

Notes on WTMC



Dear WTMC Members,

In these Notes on WTMC (7):

- **New WTMC program coordinator: Willem Halfman**
- **Good bye to the former WTMC program coordinator: Els Rommes**
- **Full program WTMC Annual Meeting at 4S/EASST (Thursday August 21, 2008). Have a look!**
- **Invitation for WTMC High Tea with Treats from the Netherlands at 4S/EASST, *please register before August 1.***
- **For those who plan to organize workshops: now €5.000,- (max.) available *per workshop*, full annual WTMC budget for workshops €15.000,-**
- **WTMC and internationalization**
- **The WTMC Dissertation Days**
- **A few notes on the past WTMC Supervisors' Day**

New WTMC program coordinator: Willem Halfman

We are very happy to announce that from October 1, 2008 onward, Willem Halfman will be our new WTMC program coordinator, next to Sally Wyatt. Even before that date, Willem will already be involved in organizing and co-chairing the WTMC Summer School.

Good bye to the former WTMC program coordinator: Els Rommes

Willem will replace Els Rommes, who has been the coordinator from 2005 up until June 1, 2008. The PhD students, Sally Wyatt and I have said good bye to her at the end of the most recent WTMC May workshop. Here, we would like to thank her again for her enthusiastic and well-organized contributions to the WTMC program.

Full program WTMC Annual Meeting at 4S/EASST (Thursday August 21, 2008)

See next page

WTMC at 4S/EASST in Rotterdam: Final Program

WTMC's Annual Meeting 2008 will be organized as a substantial contribution to the 4S/EASST Conference in Rotterdam, August, 20-23, 2008. It will be fully integrated into the 4S/EASST Conference.

On Thursday August 21, WTMC offers the following events:

- 12:30-13:30, Room M3-15
Workshop Structuring Your Dissertation—by Wiebe Bijker

A lunch meeting for PhD students (not already enrolled in WTMC) in which professor Wiebe Bijker will offer a workshop on structuring one's dissertation. This workshop has been organized in collaboration with 6S (Students' Section of 4S). WTMC offers both a free lunch and the workshop. PhD students need to register. In addition, Sally Wyatt will briefly introduce WTMC. PhD students interested in doing the workshop should register (before July 1) at hannie.spronck@fdcw.unimaas.nl

- 13:30-15:30, Room T3-39
Session: The STS Contribution to Innovation

How can STS contribute to, or even intervene in innovation, and what are the limits to such interventions?

- Stefan Kuhlmann (Twente University): *Governance of Innovation*
- Bart van Looy (Leuven University): *Prerequisites for Regime Shifts to Unfold: Exploring the Case of the Baroque Violin Technique*
- Commentator: Harro van Lente (Utrecht University)
- Chair: Rob Hoppe (Twente University)

- 15:30-16:00, Room T3-39
A High Tea with Treats from the Netherlands

A private event for invited guests such as WTMC members and former anchor teachers.

- 16:00-18:00, Room T3-39
Session: Skills and Styles in the Culture of Design

How important are skills and styles of operation in the design of devices?

- Edward Tenner (Princeton University): *The BlackBerry and the Abacus: Design, the Body, and the Evolution of Techniques*
- Peter-Paul Verbeek (Twente University): *Let's Make Things Better: Persuasive Technology and Material Morality*
- Commentator: Karin Bijsterveld (Maastricht University)
- Chair: Tsjalling Swierstra (Twente University).

- 18:00-18:15 Short Break (Shift)

- 18:15-19:45, Room M3-15
Supplenary: STS in Pharmaceutical Research

The introduction of new medicine is big business. Is STS well-suited to critically comment on the research and development in the pharmaceutical industry?

- Trudy Dehue (Groningen University): *Merging Trials and Publicity: A STS Perspective on Commercial Clinical Trial Research*
- Paul Martin (Nottingham University): *STS and the making of pharmaceutical futures*
- Sergio Sismondo (Queen's University): *Ghosts in the Machine: Medical Publication Planning*
- Moderator: Nelly Oudshoorn (Twente University).

Abstracts

Stefan Kuhlmann (Twente University)

Governance of Innovation

Responding to the question “How can STS contribute to, or even intervene in innovation, and what are the limits to such interventions?” the presentation will position STS in a broader context of social science. There is a number of more or less useful heuristics for the study of innovation environments (e.g. Porter’s diamond; Triple Helix; Innovation System; Technology Regimes, Multi-Level-Perspective, Transition research). It is a weakness of all such approaches that ‘agency’ and ‘governance’ are not thoroughly conceptualized (yet). Actor’s de facto leeway for effective intervention in innovation processes is often not known. The political science notion of ‘governance’ – used as a heuristic – may help to shed some light into the black box. The presentation will discuss the relevance and use of ‘governance’ as an extension of the Innovation System / Regime Perspective. It will point to the need for further conceptualization, exploration and testing of the role of ‘de facto governance’ as a shaping variable of technological innovation.

Bart van Looy (Leuven University) and Geert Robberechts (La Petit Bande)

Prerequisites for Regime Shifts to Unfold: Exploring the Case of the Baroque Violin Technique

From an evolutionary perspective, changes in technological regimes are considered as multi-layered processes evolving over longer periods; processes of variation, selection and retention result in new configurations of a path-dependent nature. Niche management and accumulation have been identified as important ingredients in grasping the micro-dynamics of the reconfiguration processes taking place. At the same time, these processes are situated against the background of existing regimes, characterized by a certain degree of homogeneity. In this paper, we focus on how to reconcile this apparent contradiction between the emergence and development of innovation on the one hand, and the presence—and influence—of existing regimes on the other. This question is addressed through analyzing one of the invention processes (chinless violin technique) that contributed to the transformation of performing baroque music today. Our findings reveal the crucial role of creative entrepreneurs, embodying idiosyncratic problem definition and solving capabilities vital for effectively pursuing trajectories of a more novel nature. These capabilities enable persistence and adequate levels of confidence to succeed, with the latter related directly to a certain level of familiarity with the ‘unknown’. Not only does ‘diversity’ become critical to understand dynamics underlying regime shifts, our findings also suggest a reconciliation of the role of entrepreneurs during such episodes as inherently technical and creative. Whereas the presence of supportive roles and complementary niche activities are identified as instrumental, neither the presence of a clear market demand nor ‘problems’ of existing regimes emerge as important for regime shifts to occur. Implications for innovation processes and suggestions for further research are being addressed.

Edward Tenner (Princeton University)

The BlackBerry and the Abacus: Design, the Body, and the Evolution of Techniques

The study of technology has been mainly a study of the design of devices rather than of their use. But many important technological changes have been innovations in technique. Users have developed new ways of using technology, not foreseen by designers and manufacturers. They have sometimes developed skills much more rapidly than inventors had expected; they also have experienced more persistent difficulties. New generations of users have revived old designs with new styles of operation. Elite users have skills representing thousands of hours of investment, a physical-mental capital that an innovation may either increase or threaten. Changes in pedagogy can also transform the applications of existing equipment. Examples from the arts, medicine, and sports suggest that focusing on the use of the body can be valuable for both field work and historical research.

Peter-Paul Verbeek (Twente University)

Let’s Make Things Better: Persuasive Technology and Material Morality

Information Technologies have come to play a pervasive role in our daily lives. In many discussions, these technologies are either seen as functional extensions of human faculties or as threats to the quality of our lives. They help us to do things better, or they form a

structure of surveillance and impoverish the way we communicate and experience reality. What usually remains out of sight here is the kind of subjects these technologies produce. Rather than merely *facilitating* or *oppressing* human beings, information technologies *generate* specific forms of subjectivity. They change human practices, experiences, frameworks of interpretation, and moral decisions. The newly emerging field of *Persuasive Technology* adds a new dimension to this. Rather than shaping the subject implicitly, these technologies are explicitly designed to respond intelligently to human behavior, applying sophisticated techniques of persuasion. Such technologies challenge predominant approaches in ethical theory. They reveal a moral significance of technology, and replace the autonomous moral subject with a technologically mediated one. By linking a post-phenomenological account of technology to Michel Foucault's ethical approach, the paper will develop a conceptualization of both the moral significance of technology and the technologically mediated subject. Moreover, the paper will address how practices of use and design can anticipate and stylize these technological mediations.

Trudy Dehue (Groningen University)

Merging Trials and Publicity: An STS perspective on Commercial Clinical Trial Research

A considerable number of studies have been published recently arguing that clinical trials financed by pharmaceutical companies generate more positive results for new medicines than independently-funded trials. Immense interests are involved in clinical trials today as the pharmaceutical stock market soars or plunges on the basis of even interim test results. As a consequence, pharmaceutical companies increasingly turn to commercial research organizations (CROs) that are dependent upon their clients for their very existence. The mission of CROs is not to control pharmaceutical companies, but to serve their interests. As I will demonstrate, their endeavors to get new drugs through the licensing process brought about changes in the methodological protocols of clinical trial research. In addition, CROs are now merging with professional marketing companies. This enables pharmaceutical companies to deal with one and the same firm in order to have their new drugs both tested and advertised. With marketing companies opening clinics for conducting trials, the distinction between testing and selling is completely blurred. This paper also asks how we can deal with the commercialization of clinical trial research from an

STS perspective, namely taking into account that financially-independent academic research is also inevitably 'interest-driven'. Should we, and most importantly, can we criticize the clinical trial business while we know that knowledge can never mirror nature?

Paul Martin (Nottingham University)

STS and the making of pharmaceutical futures

High hopes surround the role of the pharmaceutical and biotechnology industries in improving health and creating highly skilled jobs. The promise of novel drugs, and therapies based on genes and stem cells, has prompted a range of policy initiatives including public subsidies for R&D, a liberalisation of the drug approval process and a

reorientation of academic and clinical research in the name of improving knowledge translation. This presentation will take a critical look at these promises and the underlying assumptions that support policy and argue that they are based on a series of widely held myths about the nature of drug innovation. In particular, it will be argued that the promise of a 'biotech revolution' has been greatly overstated and that the pharmaceutical industry is far more dependent on the public sector as a source of new medicines than is commonly believed. Based on a series of interventions in UK policy debates which question these myths, I wish to explore how STS might critically engage with the making and unmaking of 'pharmaceutical futures'.

Sergio Sismondo (Queen's University)

Ghosts in the Machine: Medical Publication Planning

Publication planning is the organizational and practical work that shapes pharmaceutical companies' data and eventually turns it into medical journal articles. To gain the largest scientific impact and market value from research, articles are often written under the names of independent medical researchers or "key opinion leaders." Pharmaceutical company statisticians, reviewers from a diverse array of company departments, medical writers, and the publication planners themselves are only rarely acknowledged in journal publications, and company scientists only sometimes acknowledged. Even sponsorship, the company funding of the trial, is omitted from many meeting abstracts. For this reason we might see publication planning as the "ghost management" of medical research and publication.

I report on a conference of publication planners. I focus on three themes. First, I am interested in the insights that allow planners to be successful at placing research in medical journals: Given STS's emphasis on the importance of expertise in science, we should ask what forms of expertise planners have or employ that allow them significantly more success than independent researchers in placing articles in medical journals. Second, I examine publication planners' understanding of ethics, for that was a central theme of this meeting. On both of these themes, we see a corporate understanding of practices, which allows them to be successful and seen as ethical. Finally, I discuss my role as an STS researcher in exposing the ghost management of medical research and publication.

WTMC at 4S/EASST: Invitation for a “tea”

Dear former anchor teachers of the WTMC summer schools, former WTMC coordinators, WTMC members and other invited guests,

As probably all of you know, 4S and EASST will have a combined annual meeting in Rotterdam (August 20-23, 2008). In the context of that meeting, on **Thursday August 21**, the Netherlands Graduate School of Science, Technology and Modern Culture (WTMC) will organize a lunch workshop, two sessions and one sub plenary on topics that are at the heart of what the researchers and PhD students in WTMC are interested in. These activities together will also serve as WTMC’s annual meeting 2008. The full program of the WTMC events is included in the Notes on WTMC (7).

We would also like to invite you for a “tea” (with some nice Dutch specialties), from **3:30-4:00 pm, in room T3-39**. With the tea, we would like to thank all former WTMC summer school teachers, coordinators, members and others who have contributed to the WTMC program, which by now has a history of 22 years.

To prepare for a nice cup of tea and extras for everyone, we would appreciate to hear from you if you will be able to attend the “tea”, by sending an email to hannie.spronck@fdcw.unimaas.nl *before August 1*.

We hope to see you all,

Best wishes,

Karin Bijsterveld (academic director WTMC)
Nelly Oudshoorn (chair of the WTMC board).

Now €5.000,- available for WTMC workshops!

In order to foster research activities within WTMC and the organization of WTMC workshops, the WTMC board has decided to raise the maximum amount of funding available per workshop from 2,500 to 5,000 euro. The total amount of funding annually available for WTMC-sponsored workshops is 15,000 euro.

How to apply for a workshop grant? These are the requirements for applying:

- WTMC has a maximum of 5,000 euro available for each workshop
- The theme of the workshop needs to combine the interests of at least two of the three research clusters of WTMC in order to sustain the integration of the WTMC members' research and in order to make the workshop attractive for as many WTMC members as possible
- The workshop should be open to WTMC members, with no or seriously reduced fees for these members
- WTMC members applying should send a signed letter to the academic director of WTMC with:
 - the full program and invited speakers
 - a detailed budget (with information about additional grants, etc.)
- The letter with the grant application should be sent to the academic director of WTMC three months prior to the workshop, and calls for proposals or announcements about the workshop should be sent to the WTMC community at least two months prior to the event
- In case WTMC subsidizes the workshop, WTMC should be mentioned as (one of the) sponsor(s) on the announcements, calls and publications about the workshop. After the event, a 1-2 page report about the workshop needs to be sent to WTMC, including a financial report.

WTMC and internationalization

WTMC has been a member of the EU-funded Network of Excellence PRIME, which enabled international PhD students to participate in WTMC workshops and schools. PRIME will end in 2008, yet Manchester University has taken the initiative to submit a proposal for an EU Marie Curie International Training Network. WTMC will participate in preparing this proposal. In addition, we have examined the possibilities to collaborate in a DFG-NWO grant proposal for an international (German-Dutch) *Graduiertenkolleg*. Yet, since such a scheme only allows our graduate school to collaborate with just *one* German university, and provides funding for the German PhD student positions, but not for the Dutch ones, the WTMC board has decided to wait for an upcoming NWO pilot project. This pilot project will probably provide funding for international collaboration between Dutch graduate schools and several foreign universities. NWO expects to publish the call for that scheme early 2009.

The WTMC Dissertation Days

It is good to know that the WTMC Dissertations Days are highly valued by the PhD students that have participated so far. They notably appreciate the high quality of the feedback they receive on their dissertations chapters and papers. The Dissertation Day is

a welcome opportunity for PhD students to present their work to the STS community in a safe setting, and prepares them for the dissertation defense.

A few notes on the past WTMC Supervisors' Day

On April 24, 2008, some 15 WTMC members gathered in Utrecht for the second WTMC Supervisors' Day. We discussed the "reception" of the WTMC welcome package, the relation between WTMC and the STIS Research Masters, the new Note on Research Skills and Crafts, the relation between the local and national components of WTMC, and our position on TI pharma sponsored research projects.

A few notes on our conclusions:

1. The welcome package is very useful, but should be fully written in English. This should also hold for the information for the supervisors on how to apply for WTMC membership and on how to register new PhD students.
2. So far, we know of no WTMC PhD students who have taken up a course in one of the (research) masters programs, but this option has only recently been opened to students. We should reconsider the use of the term STIS (Science, Technology and Innovation Studies), since STS is still the most commonly used acronym for the field. We still do not fully know the implications (for WTMC) of relabeling the second year the MA—which is the case in the Philosophy of Technology track in the MA PSTS (Twente University)—as the first year of the PhD trajectory, a shift we see at many universities.
3. The Note on Research Skills and Crafts is helpful, both for the program coordinators and for the supervisors/PhD students, but needs some tweaking to make it fully consistent.
4. To enhance the connections between what happens nationally and locally, it is good to send the announcements of WTMC workshops and schools (and information about the WTMC wiki) to the general WTMC list, so as to inform supervisors on what is going on. It would be helpful if supervisors discuss the workshops and schools with their PhD students, notably in terms of the links between the workshops' content and the PhD research.
5. The PhD students would appreciate more "flexibility" in the WTMC program. The WTMC board has already decided to ask the program committee for advice on this issue.
6. As to the TI Pharma issue: Toine Pieters has attempted to influence members of parliament in order to secure an independent STS-like research program along the TI Pharma research. This had been insufficiently taken up by the MPs. Whether or not Toine will be able to do his research (on the rise and decline of medicines) as he aims to it will depend on the criteria for access to the archives—this is not completely clear yet. For Trudy Dehue's stance: come to the subplenary in the WTMC program at 4S/EASST!

