserved further discussion from the general membership, was noted by Council.

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

**ISHPSSB Budget**  
2002-03

<u>Expense</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>
Newsletter	8,000	3,399.43
Travel grants <sup>1</sup>	8,000	8,675.00
Meeting Planning <sup>2</sup>	500	0.00
Meeting expenses	20,000	14,750.00
Office support (sec./treas.)	1,000	228.00
Subscriptions <sup>3</sup>	7,500	2,870.20
Bank Fees <sup>4</sup>	3,300	2,678.20
<u>Marjorie Grene Prize</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>232.00</u>
TOTAL	\$ 48,500	\$ 32,832.63

<u>Income</u>		
Membership Dues	14,000	13,750.00
Meeting Income	24,000	37,764.35
Travel grants	1,500	2,661.00
Subscriptions	7,500	2,870.20
Membership Rental <sup>5</sup>	1,000	650.00
<u>Interest</u>	<u>500</u>	<u>291.09</u>
TOTAL	\$ 48,500	\$ 57,986.64

1. Most travel grant money will come from the Society's general fund bank account. This account represents cash reserves and at present is about \$20,000.
2. Beginning with the 2002-2003 budget period, the Society proposes to provide \$500 to support travel by the Society treasurer to negotiate financial arrangements at the upcoming site for the biennial meeting.
3. Subscriptions are, in essence, a "pass through." That is, according to the terms of the agreement with several academic journals, the Society collects money for subscriptions and sends these funds to the publishing agency.
4. As part of conducting business with bank cards, the Society incurs a cost slightly in excess of 3% per transaction. In addition, there is a monthly service fee, which covers the cost of the credit card equipment.
5. The Society rents the membership list to other academic presses and other academic societies only. This rental is for the purposes of providing information to members about academic publications and related academic activities. The Society does not rent the membership list for any other purposes.



*Local arrangements hosts Werner Callebaut and Astrid Juette.  
Photo by Chris Young.*

**ISHPSSB thanks Astrid,  
Werner, Gerd, Eva, and the  
rest of the local  
arrangements team for their  
generosity, hospitality, and  
hard work.**

# ISHPSSB Committees for 2003-2005 Established

## *ISHPSSB 2003-2005 Council*

Michael Dietrich, President  
Garland Allen, President-Elect  
Lindley Darden, Past-President  
Lynn Nyhart, Program Officer  
Chris Young, Secretary  
Keith Benson, Treasurer  
David Castle, Local Arrangements  
Ana Barahona  
Joe Cain  
Kathy Cooke  
Vivette Deister-Garcia  
Christiane Groeben  
Hans-Joerg Rheinberger  
Phil Sloan  
Pamela Henson, Archivist

## *Executive Committee*

Michael Dietrich, President  
Garland Allen, President-Elect  
Lynn Nyhart, Program Officer  
Chris Young, Secretary  
Keith Benson, Treasurer

## *Education Committee*

Joe Cain, Chair  
Gar Allan  
Charbel el-Hani  
Mark Largent  
Brendon Larson  
Muriel Lederman  
David Rudge  
Peter Taylor  
Henny van der Windt

## *Local Arrangements Committee*

David Castle, Chair  
Keith Benson  
Astrid Juette  
Lynn Nyhart  
Ginny Russell

## *Membership Development Committee*

Christiane Groeben, Chair  
Mark Barrow  
Werner Callebaut  
Raphael Falk  
Paolo Palladino  
Rivers Singelton  
Bill Wimsatt  
Chris Young

## *Nominations Committee*

Lindley Darden, Chair  
Ana Barahona  
Christiane Groeben  
Nick Hopwood  
Betty Somocovitis  
Ida Stamhuis  
Bruno Strasser

## *Off-Year Workshop Committee*

Chris Young, Chair  
Nancy Hall  
Anya Plutynski  
Phillip Sloan

## *Operations Committee*

Gar Allen, Chair  
Elihu Gerson  
Pam Henson  
Jane Mainschein  
Phil Sloan

## *Prize Committee*

Kathy Cooke, Chair  
Mike Bradie  
Joe Cain  
Judy Johns Schloegel

## *Program Committee*

Lynn Nyhart, Chair  
Douglas Allchin  
Edna Maria Suarez Diaz  
Jonathan Harwood  
Joao Nunes  
Hans-Joerg Rheinberger

## *Site Selection Committee for 2009 Meeting*

Gar Allen, Chair  
Richard Burian  
Kathy Cooke

## *Student Advisory Committee*

Vivette Deister-Garcia, Chair  
Igor Abdrakhmanov  
Fritz Allhoff  
Matt Haber  
Alistair Sponsel  
John Emrich  
Jason Zinser

## *Travel Support Committee*

Keith Benson, Chair  
Ana Barahona  
Vivette Deister-Garcia  
Lisa Gannett  
Hans-Joerg Rheinberger

*Webmaster:* Roberta Millstein

*Email list manager:* Roberta Millstein

Visit ISHPSSB Online at our  
new domain name:  
[ishpssb.org](http://ishpssb.org)

## Announcements



*Saint Stephen's Cathedral, Vienna. Photo by Chris Young.*

### The History of Science Society Awards Prizes for 2003

Nancy Siraisi (Emerita, Hunter College) has won the Society's most prestigious prize, the Sarton Medal, for her lifetime achievement in the history of science.

Mary Terrall's (UCLA) *The Man Who Flattened the Earth: Maupertuis and the Sciences in the Enlightenment* (University of Chicago Press) has won the Pfizer Prize, for the best scholarly book in the history of science.

Ken Alder's (Northwestern University) *The Measure of All Things: The Seven Year Odyssey and Hidden Error that Transformed the World* (The Free Press) has won the Watson Davis and Helen Miles Davis Prize for the best book in the history of science intended for a broad audience.

Paul L. Farber (Oregon State University) has won the Joseph H. Hazen Education Prize for excellence in teaching.

Ellen Singer More's (Institute for Medical Humanities, University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston) *Restoring the Balance: Women Physicians and the Profession of Medicine, 1850-1995* (Harvard University Press) has won the History of Women in Science Prize (henceforth to be known as the Margaret W. Rossiter History of Women in Science Prize).

Peter Neushul's (University of California, Santa Barbara) and Zuoyue Wang's (California State Polytechnic University) article "Between the Devil and the Deep Sea: C.K. Tseng, Mariculture and the Politics of Science in Modern China." *Isis*, v.91, no. 1, March 2000 has won the Derek Price/Rod Webster Prize for the best article to appear in *Isis*.

Avner Ben-Zaken's (UCLA) article

"Hebraist Motives, Pythagorean Itineraries and the Galilean Agendas of Naples: On the Margins of Text and Context" has won the Henry and Ida Schuman Prize for the best graduate student essay yet to be published.

For further information, please contact Jay Malone at 352.392.1677, [info@hssonline.org](mailto:info@hssonline.org), University of Florida, PO Box 117360, Gainesville, FL 32611-7360.

### Center for Biological Sciences Archives Established at UMBC

by Tom Beck

Capping nearly three decades of collecting biological sciences archives, officials at University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC) announced today the establishment of an international Center for Biological Sciences Archives (CBSA) in the Special Collections Department of the Albin O. Kuhn Library & Gallery. The CBSA already holds 13 major biological sciences archives and plans to develop and promote these and other holdings in the coming years.

Among the CBSA's holdings are the archives of the American Society for Cell Biology, the Tissue Culture Association (now called the Society for Invitro Biology), Society for Developmental Biology, International Union of Immunological Societies, American Type Culture

*Continued on next page.*



## Announcements

Collection, the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, American Association of Immunologists, Society for Protozoologists, the Biophysical Society, the Society for Industrial Microbiology, the University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute (UMBI), and archives of Keith R. Porter and R.D. Allen. Also located at UMBC are the Archives of the American Society for Microbiology, which in addition holds the archives of the International Union of Microbiological Societies, the Anne Sayre Collection of Rosalind Franklin materials, and the Rita Colwell papers.

The mission of the CBSA is to identify, preserve, and provide access to manuscripts, personal papers, and archives generated by individuals and institutions involved in the biological sciences. In addition the CBSA will encourage research, scholarship, and publication of writings on the history, policy implications, and social and cultural impact of the biological sciences. Public programs concerning the archives will be featured in the future as the archives and its activities are developed.

Provost Arthur Johnson said upon approval of the CBSA: "This Center will fill a unique niche at UMBC. It fits very well within the campus mission and the bioscience activities we have in place."

### Dibner Summer Seminar in the History of Biology

#### Perspectives on Molecular Evolution

Course Date: May 19 - May 26, 2004

This is an intensive, one-week seminar with annually varying topics. It is designed for advanced graduate students, younger scholars, and also more established researchers in biology and the history and philosophy of biology. The course is limited to approximately 20 participants, including discussion leaders.

The topic for 2004 is "Perspectives on Molecular Evolution." It is generally acknowledged that, beginning in the 1960s and continuing to the present day, evolutionary biology has been significantly transformed by the incorporation of ideas and techniques from molecular biology. In this seminar, we will "pause" to reflect on these four decades of change. How, exactly, have the general theories and central questions of evolutionary biology changed as a result of molecular considerations? How, exactly, have the standards and practices of evolutionary biology been affected? And, reciprocally, how has evolutionary biology influenced molecular biology? In the process of pursuing these overarching questions, we

will consider particular issues and episodes having to do with rates and mechanisms of evolutionary change, the evolution of the genome, molecular phylogenetics, approaches to modeling, and the development of tests to discriminate between alternative hypotheses. Discussions will be led by invited



From the 1944 film *Swing Fever*, starring Kay Kyser (left) and Merwyn Bogue, better known as "Ish Kabibble."

*Continued on next page.*

## Announcements

biologists, historians, and philosophers. Readings and questions-to-ponder will be circulated in advance.

Another goal of this year's seminar will be to use the resources of the internet to incorporate biologists, historians, and philosophers outside our small group into an ongoing discussion of the topic. To this end, the seminar will make use of, and build upon an existing web-based project on "The History of Recent Science and Technology". <<http://hrst.mit.edu>>

The Seminar in the History of Biology has been supported since 1989 by the Dibner Fund and the Dibner Institute. For more information about the seminar in general, past topics, updates concerning this year's topic, and application information, please visit the course website: <<http://dibinst.mit.edu/DIBNER/DIConferences/WoodsHole/WoodsHoleHome.htm>>

The seminar is being organized with the help of the scientific staff of the MBL's Josephine Bay Paul Center in Comparative Molecular Biology and Evolution.



Gar Allen, ISHPSSB President Elect (foreground), Jim Collins, Arizona State University, and Chris Young, ISHPSSB Secretary. Photo by Keith Benson.

Additional funding for the 2004 seminar has been made available by the Sloan Foundation.

Directors: John Beatty, University of British Columbia; James Collins, Arizona State University; and Jane Maienschein, Arizona State University.

Organizers for 2004: Michael Dietrich, Dartmouth College; and Jan Sapp, York University, Toronto.

### *New Review of Bioethics* – New to Taylor & Francis in 2003

Print ISSN: 1740-0287, Online ISSN: 1740-7915

Editor: Mairi Levitt, University of Central Lancaster, UK

Deputy Editor: Garrath Williams, Lancaster University, UK

The *New Review of Bioethics* is an annual forum for multidisciplinary discussion of bioethics - the ethical, legal, social and political issues posed by medicine and the life sciences. Taking different themes for each volume, the journal aims to devote sustained attention to topics still not central to bioethics - for example: global research priorities; the public health and community services that maintain or promote health rather than cure illness; complementary and alternative medicine. *The New Review* will also reflect on bioethics as a discipline, including the relation between ethical theory and practice, the role of social science and empirical research, the relationship between the disciplines in bioethics and the institutionalisation of bioethics. *The New Review of Bioethics* is here both to survey, and to pose questions for, the current shape of bioethics, aiming to provoke as well as inform.

Institutional Rate: US\$154/ £83

Personal Rate: US\$41/ £25

For further information please visit <[www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/17400287.asp](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/17400287.asp)> or contact Lucy Parrott at <[Lucy.Parrott@tandf.co.uk](mailto:Lucy.Parrott@tandf.co.uk)>

# The Decathlon of Biotourism

—Nathaniel Comfort, Johns Hopkins University

Shamelessly submitted to the ISHPSSB newsletter, September, 2003

We are all familiar with ecotourism, in which one visits beautiful, towntrodden places, taking only pictures, leaving only footprints, broadening one's horizons, and reducing the locals' incentive to grow narcotics. But Ishkabibblers are an intellectual group, and sometimes we need a little more stimulation. Also, as we saw so vividly on the Saturday of the Vienna meeting, we can be just a *bit* competitive. The stunning array of scientifically significant sites in and near Vienna inspired a number of us to devise a new sort of contest, one that requires insight, fortitude, imagination, and the ability to swallow one's pride. (It is therefore ideally suited to graduate students.) We call it the Decathlon of Biotourism.

Herewith, then, are the rules and description.

Each event consists of visiting one of ten major sites in the history of biology. The events were selected following standard principles of Whiggism and chauvinism toward our own interests, leavened only by some consideration of geographical range, the quality of the local food and wine, and humorous potential.

Contestants will be referred to below as "scholars." Anyone having attended an Ishkabibble meeting is eligible to be a scholar. Individuals who have attended but never presented at an Ishkabibble meeting will be designated "non-publishing scholars" and will be subjected to more stringent judging standards.

The events may be performed in any order. Each event carries ten points for a successful visit of the site (getting there AND returning home alive and *compos mentis*; death, whether cerebral or corporal, is disqualifying). Proof of the visit must be collected and must include a photograph

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## Announcements

### Call For Papers

#### Conference: "Philosophical Issues in Medical Science"

Dates: May 13th-15th, 2004

Place: University of Alabama at Birmingham

Featured speakers:

Clark Glymour, Philosophy, Carnegie Mellon University

Paul Thagard, Philosophy, University of Waterloo

Miriam Solomon, Philosophy, Temple University

Allen Buchanan, Philosophy, Duke University

Dan Brock, Philosophy, Brown University

Jonathan Kaplan, Philosophy, Oregon State University

George Graham, Philosophy, Wake Forest University

Lennart Nordenfelt, Health and Society, Linköping Univ., Sweden

Allan Horwitz, Sociology, Rutgers University

Alice Dreger, Science & Technology Studies, Michigan State Univ.

This conference aims at a philosophical examination of medicine that goes beyond the traditional applied-ethics model, using the tools of epistemology, philosophy of science, metaphysics, political philosophy, and other disciplines to explore a broad range of health-related issues, as well as the theoretical bases and foundational

controversies of medical science. Key issues include: the nature of medical theories and evidence, the objective reality of medical concepts, the nature of disease, the social process in producing medical knowledge, the nature of mental health and illness, the concept of personhood in medical and mental health settings, health and normality, the role of values in medical research and practice, distributive justice and health care, the role of medicine in a liberal democracy, and the role of clinical trials in medical research.

Submissions:

Send two copies of your paper of no longer than 3000 words and an abstract of no more than 200 words. Papers on various philosophical topics relevant to medical science are welcome.

Send to: Jennifer McKittrick, UAB Department of Philosophy, 900 13th Street South, HB 414A, Birmingham, AL, 35294-1260

Email submissions are welcome. Send to <mckitric@uab.edu> Submissions must be received by February 2, 2004. Notification will occur by early March, 2004.

of the scholar at the site, plus at least one of the following: collection of some artifact unique to the site (souvenir T-shirt, postcard sent to an acquaintance with a local postmark); validated ticket to and/or from the site via public or commercial transportation; a pack of Mentos mints. Except in event 7, removal of natural objects — stones, seeds, fossils, laboratory equipment, giant tortoises, etc. — from any site in any event is disqualifying.

Three additional points will be awarded for the completion of each subevent, listed below. Subevents must also be documented, either by photograph or by signed affidavit from a witness.

The competition will run for twelve years. At the close of the last session of the 2015 ISHPSSB meeting, any scholar or non-publishing scholar having completed all ten events will submit documentation to Keith Benson, who, along with a committee of judges, does not yet realize that he will evaluate the documentation and total up the points.

The scholar who, by the close of the competition, has collected the most points will win a smart, late-model organism, guaranteed in excellent condition. The second-place finisher will receive a new paradigm, only slightly shifted. Third place will receive an epistemic thing. All finishers will be foregrounded, privileged, and overdetermined at the society banquet.

The events, and their subevents:

1. *Abbey of St. Thomas, Brno, Czech Republic (where Gregor Mendel performed his breeding experiments)*

- Go to the chapel, kneel before the altar, and think secular thoughts.
- Be a mendelian, then don't be a mendelian (repeat nine times).
- It's a long trip home — don't forget to pea before you leave.

2. *Konrad Lorenz Research Station, Grünau, Austria (where Lorenz studied imprinting in greylag geese and performed many experiments on instinct)*

- Persuade something to follow you around all day, honking.
- Do something impulsive, over and over, just for the hell of it.
- Have someone blindfold you, take you at least thirty kilometers away in any direction, remove the blindfold, and return on your own, without a map.

3. *Linnaeus birthplace, Råshult, Sweden*

- Ask the docent, rhetorically, if he or she knows from where Linnaeus derived his genus/species nomenclature system. Two bonus points if the docent gets the pun.
- Arrive by any method you wish, but leave by taxonomy.

4. *Pasteur's grave, Paris, France*

- Pasteurize France, using only a typewriter.
- Prepare a brief speech about what Pasteur meant to French science and deliver it publicly—but keep your notes to yourself.
- Write “I've discovered the secret to Pasteur's anthrax vaccine!” on a postcard, dust it with cornstarch, and send it to a scholarly rival.

5. *Stazione Zoologica, Naples (first modern marine biology laboratory; summer destination for hundreds of leading biologists in 19<sup>th</sup> and early twentieth centuries)*

- Collect both a squishy and a crunchy.
- Make a blastomere martini: shaken, not punctured.
- Go out for sushi.

6. *Down House, Kent, England (Charles Darwin home)*

- Select something both naturally and sexually.
- Vomit — discreetly, in quiet desperation, not Romantically.

7. *Cavendish Laboratory, Cambridge, England (where Watson and Crick constructed their double-helix model of DNA)*

- Take turns gawking vacantly at the ceiling and pointing smirkingly at an imaginary model.
- Burst into a nearby pub brandishing Watson's new book and shouting that you've found *The Secret of Life*.
- Steal something.

8. *Fly room, Schermerhorn Hall, Columbia University, New York, NY (Laboratory of T. H. Morgan and birthplace of classical genetics)*

- Arrive in New York on a red-eye flight.
- Draw a map of how to get there, starting from neither Brno nor Down House.
- On your way off campus, stop in an embryology laboratory and marginalize someone.

9. *Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, Long Island, NY (Home of the phage group, Barbara McClintock's discovery of transposable elements, and the Eugenics Record Office)*

- Rewrite your own history at least twice.
- Feel an organism.
- Sterilize something, but it must be inanimate and you may use only hot, soapy water.

10. *Galápagos Islands, Ecuador (site of Darwin's famous observations leading to his theory of evolution)*

- Radiate among at least five islands.
- Evolve.
- Dethrone mankind from the right hand of God and don't even finch.

## Trip to Grünau to visit Konrad-Lorenz-Research-Station for Ethology and the Bald Ibis Flight Project in the Eastern Austrian Alps, July 20-21, 2003

By Lindley Darden

After the busy ISH03 conference in Vienna (for which thanks to everyone who participated), a group boarded a bus in front of the Einstein Cafe, in the shadow of the gothic Rathaus tower where we had the mayor's lovely reception. Amazingly, after all her work as Chair of Local Arrangements for ISH03, Astrid Juette still had the energy to be our able leader. She is the Executive Manager of the Konrad Lorenz Institute for Evolution and Cognition Research (local Vienna hosts for ISH03), not to be confused with the separate Konrad-Lorenz-Research-Station in Grünau that we were on our way to visit. After a comfortable ride along the autobahn for about three hours, we began winding up into rocky-topped mountains, not high enough for snow, but nonetheless spectacular. Arriving at our hotel in Grünau, I was reminded of a Swiss chalet, with wooden trim around red geraniums in window boxes. The fresh mountain air surrounded my balcony, where I watched the black and white hotel cat stalk something in the meadow below. Soon we were back on the bus, winding our way up a one-lane mountain road among evergreens, higher and higher, to get to the Hochberg Haus Restaurant at 1200 meters to see the sunset. The lederhosen clad owner greeted us with small glasses filled with potent spirits as we settled onto the porch and gazed out to green mountains surrounding us in the late afternoon sun. Hardy fare, flaming deserts, many glasses of spirits, an orange sunset and then completely dark mountains filled our evening in this spectacular setting that we seemed to have all to ourselves. Chip Burkhardt told us stories about the history of ethology from his



Mountain sunset dinner: (around from left) Bus driver, Sarah Jansen, Paul Pojman, Cicly Selby, Douglas Allchin, Chip Burkhardt, Astrid Juette, Kurt Kotrshal, Mike Bradie. Photo by Lindley Darden.

forthcoming book. Douglas Allchin and Sherrie Lyons planned their hiking trip. Cecily Selby told us about her switch from physics to biology. At the other end of the table Mike Bradie, Paul Pojman, Sarah Jansen and Astrid talked with Kurt Kotrschal and his students about their ongoing research projects on worms, ravens, and our own species. Kurt is the director of the Konrad-Lorenz-



Biologist and ultralite pilot Johannes Fritz with bald ibis and foster parents. Photo by Lindley Darden.

Research-Station and told us about plans for our visit the next day. We plied the bus driver with coffee so he could safely negotiate the ghostly roller coaster ride down the mountain late into the night.

After a restful sleep in the mountain air, a quick swim in the hotel's indoor spa, and a scrumptious breakfast served by dirndl-clad staff, we boarded the bus for the day's birdwatching. Kurt met us at a farm area and field, where we saw the first flock of bald ibis (*Geronticus eremita*), poking for grubs in a field with their curved beaks. Their dark glossy feathers, shape and size look like glossy ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*) more familiar to birdwatchers from North America, but their bald heads look more like vultures (*Coryps atratus*). We were also people watching, as two students moved among the ibis, recording their behavior. They had learned that the pairs in which the male follows slightly behind the female were not loving monogamous pairs. Instead, the male watched for the female to probe a tasty grub and then stole it!

A short ride and walk along a rushing mountain river lead us to Lorenz's former summer home, now housing the Research Station. Again we watched a student watching bird behavior, this time sitting on the riverbank, noting the individualistic behaviors of bold and shy greylag geese.

*Continued on next page.*

# *Mendel's Monastery*

By Michael Bradie  
Department of Philosophy  
Bowling Green State University  
mbradie@bgnet.bgsu.edu

As a fitting close to what was, by all accounts, one of the most successful and enjoyable ISHKABIBBLE meetings, a small group of intrepid sightseers ventured out to visit the monastery in Brno, Czech Republic where Gregor Mendel conducted his famous experiments with peas. At the last minute, our intended group leader, Astrid Juette, the Executive Manager of the KLI, whose organization skills and hard work were major factors in making the meeting a success, misplaced her passport and could not go. Werner Callebaut, the Scientific Manager of the KLI and the local organizer, stepped into the breach and we set off for the Abbey, some 110 kilometers away. At the border, our passports were indeed checked but otherwise the trip to Brno was uneventful.

Gregor Mendel was at the Abbey of St. Thomas in Brno from 1843 until his death in 1884. The Abbey was originally a Cistercians monastery. The Cistercian order dates back to 1098 and is a branch of the Benedictines.

The monastery in Brno dates from 1323 and sits on the site of an early Romanesque church. The Cistercians were active in Brno until 1782, when their community was abolished by the Austrian Emperor Joseph II. In 1783, the site was taken over by the Order of St. Augustine at Saint Thomas. The history of the monastery is filled with a succession of conflicts with the civil authorities. During the Communist period, the monastery was converted to civilian use and the offending religious relics and decorations were covered up. In 1989, the Augustinians returned. The monastery is currently being restored and is slated to house a Mendel Museum of Genetics and a Mendel Life Science Center. Currently, there is an exhibit on display, "Gregor Mendel: The Genius of Genetics," which, in the words of the promotional literature, seeks to go "beyond the romantic myth of the cloistered monk undertaking incongruous experiments with peas." In addition to exhibits of texts and manuscripts by Mendel and his contemporaries, there are works by seven contemporary artists that give expression to the interaction between art and science. For those of you not fortunate enough to have been along on our excursion, you may get some

*Continued on next page.*

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## Grünau Trip, continued from previous page

(They are not called "greyleg" as we had mistakenly heard; they have pink legs.) Lorenz brought the flock here when he retired. Unlike Lorenz, the Research Station is now doing hormonal and heart rate studies, in order to correlate physiological variables with behavioral ones. We were treated to a nut liqueur as we met students working at the Research Station and learned about their ethological research. A small deer-like animal (maybe an ibex?) tried to come up the steps as we were leaving. Kurt said that he likes to eat the furniture and shouldn't be allowed in. This annoyed the little fellow, so he peed on some shoes coming out the door, effectively asserting his territoriality.

Time for lunch at an outdoor garden restaurant (as usual in Austria) along side a lake surrounded by steep, rocky-topped mountains. Some of the group went off to swim after lunch while others of us sat, relaxed and reminisced about the conference. Soon biologist and pilot Johannes Fritz arrived to have coffee and tell us about the second bald ibis project that we were about to visit. The bus took us to a small airport where an ultralite plane sat in a field. Nearby was a different flock of bald ibis that were imprinted on human foster parents, who sat in the field with them. It

looked so pleasant that Sherrie and Chip decided they would enjoy that job. The ibis are being trained to fly behind the ultralite, with the pilot in the front and the foster parent in the back, saying, "Come, come." The plan is to teach these birds a new migration route over the Alps to Italy (other wild birds get shot when they go to Syria). Bald ibis used to live in western Europe several hundred years ago. The goal is to reintroduce them. (The web site <[www.waldrappteam.at](http://www.waldrappteam.at)> recounts their adventures in August.)

As Douglas and Sherrie departed to prepare for their hiking trip, the rest of us boarded our bus to return to Vienna. I wished I could stay a few more days in the cool mountain air and do some bird watching. Sherrie adds: "Fritz picked us up early the day after our hike and we got to watch the birds train with the ultralite. It was fantastic! Our spectacular hike included a hut half way up the mountain that was flying Buddhist prayer flags because it was being run by a Buddhist Nepalese couple who had come over to learn how to run huts in Nepal for trekking." Grünau is certainly a place worthy of a return trip.

flavor of the exhibition by visiting the website of the museum at [www.mendel-museum.org](http://www.mendel-museum.org).

Before visiting the exhibition, we went around the corner to an outdoor café for lunch and to sample the local brew, Starobrno beer <[www.starobrno.com](http://www.starobrno.com)>. There was some initial confusion and worry since Werner was one of only a few of us who had the foresight to exchange our Euros for the local currency, the Ceska Koruna. Depending on who we asked, we were told that “Yes, we do accept Euros” and “No, we don’t accept Euros.” We were told that there was an ATM machine down the block (or, so we understood) but it wasn’t obvious, given the language problem, where exactly it was. Luckily, they took Euros and we were able to eat and drink.

After lunch, we went back to the Abbey for a guided tour. At one point we came upon the statue of an agonized figure holding a crucified figure in his hands. It was, we learned, a representation of a martyred monk. The monk, it seems, had been the confessor to a young Queen with an older suspicious husband. After the Queen went to confession, the King importuned the monk to reveal what his wife had said. The monk refused and was martyred for his trouble. The Queen got the last laugh, however, since she outlived two Kings. The things one learns on biology field trips! There was a piano in one of the rooms and Bernard Feltz sat down and gave a quick impromptu performance – so quick, that when I tried to get a picture of the event, he was already moving away from the piano, and so the result is a ghostly out of focus image (fitting for an old monastery). We had been advised by Chip Burkhardt to see the library if possible. It contains 27,000 volumes including many first editions. Only a small number are on theological themes. The bulk of them are on topics in the natural and social sciences. But, alas, the library was closed and could not be opened because of worries about the security of the collection. After completing our tour of the Abbey, we visited the Mendel exhibit and saw the many manuscripts, letters and notebooks on display, as well as the works of art. I was surprised to discover that Mendel was involved in bee-keeping and the recording of weather data in addition to his experiments on inheritance. We visited the buildings behind the Abbey that housed Mendel’s laboratory, but they were locked and not restored. Some bee colonies were close by and inspected by the less timid among us.

At this point, the day was wearing on, the effects of food and beer were beginning to tell and so we abandoned a tentative plan to visit a local brewery in favor of heading home. Werner thought we could get a good deal on schnapps while we were in the Czech Republic so we



*Michael Ruse, Florida State University (seated), and Bob Richards (University of Chicago) discuss future projects -- mutually antagonistic, of course -- en route to the banquet outside Vienna. Photo by Chris Young.*

prevailed upon the bus driver to find a likely shop on the way home. Werner, Paul Pojman and I went in to what turned out to be a glorified 7-11. They did have some liqueurs though, and Paul and Werner bought some.

There was a minor delay at the border again but otherwise the trip back to Vienna was uneventful.

Michael Dietrich, *President*  
Department of Biological Sciences  
Dartmouth College  
Hanover, NH 03755 USA  
(603) 646-1389  
president@ishpssb.org

Garland Allen, *President-Elect*  
Washington University  
allen@biodec.wustl.edu

Keith Benson, *Treasurer*  
13423 Burma Rd. SW  
Vashon Island, WA 98070 USA  
treasurer@ishpssb.org

Chris Young, *Secretary*  
1316 N Astor St  
Milwaukee, WI 53202-2824 USA  
(414) 298-9138  
secretary@ishpssb.org

Lynn K. Nyhart, *Program Officer*  
University of Wisconsin  
lknnyhart@wisc.edu

Vivette Garcia-Deister, *Student Representative*  
vivettegd@aol.com

Ex Officio Member of Council:  
Pamela Henson, *Archivist*  
Institutional History Division  
Smithsonian Institution Archives  
Washington, DC 20560-0414  
(202) 786-2735  
hensonp@osia.si.edu

For additional council contact  
information, visit our website at  
ishpssb.org  
or contact Chris Young.

Lindley Darden, *Past President*  
University of Maryland, College Park  
darden@carnap.umd.edu

*Council through 2007*  
Joe Cain  
University College London  
j.cain@ucl.ac.uk

Kathy Cooke  
Quinnipiac University  
kathy.cooke@quinnipiac.edu

Phil Sloan  
University of Notre Dame  
sloan.1@nd.edu

*Council through 2005*  
Ana Barahona  
UNAM, Mexico  
abe@hp.fcencias.unam.mx

Christiane Groeben  
Stazione Zoologica, Italy  
groeben@alpha.szn.it

Hans-Jörg Rheinberger  
Max Plank Institut, Germany  
rheinbg@mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de

**Deadline for Spring 2004 Newsletter: March 31, 2004**

**Contact Chris Young**

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