



DUPONT SUMMIT 2013

..... Pressing Issues, Economic Realities

December 6, 2013 * Historic Whittemore House, Washington, DC

The Policy Studies Organization

Speakers

Clarissa Ai Ling Lee - *Duke University*

Stephanie Bernhard - *University of Virginia*

Marcia Davitt - *Virginia Tech*

Jennifer L. Lawrence - *Virginia Tech*

“Humanist Interventions into Science and Technology Studies on Energy, Climate, and the Environment”

This panel will examine the degrees of subjectivity and speculation, inherent to scientific ‘facts’ and knowledge production, through the critical lens of humanities, in the high stakes areas of policy concerns, be they about environmentalism, climate, energy, or other less direct connections. Moreover, these areas of studies are already interdisciplinary in themselves, occupying natural scientists and social scientists alike, with humanists becoming increasingly interested in producing our own interventions. Using the different approaches stemming from the different interests and knowledge backgrounds of the panelists (in science and technology studies, cultural studies, and literature), we seek to problematize the conversations taking place among the practitioners in these knowledge fields by injecting other possibilities for thinking about policy and pragmatic issues from the humanistic and posthumanistic perspectives that are known to percolate, even if not always visibly, through the political, economic, sociological, and philosophical dimensions of these knowledge fields. At the same time, we are interested in asking how we can contribute to the scientific process as nonscientists. Our investigations of these scientific subjects that bear no easy answers and can as easily falsify the received wisdom on scientific fact and objectivity.



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Biographies

Clarissa A.L. Lee is a PhD Candidate in Literature and is pursuing a graduate certificate in the History and Philosophy of Science, Medicine, and Technology at Duke University. She has an undergraduate degree in physics and an MA in English from University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. She works at the intersection of science and technology studies (particularly in the physical sciences), media archaeology, book history, and critical theory. Her dissertation focuses on how to get to an elusive ontology in the quantum/Newtonian theory divide, and the larger question of life, by interfacing the speculative epistemology of particle physics with the creative affordances of science fiction. She hopes her work will contribute to more rigorous interdisciplinary studies between the sciences and the humanities. Links to her more recent works can be found at her primary blog, scandalousthoughts.wordpress.com. She tweets as @normasalim.

Stephanie Bernhard is the Gregory L. and Nancy H. Curl/Jefferson Fellow in English Literature at the University of Virginia. She works on transatlantic Modernism, with a focus on agrarian literature and modern interpretation of Classical texts. She also explores the role that literature and the arts can play in the representation of climate change in contemporary culture. Her essays and reviews have appeared in *The New Inquiry* and *Full Stop Magazine*.

Jennifer L. Lawrence is currently a doctoral candidate in the ASPECT (Alliance for Social, Political, Ethical and Cultural Thought) program at Virginia Tech. She is an instructor in the Political Science department where she teaches courses in International Relations, Environmental Politics, and Urban Affairs. Her academic background is in International Political Economy and her current research focuses on environmental disaster as a pretext for economic growth, using the Deepwater Horizon oil spill to contextualize the project. This research is of an interdisciplinary nature and is conducted from a problem-centered, theory driven methodology.

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Biographies (Continued)

Marcia Davitt is a PhD student in Science, Technology, & Society at Virginia Tech, and her dissertation addresses the performative impact (i.e. the material effects) of biofuels policy and research discourse on land-use change. She holds a B.S. in Management Information Systems, an MA in Environmental Science & Policy, and has 20 years of experience as a Healthcare Information Technology professional. Her interests include: exploring the impacts that a technologically-mediated existence has on scientific representations of natural organisms and on the ways humans relate to those organisms; pursuing ways to change the dominant culture of expertise that keeps other voices and other epistemologies from participating in policymaking and decisions that impact the entire community; exploring the normative implications of technological solutions; engaging the public in science and technology through critical issues-based museum exhibits and peripatetic science cafes.