



# Members' Newsletter

NOVEMBER 21, 2005

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 1

*Promoting  
dialogue among  
scholars, the  
public, and  
policymakers  
about the role of  
science in society*

*"In two-way  
exchanges, the ability  
of scientists to  
understand the public  
becomes at least as  
much a concern as the  
public's understanding  
of science"*

– Sheila Jasanoff.  
*Science* 278 (5346):  
2066

**You're not an official FOSEP member until you [sign up online](#). If you haven't signed up yet, please do so.**

## Reflections

It's FOSEP's sophomore year! Thanks to all of the members who made the first year such a success and welcome to our new members. Check out our [annual report](#) to see what we accomplished in our first year. We hope to continue the seminars, forums, and discussions this year, and expect that our **expanding membership** – from four in Jan 2004 to twenty in Nov 2004 to nearly 60 today – will lead us in new directions, too.



Autumn 2005 general meeting

We are simply astounded by the number of graduate students and postdoctoral fellows from a multitude of disciplines who have a shared interest in connecting science and society. This really makes a statement about the feeling of social responsibility among scholars (at least in Seattle!) FOSEP members hail from a multitude of programs in health sciences, earth sciences, philosophy, education, public health, sociology, and more. With your

help, our goal of promoting true multidisciplinary dialogue among scholars will be realized. Let's think big and do great things!

## Be there!

### 2006 public forum

#### **Medicines and Your Health: Prescriptions for Safe and Effective Medicines**

A year of hard work by the Community Outreach Committee culminates at the second annual FOSEP public forum on Tuesday, November 29<sup>th</sup>, 7-9pm in Kane Hall 130. We hope to see you all there! Please support their efforts by spreading the word by mouth, email, or by hanging a poster or two ([download one here](#)).

The forum will have a star moderator:

Enrique Cerna, the Executive Director of PBS's Emmy-award winning "KCTS connects." Expert panelists are: Bruce Psaty, Professor of Medicine and Epidemiology, UW; Michael King, Assoc. Director of Clinical Pharmacology, Johnson & Johnson; and Shirley Murphy, Acting Deputy Director of the Office of



A Saturday morning work meeting

Counter-Terrorism and Pediatric Drug Development, U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Check out the [fancy website](#) that Jennifer Flexman created for the forum! Brush up on some background information on drug safety, cost, and efficacy and then submit a question for the speakers.

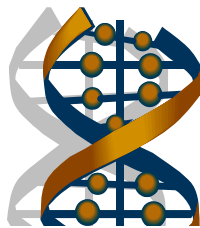
Several events are being planned in conjunction with the forum:

- ◆ [Science on Tap](#) is a local science outreach group that gives the public a chance to talk with local scientists every month at Ravenna's Third Place Books. Beth Rowan recruited Noel Weiss, Professor of Epidemiology at FHCRC and UW, to speak the night before the forum: Monday, November 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm. His talk is titled "A layman's guide to interpreting health reports in the media."
- ◆ [Northwest Association for the Advancement of Research](#) is a local nonprofit that promotes understanding of biomedical research. Maisy McGaughey collaborated with NWABR to plan a workshop on drug development and regulation for science teachers. The workshop will take place in the HUB on the afternoon of November 29<sup>th</sup>, and Maisy will bring the teachers to our forum afterward!
- ◆ Beth Rowan is leading a project **Community Discussion Project Team** to develop a series of small discussions between the public and local experts on specialized topics relating to the "Medicines and Your Health" forum. The forum will help to inform the public and policymakers, but the real dialogue with the public starts here! Thanks to Beth and the rest of the team for planning a prototype event that we hope to emulate for other topics in the future. Email Beth ([rowanb@u](mailto:rowanb@u)) to join the team!

Forum planning committee members are: Beth Rowan (biology), Paula Ladd (Postdoc, FHCRC), Maisy McGaughey (Cognitive Studies in Education), and Jennifer Flexman (bioengineering). Committee co-chairs are Carla Calogero (Medical History & Ethics) and Lucia Hindorff (Postdoc, Epidemiology). Putting the forum together has been a Herculean task. They deserve a huge round of applause (and a vacation!)

## Academic Outreach Seminar

**The Fear of Genetic Discrimination and the Need for a Public Policy Solution**



**Tues., Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>, 4:00 pm, Physics & Astronomy A102**

**Featuring Timothy Leshan**, Branch Chief & Senior Policy Analyst, Office of Policy, Communication and Education, National Human Genome Research Institute, NIH.

Please come and join the Academic Outreach committee at their Autumn Quarter Seminar. You could also support their efforts by posting a flyer or three, which will soon be linked from our website. Timothy Leshan directs public policy for NHGRI and formerly directed public policy at the American Society for Cell Biology and served as project coordinator for the Center for Science, Technology and Public Policy at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. Thanks, Anne-Marie for inviting this distinguished speaker!

Academic Outreach committee members are: Emily Marshall (Microbiology), Robert Elleman (Atmospheric Sciences), Jeremy Fischer (Philosophy), Michele Koppes (Earth & Space Sciences). Committee co-chairs are Katie Crahan (Atmospheric Sciences) and Anne-Marie Laberge (Public Health Genetics).

### Member Profile

Each month, we will profile one or two FOSEP members in our newsletter. This might seem corny, but this will help us to learn about the interests and accomplishments of our members. Send a profile of 100 words or fewer and a photo of yourself to [newsletter@fosep.org](mailto:newsletter@fosep.org). Please don't be afraid to brag. Smart, successful members make us look good. 😊

You can read more about us (directors) [online](#) and about our committee chairs in FOSEP's [annual report](#).

## From the Directors

Many of you know that the executive committee is undergoing a big transition. One of our founding directors, Bree Mitchell (Molecular & Cellular Biology), graduated and departed for more lucrative pastures at Intel in San Francisco. The other founding directors have had a heck of a quarter: Melanie Roberts (Neurobiology) and Sarah Benki (Microbiology) are defending soon, and Thomas Robey (Bioengineering/MSTP) and Jessica Chubak (Epidemiology) are taking their general exams. We have welcomed two new directors this quarter: Jennifer Flexman (Bioengineering) and William Navarre (Postdoc, Microbiology).

A great challenge of being a large group of busy people is **communication**. Below are some ways that we're trying to do to facilitate communication among members. Please help us by participating in discussions

- ◆ **Newsletters:** We will compile monthly newsletters to keep members updated about FOSEP's progress, to highlight news of interest, to profile FOSEP members, and to post FOSEP 'help needed' announcements. Please send updates on your FOSEP projects, interesting tidbits about you, links to stories of interest, quotes, or short essays for the newsletter to [newsletter@fosep.org](mailto:newsletter@fosep.org)
- ◆ **Online discussion boards:** If you read an interesting article, have an idea, an opinion, or know of an interesting event, please post it on the relevant [discussion board](#) on the FOSEP members' webpage. These boards will be very important for organization sustainability; future members can see what we've done, what we are thinking, and possibly follow up on some ideas.
- ◆ **Quarterly members' meetings:** These meetings will be part FOSEP business, part social. We request that all members attend so that we can all stay on the same page and get to know one another better. All committees & project teams will give a short update on progress and solicit feedback and help. We will post an agenda a week before the meeting on our [members' board](#). Let us know if you want us to add anything to our agenda.
- ◆ **Talk to us!** We want to hear from you! Email us directly: [fosep@u.washington.edu](mailto:fosep@u.washington.edu) or [submit an anonymous comment by email](#). We SWEAR it's anonymous!

## Have you heard?

### Evolution of the evolution debate

School boards in Kansas and Pennsylvania voted to teach alternatives to and criticism of the theory of evolution. There were political repercussions to this decision in the recent elections. Why are issues in science and religion so divisive? What does 'the other side' think about and believe? FOSEP's Science and Religion Project Team will work through 2006 to inform us about this topic. A seminar early next year about Intelligent Design is being planned by the Academic Outreach Committee and will be FOSEP's first foray into this hot topic. For more info on the debate, see the New York Times full coverage of [the Evolution Debate](#). Thanks to Kristin Miller (epidemiology) for that link!



### **Dalai Lama was the keynote speaker at Society for Neuroscience meeting**

Read more about it [here](#). Here are some quotes from the Dalai Lama in his [Op-ed in the New York Times](#) (Thanks again, Kristin!):

"If science proves some belief of Buddhism wrong, then Buddhism will have to change. In my view, science and Buddhism share a search for the truth and for understanding reality. By learning from science about aspects of reality where its understanding may be more advanced, I believe that Buddhism enriches its own worldview."

"I believe that we must find a way to bring ethical considerations to bear upon the direction of scientific development, especially in the life sciences."

"Sometimes when scientists concentrate on their own narrow fields, their keen focus obscures the larger effect their work might have... It is no longer adequate to adopt the view that our responsibility as a society is to simply further scientific knowledge and enhance technological power and that the choice of what to do with this knowledge and power should be left in the hands of the individual"

### **Democrats' agenda pushes science, technology, and STEM education**

House minority leader Nancy Pelosi announced the Democrats' "[Innovation strategy](#)" this week, which calls for more research spending, more internet access, and a renewed focus on science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education. The agenda follows a recent National Academies report, "[Rising above the Gathering Storm.](#)" What do you think? Is the US falling behind in science? Do we need more scientists and engineers? Chime in on the [topics discussion board](#).