



Conference Program

Narrating Science

The Power of Stories in the 21st Century

Toronto, May 24 – 27, 2017

Background

In the latter decades of the twentieth century, discourses on science and technology spread beyond the professional communities of scientific experts involved in knowledge production. Narrative accounts, in both words and images, have played an increasingly important role in these discourses. In the cultural realm, we saw the rise of the “popular science” genre, of science series and documentaries on TV, and, around the turn of the millennium, an increase in the amount and quality of attention paid to science in fiction. The Narrating Science conference brings together scholars, writers, and scientists to discuss how and to what effect storytelling about science across a spectrum of genres and media--fiction and non-fiction, print and film—contributes to understandings of scientific processes and issues of societal concern such as climate change, genetic engineering, nuclear physics, evolution, concepts of cognition, pharmaceuticals, and nuclear power.

About Fiction Meets Science www.fictionmeetsscience.org

Since 2013, the Fiction Meets Science Program has been bringing scholars, novelists and scientists together to analyse and contribute to the recent wave of literary fiction about science. The program is based at the Universities of Bremen and Oldenburg, and the Hanse-Wissenschaftskolleg in northwestern Germany, but most of the literature it is concerned with is written in English, and the FMS scholars and novelists come from around Europe, North America, and Australia. The University of Guelph’s College of Arts has been a partner in the program since its inception.

Organized by Donald Bruce (College of the Arts, University of Guelph), Susan M. Gaines (Fiction Meets Science, University of Bremen), and David A. Kirby (University of Manchester) and made possible by generous funding from the University of Guelph, the University of Bremen, and Volkswagen Foundation.

Wednesday, May 24

5:30 – 6:30 PM	Welcome Reception <i>Drinks, snacks, greetings, and logistics</i> Venue: Summerhill Room, Level H1, Toronto Marriott Bloor Yorkville Hotel
7:00 – 8:45	Allegra Goodman and Karen Joy Fowler Reading and conversation with the authors of <i>Intuition</i> and <i>We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves</i> <i>Moderated by Anna Auguscik</i> Open to public, admission free Venue: Trinity St. Paul's Centre, 427 Bloor St. West

Thursday, May 25

Venue: Hanlan McBride Room, Level H4, Toronto Marriott Bloor Yorkville Hotel

Session I Chair: Don Bruce

9:00 – 9:15 AM	Introduction & Overview Narrative Meets Science at the Turn of the Millennium (<i>Susan M. Gaines</i>)
9:20 – 9:45	Between Mad Science and Paper Work: The Coexistence of Stereotypical and Realistic Representations of Science in Fiction (<i>Luz María Hernández Nieto, Peter Weingart</i>)
9:45 – 10:00	Questions & Discussion
10:00 – 10:25	Narrating the History of Science from a Female Perspective: Women Scientists in Contemporary Historical Novels and Plays (<i>Christine Müller</i>)
10:25 – 10:40	Questions & Discussion
10:40 – 10:55	Break
10:55 – 12:00	Fictional Science narratives and Their Global dimensions Scientist Characters in Transcultural Contexts (<i>Anton Kirchhofer</i>) Journalist Characters and the Mediation of Science in Environmental Justice Narratives (<i>Hanna Straß-Senol</i>) Media Spheres of the ‘Transcultural Science Novel’ (<i>Anna Auguscik</i>)
12:00 – 12:30	Questions & Discussion
12:30 – 1:45 PM	Lunch – Buffet
Session II Chair: Ingrid Ocket	
1:45 – 2:10	Meaning-Making between Dissent and Complementarity: The Discursive Reception of Science Narratives in Reading Groups (<i>Sonja Fückler</i>)
2:10 – 2:25	Questions & Discussion
2:25 – 2:50	Alternative Facts: Michael Crichton and Mass Market Fictions of Science (<i>Joanna Radin</i>)
2:50 – 3:05	Questions & Discussion
3:05 – 3:25	Break
3:25 – 3:45	What does Contemporary Literature Need: Climate Science/Climate Culture? (<i>Catherine Bush</i>)
3:50 – 4:50	Writing Stories about Science: Panel Discussion (<i>Susan M. Gaines, Karen Joy Fowler, Jaspreet Singh, Allegra Goodman, Catherine Bush</i>)
4:50 – 5:20	Questions & Discussion
5:30	Cocktail Hour Venue: Rosedale Room, Level H1, Toronto Marriott Bloor Yorkville Hotel

Friday, May 26

Venue: Hanlan McBride Room, Level H4, Toronto Marriott Bloor Yorkville Hotel

Session III Chair: Peter Weingart

8:45 – 9:10 AM	Pandemic stories: Narrative Roles in the Media and the Shaping of Health Information (<i>Tess Laidlaw</i>)
9:15 – 9:40	Jonah Lehrer and the “Brain Behaviour” Bubble (<i>Lauren Kilian</i>)
9:40 – 10:05	Questions & Discussion
10:05 – 10:30	Narrative and Humour: Constructing Science as Common Sense in <i>South Park</i> (<i>Edward Bankes</i>)
10:30 – 10:45	Questions & Discussion
10:45 – 11:05	Break
11:05 – 12:05	Stories, Entertainment, and Science Communication: Panel Discussion (<i>David A. Kirby, Aquiles Negrete Yankelevich, Ingrid Ocket, Joanna Radin</i>)
12:05 – 12 :35	Questions & Discussion
12:35 – 1:55 PM	Lunch – Buffet
Session IV Chair: Luz Maria Hernández Nieto	
1:55 – 2:20	New Narrations about Empowerment, the Case of the TV show <i>Westworld</i> (<i>Adrian Perez</i>)
2:20 – 2:35	Questions & Discussion
2:35 – 3:00	Graphic Bombs: Scientific Knowledge and the Manhattan Project in Comic Books (<i>Lindsey Michael Banco</i>)
3:05 – 3:30	The potential of visual narratives for science communication (<i>Matteo Farinella</i>)
3:30 – 3:55	Questions & Discussion
3:55 – 4:15	Break
4:15 – 4:45	Cells, Genes, and Stories: HeLa’s Journey from Labs to Literature (<i>Priscilla Wald</i>)
4:45 – 5:10	Questions & Discussion
5:30	Cocktail Hour Venue: Rosedale Room, Level H1

Saturday, May 27

Venue: Hanlan McBride Room, Level H4, Toronto Marriott Bloor Yorkville Hotel

Session V Chair: Hanna Straß-Senol

9:00 – 9:25 AM	The Roots of African Eve: Science Writing on Human Origins and Alex Haley's <i>Roots</i> (<i>Josie Gill</i>)
9:25 – 9:40	Questions & Discussion
9:40 – 10:05	Politics of Science Narratives in Colonial and Postcolonial India (<i>Rajive Tiwari</i>)
10:05 – 10:20	Questions & Discussion
10:20 – 10:35	Break
10:35 – 11:00	Accident and Agency in the Nuclear World (<i>David K. Hecht</i>)
11:00 – 11:15	Questions & Discussion
11:15 – 11:40	<i>The Speed of Dark, Speculation and Ethnography</i> (<i>Joan Haran</i>)
11:40 – 11:55	Questions & Discussion
11:55 – 1:00 PM	Lunch – Buffet

Session VI Chair: David Kirby

1:00 – 1:25	The Utopia of “Planetary Stewardship”. Situating the politics of the Anthropocene within the Ecotopian Tradition (<i>Emanuel Herold</i>)
1:30 – 1:55	Unsettling Scientific Stories: Fictional Futures and Sociological Speculation (<i>Lisa Garforth and Amy C. Chambers</i>)
1:55 – 2:20	Questions & Discussion
2:20 – 3:00	Round Robin Sum-Up