

ISHPSSB

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

Biannual Newsletter

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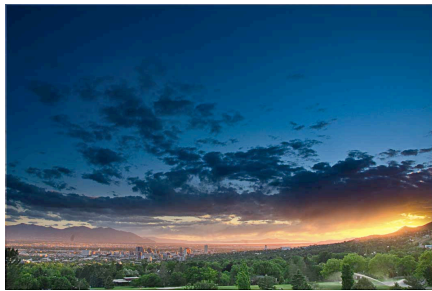
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President's Semi-Annual Report

Ana Barahona, President

It is incredible that we are almost a year away from our next meeting. Although you might think it is very early to think about it, it is not! This is the perfect time to keep everyone reminded and enthusiastic about our most important activity, our biennial meeting. So it is good to encourage session ideas at this moment.

I think we can all agree that it is desirable that our next meeting program shows the main activity of ISHPSSB (even the reason for its founding): to bring scholars from the fields of history, philosophy, sociology, and biology together to

study the biological sciences from an interdisciplinary perspective. Although is not a simple task, we've been thinking about this for the last few months since Brisbane, and I think we now have a pretty good idea to work on. This is the main reason why I'm including a Preliminary Call for Papers from Chris Young and Mark Largent, Program Co-chairs, who have been working with their entire Committee and with the Local-Arrangements Committee, in the organization of an insightful and interdisciplinary program meeting in Utah in July 2011.

As you may remember, we had a very fruitful discussion in Brisbane at the General Business Meeting, where we discussed topics such as a web-based system to improve communication among Society members, and future directions of interdisciplinary

research within the Society. There we also shared our concerns and thoughts about where our Society is going, and where we want it to go (you can check the Fall Newsletter for more information). We decided to discuss these topics in a more organized way beginning with in-committee discussion.

I'm including the reports of the Publications and Grene Prize Committees which reflect the ideas of some members of our community. Let's hope that we have more reports in the near future, and can discuss them in Utah.

Last but not least, please take a look at the Off Year Workshop proposed by Gillian Baker and colleagues, and at the Call for Papers for the Marjorie Grene Prize.

Utah 2011

Preliminary Call for Papers

Chris Young and Mark Largent, Program Co-Chairs

ISHPSSB Program Co-Chairs Chris Young and Mark Largent hope you are already thinking about papers and sessions for the 2011 meeting in Salt Lake City.

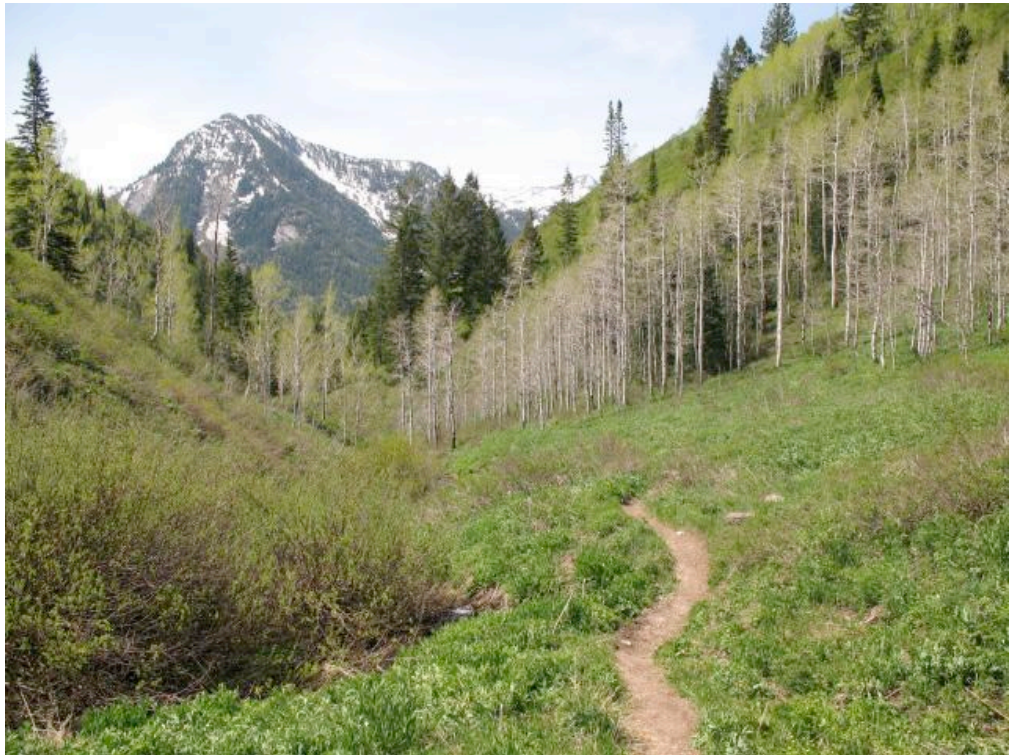
To be sure you are getting the most up-to-date information about the meeting, subscribe to the ISHPSSB listserv by clicking on the "Listserv" link at www.ishpssb.org

In the coming months, we will be setting up a bulletin board where you

can suggest a session, or review sessions that have been proposed so far. For now, only members can post on this bulletin board, so you might check on your membership status and then start sharing ideas. The bulletin board link is <http://ishpssb.onefireplace.com/>

Now, a few comments on audience, posters, and themes:

Our expectation for the Salt Lake City meeting is that we will have more cross-disciplinary sessions than ever before. In addition, we expect that all sessions will be geared toward wider audiences. This was a major thrust of the discussions that came out of the Brisbane meeting in 2009. Every scholar has numerous meetings in which to present work to her or his peers: historians speaking to historians, philosophers speaking to philosophers, sociologists speaking to sociologists, and biologists from across the spectrum speaking to biologists within their specialty. ISHPSSB is uniquely situated to



provide us the opportunity to talk to each other, across disciplinary boundaries, about biology studies. In order for this to happen, we need to think broadly about each other as an audience. We hope you will begin now to look for ways of collaborating.

A new feature of the program for 2011 will be the creation of a poster session. This is intended as a dynamic setting for scholars to present their work in progress as well as expanding on the implications of work completed in an interactive setting. The program co-chairs intend to solicit posters from a wide range of scholars, providing for interaction among all participants. We expect that this setting will engage biologists, historians, sociologists, and philosophers alike. Our local arrangements team is working to make this happen in a comfortable setting with refreshments readily available.

As we begin planning for how sessions will be organized, we ask that presenters think about ways their

work will potentially connect to other sessions throughout the meeting. We hope this can be accomplished by thinking about the larger themes that are illuminated by your work. These themes are meant to be broad and overlapping, but will help to provide benchmarks for organizing sessions as well as signposts for people at the conference seeking out areas of inquiry. Some themes we have identified include: Civic engagement; Race; Policy, science funding, and scientific progress; Sustainability, environment, energy, and economics; Gender and LGBT; Genetic testing; Evo-Devo; and Education. Please note that not all papers and sessions are expected to fit into one of the themes, and we hope that as we see work that pushes beyond these categories we can all be more aware of the new directions scholars and members of ISHPSSB are taking.

It is still too early to submit a freestanding paper proposal, in part because we are not yet to that stage in the planning, but primarily because there is still plenty of time for you to

be looking for colleagues throughout the world who will complement your work in a session. We would like the next six months to be a productive time for identifying collaborators.

During this time, we will also be soliciting scholars to take up leadership in addressing specific themes as described above. If you are in a position to provide leadership in coordinating a theme, or if you would like to suggest a theme that will strengthen our multi-disciplinary and cross-session collaboration, please contact Chris Young and Mark Largent at program@ishpssb.org

The deadline for the final call for papers will be February 28, 2011. We hope you will be checking back regularly on the bulletin board to identify how your work may connect with other potential proposals.

Please also keep in mind the ISHPSSB policy on multiple participation: no one may present in more than one session; exceptions are made for those who organize another session, comment in another session, or give a short plenary address. Individuals may serve more than one function in a given session, e.g., chair and presenter. If you have questions about your session or paper idea, or about procedures, please contact the Program Co-Chairs, Chris Young and Mark Largent: program@ishpssb.org Chris Young, Department of Biology, PO Box 343922, Alverno College, Milwaukee, WI 53234; (414) 298-9138.

ISHPSSB would like to encourage sessions that:

- a) combine more than one disciplinary perspective;
- b) include participants from more than one institution and/or nation;



c) promote the interaction of junior and senior scholars, including students.

Program guidelines include:

- (1) The program co-chairs, in consultation with the program committee, and consistent with site constraints, will organize a rich, diverse, and high quality program. While it is the intention of the Society to be as inclusive as possible, the program co-chairs have the discretion to reject papers or sessions that are truly inappropriate for these meetings or that do not meet basic standards of

communication. The program committee is available to assist the program co-chairs in judging borderline cases.

- (2) No one may present in more than one session. An exception is made for those who organize another session, comment in another session, or give a short plenary address. Individuals may serve more than one function in a given session, e.g. chair and presenter.

- (3) Each regular session must have a minimum of three presenters.

(4) Multiple sessions on a given topic should be identified with titles that distinguish the particular focus of each session, rather than merely serialize the topic.

(5) All accepted participants must pre-register for the conference in order to be included in the program.

Members of the 2011 Program Committee include:

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(largent@msu.edu)

Young, Chris (co-chair)
(chris.young@alverno.edu)

Call for Nominations

President-Elect, Council Members (3), Program Officer, Secretary, Treasurer.

Bylaw Article II, Section 13 stipulates that "Candidates for each office and Directorship shall be nominated by a nominating committee or by nomination of any two Members regardless of class, of The Society."

The Society must elect a President-Elect to serve during 2011-2013 who will then become President, 2013-2015. The next President-Elect will succeed Paul Griffiths, who was elected President-Elect for 2009-11 in Brisbane and will serve as President during 2011-13. Nominees are also needed for three members of the council to serve four year terms, 2011-2015. The Council terms of John Dupré, Jean Gayon, and V. Betty Smocovitis will end in 2011. We also need nominations for Program Officer for ISHPSSB 2013, as well as for Secretary and Treasurer. The latter two officers are eligible to succeed themselves. We encourage suggestions and nominations to any member of the nominations committee: Richard Burian (rmburian@vt.edu), Marion Blute (marion.blute@utoronto.ca), Jean Gayon (jean.gayon@gmail.com), Betty Smocovitis (bsmocovi@history.ufl.edu), and Staffan Müller-Wille (S.E.W.Mueller-Wille@EXETER.AC.UK). To ensure that all suggestions and nominations are considered, they should be sent by December 15, 2010, to a member or chair of the Nominations Committee, Jim Griesemer, jrgriesemer@ucdavis.edu, or to the Department of Philosophy, University of California, Davis, Davis CA 95616 USA.

Publications Committee Report

Following the workshop on digitization held during our meeting in Brisbane, the

Publication Committee was charged with articulating a set of recommendations regarding the Society's digital publishing, which includes our website, newsletter, discussion boards, and listserv.

Since Brisbane, our committee has discussed the advantages and disadvantages of different forms of digital content, including the possibility of launching a wiki and a blog to supplement our current webpage. We will be forwarding a recommendation to the Executive Council regarding these kinds of digital content, a content management system, and an Editorial Policy for all of our Society related content.

We hope to forward our recommendations this summer, so that we can help implement any changes that are approved.

Michael R. Dietrich, Chair.

Carl Craver, Nathan Crowe, Mark Largent, Manfred Laubichler, John Lynch, Roberta Millstein, Beckett Sterner, John Wilkins, Grant Yamashita and Frédéric Bouchard.

Marjorie Grene Prize Committee Response to "Quo vadis ISH?"

Fragmentation and Integration of ISHPSSB

1. The "Author Meets Critics" solution seems promising but it is a genre better suited to philosophy

than to history. Another idea: rethink the notion of “Author Meets Critics” and rename such a session to encourage friendly discussion.

Authors could be those working in areas that draw interest from different disciplines and bring historians and sociologists together. The very successful recent author-meets-critics sessions organized around Richard Weikart could potentially be reprised at the 2011 meeting.

2. We should return to the original emphasis that drew us all together in the first place: biology. Inviting biologists to speak in the session organized by the president—the plenary session—would be a practical way of achieving this. The topic could be of relevance to historians and sociologists and the session could be organized to encourage discussion. We might consider having four plenary sessions if finances permit: one from each of our four communities. If these sessions could be advertised before abstracts were due, it would motivate students and attract participants from all four disciplines.

3. While the issue of a “top-down” approach to the programme is contentious, interdisciplinary presentations and sessions could be emphasized in planning. In this vein, we could “normalize” our integrative approach by designating one person (not the president) to take the lead. The “ISH Problem Fixer” (for lack of a better name) could target 5-10 individuals to coax them into organizing truly interdisciplinary sessions for the 2011 meeting. These sessions would not be extracurricular like author-meets-critics or plenaries, but rather simply integrative but otherwise ordinary conference sessions. We have a list of at least

seven potential and promising candidate “Fixers”.

Graduate Student Participation

1. Graduate students on the committee reiterated their overwhelmingly positive view of ISHPSSB meetings. One way of encouraging more student involvement and empowerment (and to foster more mentoring experiences) would be to incorporate practices of the off-year workshop in the biennial meetings. The Happy Office Hours go off quite well at the off-year workshops and some participants cite it as the most valuable part of the meeting. However, one member cautioned that we not have the social effects of alcohol “built-in”, adding that the aspects of philosophical culture that are less inviting to non-philosophers can be exaggerated in the context of the pub. We could identify senior members who can act as mentors but also junior ones who are fresh in their positions and can relate to the challenges of being on a competitive job market. Allowing student participating in the meeting on some level other than giving a talk—chairing sessions, commenting, etc. was another suggestion for encouraging student membership and involvement and providing important professional experience.

Digital Dissemination

1. Facebook was cited as an effective venue for communication. As for the Forum for Organizing Sessions: it was pointed out that the bulletin board for the 2009 meeting had 12 posts, with only one receiving a response (unless the individuals were emailed directly). It was suggested that this bulletin board have a more central, up front place on the ISH Website, and have a clearly titled link. This would

also encourage interaction between disciplines.

Tara Abraham, Chair

On behalf of the Marjorie Grene Prize Committee: Gillian Barker, Kevin Elliott, Marta Halina, Gregory Radick, Sarah Robins, Adam Shapiro, Elizabeth Silver, V. Betty Smocovitis.

Off Year Workshop Call for Abstracts

INTEGRATING COMPLEXITY: ENVIRONMENT AND HISTORY

Two linked workshops in a 4-day event

7-10 October 2010

Organism-Environment Interaction: Past, Present & Future

a Workshop presented by:

The International Society for History, Philosophy, and Social Studies of Biology

Department of Philosophy, The University of Western Ontario

Joseph L. Rotman Institute for Science and Values, University of Western Ontario

Methodology in the Historical Sciences

a Workshop presented by:

Department of Philosophy, The University of Western Ontario

Joseph L. Rotman Institute for Science and Values, The University of Western Ontario

Invited Speakers Include:

- John Beatty, University of British Columbia
- Carol Cleland, University of Colorado
- Frank Egerton, University of Wisconsin-Parkside
- Christopher D. Green, York University
- Harry Heft, Denison University
- John Odling-Smee, Oxford University
- Robert Richards, University of Chicago
- Emily Schultz, St. Cloud State University
- George E. Smith, Tufts University
- Denis Walsh, University of Toronto

Call for Abstracts:

The 4-day event at The University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario, Canada, comprises two linked workshops addressing interrelated strands in approaches to phenomena whose causal complexity poses special challenges to scientific understanding:

- (1) the conceptual integration of complexity in explorations of organism-environment interaction in the life sciences and social sciences, and
- (2) the methodological integration of complexity in the distinctive approaches to confirmation and explanation in the historical sciences.

The two workshops will draw together philosophers, historians, and natural and social scientists whose work focuses on the interpretation of organism-environment interaction and its implications for our understanding of complex biological

and social systems, and on the distinctive methodological challenges posed by the historical sciences.

1. Organism-Environment Interaction: Past, Present & Future

The partitioning of the complexity of the organic world into organism and environment—a step toward simpler abstract representations of organic phenomena—opened a space for exploration of the complex and dynamic relationship between the two. Conceptions of this relationship have played a crucial role in the development of many areas of biology, including evolutionary theory, ecology and ethology. Other disciplines, including the social sciences and medicine, have also made use of the diverse representations of the complex interaction between organisms and their environment. These relationships remain deeply contested in all of these domains today.

Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- Pre-Darwinian Conceptions of O-E Interaction
- Organization, Regulation & Response in O-E Interaction
- O-E Interaction in Evolution
- Intervening in the Environment
- O-E Interaction in Medicine
- History Matters: O-E Interaction and Historicity
- O-E Interaction in the Human Sciences

2. Methodology in the Historical Sciences

The distinctive epistemological challenges of the “historical sciences”

give rise to methodological debates concerning contingency, historicity, irreversibility and the limits of simple equilibrium models in biology but also in other disciplines such as palaeontology, geology, cosmology and history itself. The implications of these issues are far-reaching for questions of evidence, explanation and the nature of understanding in the historical sciences.

Possible Topics include but are not limited to:

- Path dependence, contingency and irreversibility
- Historical explanation
- Anthropoc principles
- Reconstructing the past
- Understanding unique events

Workshop Structure:

The event will combine plenary sessions presented by invited speakers, panel sessions, and discussion sessions led by graduate students and junior scholars.

Submission Guidelines:

Please submit a 1-page abstract for a presentation of no more than 20 minutes. There are two types of sessions: break-out discussions and panels. In a break-out discussion, the presentation introduces material for an extended discussion led by the presenter. In a panel, three related presentations precede a combined discussion. You may specify which format you prefer, though we will consider all submissions for both formats. For break-out discussions, please provide references for 2-3 background readings that can be made available in advance.

Send submissions or any inquiries to: iceh@uwo.ca

This event aims to foster lively discussion across disciplinary lines and between junior and senior scholars - submissions from any relevant field and from graduate students are welcome.

Deadline: June 1, 2010

Marjorie Grene Prize Call for Papers

ISHPSSB seeks submissions for the 2011 Marjorie Grene Prize. This prize is intended to advance the careers of younger scholars, and will be awarded to the best manuscript based on a presentation at one of the two previous ISHPSSB meetings (Exeter 2007 or Brisbane 2009) by someone who was, at the time of presentation, a graduate student.

It is very appropriate for ISHPSSB to name this prize in Marjorie Grene's honor. Not only did 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 was a valued mentor to many members of the Society and a long-standing inspiration to all.

The award will consist of a certificate and an award of \$500.

Submissions should be in the form of a paper prepared for submission to a professional journal, with an indication of the journal in question and whether the paper is already in review. Submissions can be in the form of papers already accepted for publication. Electronic submissions, in Microsoft Word or PDF format, are

preferred and must be emailed no later than March 1, 2011. Hardcopy submissions must include three complete copies of the paper and be mailed no later than March 1, 2011.

The winning entry will be announced by May 1, 2011.

Please submit papers to:

Tara Abraham, taabraha@uoguelph.ca
Department of History
University of Guelph
Guelph, ON
N1G 2W1
CANADA

Treasurer's Report

Lisa Gannett, Treasurer

The Society is in healthy financial shape. The financial statement for 2009 (year-end balance \$82,447.52) can be found at <http://www.ishpssb.org/operations/treasurer.html>. Of special note, proceeds from the Brisbane 2009 meeting were \$18,050.82: thanks go to the local organization headed by Paul Griffiths and program co-chairs Manfred Laubichler and Marsha Richmond. \$29,203.60 (from the NSF/HSS grant, donations, and general funds) was spent on supporting graduate student travel to the Brisbane meeting.

The required information return (Form 990) for 2009 will be filed with the IRS by the deadline of May 15th in order to maintain our status as a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) public charity. Remember that contributions to 501(c)(3) organizations (membership fees and donations) are tax-deductible in the US and possibly elsewhere depending on tax treaties. In the US, donations of \$250 or more need to be

substantiated with a written communication from the charity (e.g. receipt or letter); for contributions less than \$250, a bank record (e.g. cancelled check) is also acceptable.

Travel Support Committee Report

Lisa Gannett

ISHPSSB supports travel to its biennial meeting for graduate students based on funding available through memberships and donations to the society. Current committee members are Lisa Gannett (Chair), Rachael Brown, Linnda Caporael, Berris Charnley, Don Goodman-Wilson, and Gregory Radick. Information can be found at http://www.ishpssb.org/operations/travel_comm.html. Please send any recommendations for policy or procedural changes to Lisa or one of the other committee members. We urge you to consider making a donation when you renew your membership.

Special Offers from Publishers

Annals of Science

\$99 or £60/year; subscribe online via the 'news and offers' link on the journal's website www.informaworld.com/tasc or write directly to the publisher (contact Lisa or Roberta for address).

Biological Theory

Subscribe online via journal's website <http://www.mitpressjournals.org/loi/biot> (contact Lisa or Roberta for code which you need to enter to receive the society discount of 20%).

Biology and Philosophy

\$62/year; together with Journal of the History of Biology: \$99/year; order when you renew your membership or at other times via PayPal on the society's website (membership page).

History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences

\$50 or €40/year; order when you renew your membership or at other times via PayPal on the society's website (membership page).

Journal of the History of Biology

\$56/year; together with Biology and Philosophy: \$99/year; order when you renew your membership or at other times via PayPal on the society's website (membership page).

Metascience

\$39 or €39/year; subscribe online via the 'Journal for Societies Members' link on the Springer website <http://www.springer.com/generic/order/journals+subscription?SGWID=0-40514-0-0-0>.

Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences

\$45 or €39/year; to purchase a discounted subscription, contact your Elsevier regional sales office http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/contact.cws_home/regional.

Note that all PayPal subscriptions to journals through the Society will soon migrate to the Wild Apricot registration service at <http://ishpssb.onefireplace.com/>

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For additional Council contact information, visit our website at <http://www.ishpssb.org> or contact [Roberta Millstein](mailto:Roberta.Millstein).

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