



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

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## President's Report

My beginnings as President were difficult. The death of Werner was a shock that was hard to come to terms with. But the situation created by his death was also difficult for ISHPSSB. The loss of a President was unprecedented, and the way to proceed in these circumstances was not obvious.

These difficulties were overcome thanks to the members of ISH, in particular those working in the Council and Executive Committee, to the Treasurer Laura Perini, and to all the members of the different committees. In particular I would like to thank Anya Plutynski whose help was so precious. Anya will soon leave her position as Secretary, and we can all thank her for the work she did in recent years. This kind of work is highly demanding and should be properly recognized by the institutions that supervise careers.

I also want to thank Paul Griffiths who from time to time had to pull on the President's suit again to help us. I would also like to acknowledge the work done by Roger Sansom on the Site Selection Committee. He kindly agreed to replace me, and with the other members of this committee made a precise study of the two wonderful proposals that we have received. This is a precious aid in the discussions, which we will continue to have up to the Montreal meeting, before the final decision.

We had to move on, and Werner would surely have approved. Thanks to the work of Christophe Malaterre and Frédéric Bouchard, of the program co-chairs Rob Wilson and Mark Borrello, and of all the members of the Program Committee, the organization of the Montreal meeting is proceeding nicely. Montreal is a very pleasant city, where both North Americans and Europeans feel at home. I am sure that it will be the same for members from every part of the world. The candidatures for the David Hull Prize, the Marjorie Grene Prize and the recently created Werner Callebaut Prize have been received.

Three issues have been regularly raised in recent years by the members of ISHPSSB. The first, the price to pay for the success of the Society, was the increasing number of people attending ISHPSSB meetings, and the consequent increase in the number of sessions running in parallel – up to 15 in Montpellier. Parallel sessions are always frustrating, but frustration becomes unbearable when the number is so high. Will it be

necessary in future to limit the attendance at ISHPSSB meetings? The second concerns representation of disciplines within ISHPSSB. While philosophers of biology feel comfortable in the Society, it appears that the same is not true for some historians and social scientists. How to remedy to this imbalance? The third issue concerns the opening of the Society to more new members from parts of the world where the present number of members remains too low: Eastern Europe, but also Asia where countries like India are not yet sufficiently represented.

To answer these issues, my feeling is that we have to return to our fundamentals. Personally, what struck me when I attended my first ISHPSSB meeting was its openness to young people, and generally to all new potential members who did not yet have an obvious ID in the philosophy or history of biology, but who felt attracted to these fields of research. The strength of ISHPSSB comes from the fact that the Society is different from other academic societies, as they are centered on one discipline. For this reason, ISHPSSB is less directly associated with the recruitment of young scholars. The advantage is that for them the feeling of being evaluated is less of a burden when they communicate during ISHPSSB meetings.

We must build even more on these specificities of ISHPSSB and offer what other societies are unable to offer: the exploration of new fields of research where pluridisciplinarity is present or looks necessary. We must anticipate further developments, and give a wider place to new paths of research. ISHPSSB must be a place for innovations. Pluridisciplinarity cannot be prescribed, but it will naturally flourish in the study of well-chosen topics. These new territories are those in which students will have more opportunities to be recruited. Going in this direction will not abolish the issues that I mentioned previously, but it will help us to find original and less constraining solutions.

A last point concerning the website. Its modification has been discussed during many years. Thanks to the energy of Maria Kronfeldner and of the members of the Publications Committee, the dream has now become reality. The new site will be fully functional, not as we anticipated for the Montreal meeting, but very soon after it.

*Michel Morange*  
President

**ISHPSSB 2015 Montréal**

**MONTRÉAL 2015**  
**JULY 5 - JULY 10**

Friends,

ISHPSSB 2015 in Montréal is coming up shortly. This meeting is on track to be one of the biggest ISH meetings yet. Rob Wilson and Mark Borrello (program co-chairs) have worked diligently to organize an amazingly rich program (including keynote conferences from Sandra Harding and Ford Doolittle). You can all check out a preliminary version of the program on the [conference website](#). We have many activities planned to make your first (or repeat) visit to Montréal memorable.

First and foremost, we have decided to try something new for the banquet and forego the rubber chicken option. This year's banquet is a buffet cocktail dinner in a lounge at the heart of downtown Montréal and we have made sure that the price is reasonable for all ISH

members. Although we have made sure to have a good capacity area, we invite you to [register for the banquet dinner](#) early to insure you get your ticket. We also would like to invite parent members to register early to notify us of child care needs (see special field to this effect on the registration form). We are still working on finding the right type of childcare at a reasonable price, but it's very difficult to do so without a better idea of the number of parents needing such help. Planning ahead is a necessity all around: Montréal is one of the most popular summer touristic destinations in North America. For that reason we also invite you to book your hotel rooms or student residence as soon as possible. To help you in your travel planning we have negotiated reduced accommodation prices in many hotels within walking distance of the conference venue (<http://ishpssb2015.uqam.ca/plan-your-trip/accommodation.html>). Keep in mind that public transport is bountiful and safe, bike rentals are easy, taxis are everywhere, and that there are PLENTY of restaurants close to the conference area. For all those reasons, and for many environmental ones, a car rental is not necessary unless you plan on extending your stay in Québec to visit the beautiful Laurentians or Eastern Townships, or to go farther afield to historic Québec City and beyond.

We are happy to welcome you all to our dear city and we look forward to sharing ideas and good conversation with you all.

*Christophe Malaterre & Frédéric Bouchard*  
*Local co-organizers*



*A view of Montréal*

## ISHPSSB Meeting 2017

The site selection committee received proposals from Sao Paulo and Jerusalem to host the 2017 meeting of the society. Both proposals had great merit, but the committee found that the Brazilian proposal has greater strengths but also a significant weakness in terms of practicality. Given these issues could affect a lot of the society's members, this committee has chosen to let the council vote, and the membership make the final decision at the next meeting in Montreal after both proposals have been showcased.

The main factors which the committee thinks should be weighed on by the members are the following:

### *Internationalization*

Both proposals offer new hosts for the meeting, although Brazil fits better into a pattern of hosting in Europe, North America, then somewhere else. Also, hosting the meeting for first time in South America could draw in some new members from Brazil and surrounding countries.

### *Travel requirements*

The Brazilian proposal has the weakness that citizens of USA, Canada, Mexico, and Japan, among some others, would require a visa (because Brazil has a reciprocity policy regarding visas). This process takes months to complete and requires an itinerary, so people would have to buy tickets very early. It is involved enough that we would expect some people who planned on coming and purchased tickets to ultimately not attend. It would also cost US citizens \$160, and other countries less.

Independently of which site does the members select, we would invite the losing bid to apply to host 2019.

*Roger Sansom on behalf of the Site Selection Committee*

## **Events for student and early career members in Montreal**

The committee announces two events. All early career scholars, including graduate students and early career scholars (post-docs, research fellows, young stage faculty, etc) are encouraged to attend.

## *Early Career Scholar Mentoring Luncheon*

Time: 1pm on Tuesday, July 7th (during the 3-hour lunch break from 12:30 to 3:30pm)

In 2013, the Advisory Committee hosted an interdisciplinary mentoring panel for the first time. This year, the mentoring event will take the form of an informal luncheon. This mentoring event will give students and early career members of the society a chance to meet, mingle, chat, and lunch with established scholars. Topics to be discussed include navigating the job market, interdisciplinary publishing, collaborations between the life sciences and their history and philosophy, alternative careers, being a minority in the field, and possibly more. You do not have to be a student to attend.

There will be about 6 tables, with a total of 13-14 mentors. Each table will focus on a particular topic. Participants can stay at one table or move to another during the lunch event. Registration is on-site and lunch will be provided. So mark your conference calendars and be sure to visit us! Location and format details will be announced through email and on the conference website.

## *Graduate Student Member General Meeting*

Time: 1pm on Wednesday, July 8th (during the 3-hour lunch break from 12:30 to 3:30pm)

Duration: 1 hour

We will be electing our 2015-2017 Graduate Representative. Being a Grad Rep is an excellent opportunity to discuss and vote on ISHPSSB internal policies with faculty committee members on behalf of the student body. (S)he is also the default Chair of the Student Advisory Committee. The Committee, which consists of both students and faculty members, has the freedom to plan conference events that benefit the student and early career scholars. You are welcome to exercise your creativity and propose to the board both on-site, off-site, and outreach activities that would benefit ISH and its student members. If you are interested in nominating or self-nominating for the position, please email Lynn at [ccf79@mizzou.edu](mailto:ccf79@mizzou.edu).

The general meeting is also an opportunity for student members to give feedback regarding the student travel support funding and reimbursement process. The current student rep has worked hard to increase the

visibility of the student travel grant information and to extend the application deadline. The award will be announced by the Travel Support Committee in April.

Lunch may be provided. We will circulate a more detailed agenda closer to the time.

*Lynn Chiu (ISHPSSB Graduate Representative), Nina Atanasova, Ann-Sophie Barwich, and Emily Parke (Student Advisory Committee members)*

### **From the 2015 Marjorie Grene and Werner Callebaut Prizes Committee**

The calls for the above prizes closed on 15 February 2015, with a very healthy pool of submissions for both prizes. The Grene 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 (Salt Lake City or Montpellier) by someone who was, at the time of presentation, a graduate student. The newly inaugurated Werner Callebaut Prize is intended to advance the careers of younger scholars working at the intersection of the fields represented by ISHPSSB, and will be awarded to the best manuscript utilizing an interdisciplinary approach based on a presentation at one of the two previous ISHPSSB meetings (Salt Lake City or Montpellier). For more details please see <http://ishpssb.org/prizes/>.

The Committee is composed of Rachel Ankeny, Marion Blute, Jay Odenbaugh, and Neeraja Sankaran, all of whom are busily reading the generally high quality papers submitted. The prizes will be announced publicly at the ISHPSSB meeting in Montreal.

Please consider donating to the prize funds, especially to the new Werner Callebaut Prize: donations can be made when you renew your membership or via the ISH webpage.

*Rachel A. Ankeny  
Committee Chair*

### **From the 2015 David L. Hull Prize Committee**

The David L. Hull Prize is a biennial prize established in 2011 by ISHPSSB to honor the life and legacy of David L. Hull (1935-2010). The Prize honors an extraordinary contribution to scholarship and service that promotes interdisciplinary connections between history, philosophy, social studies, and biology. In the spirit of David Hull's own service to the profession and his support for the contributions and the advancement of people at early stages of their careers, the Prize is not restricted to recognition of a lifetime of achievement, but may be awarded to individuals at any stage of their career to acknowledge and promote significant efforts they have made that combine scholarship and service. The first recipient of the prize was Will Provine in 2011. The second recipient was Bill Wimsatt in 2013.

The Committee reports that it received three nominations for the 2015 prize and will announce its final decision at the ISHPSSB meeting in Montreal.

*James Griesemer  
Committee Chair*

### **From the Nominations Committee**

The Nominations Committee issued a call for nominations for the positions of President 2017-19, Secretary and Three members of Council. Elections for these positions will be held in advance of our Summer 2015 meeting.

The members who have been nominated are:

President:  
*Staffan Mueller Wille  
Marsha Richmond*

Treasurer:  
*Laura Perini*

Secretary:  
*Sean Valles*

Program Chair:  
*Tba*

Council:  
*Tba*

*Paul Griffiths  
Committee Chair*

## **From the Program Committee**

The program committee is pleased to report that the session schedule for the Montreal meeting is in final editing. We have slotted into the 5 meeting days a total of 225 sessions. We're happy to note that slightly more than half of the sessions were submitted as organized sessions and we were able to honor the preferred time slots for those sessions. The remaining individual papers were organized into standard format sessions and distributed over the program. We've also got two fantastic keynote lectures one from Sandra Harding and the other from Ford Doolittle. A preliminary version of the program can be found here:

<http://ishpssb2015.uqam.ca/program/programme.html>

*Rob Wilson & Mark Borrello*

*Program Co-Chairs*

# The Backpage

## ISHPSSB Officers and Council Members 2013-2015

Michel Morange  
*President*  
morange@biologie.ens.fr

Laura Perini (Treasurer)  
laura.perini@pomona.edu

Michel Morange (President Elect)  
morange@biologie.ens.fr

Rachel Ankeny (Greene Prize Committee)  
rachel.ankeney@adelaide.edu.au

Maria Kronfeldner (Publications Committee)  
kronfeldnerm@ceu.hu

Emily Schultz (Membership Development Committee)  
eschultz@stcloudstate.edu

Giuseppe Testa (Education Committee)  
giuseppe.testa@ieo.eu

Anya Plutynski (Secretary)  
aplutyns@artsci.wustl.edu

Paul Griffiths (Past President)  
paul.griffiths@sydney.edu.au

Lynn Chien-Hui Chiu (Student Advisory Committee)  
ccf79@mizzou.edu

Mark Borrello (Program Co-Chair)  
borrello@umn.edu

Alan Love (Membership Development Committee)  
aclove@umn.edu

Akihisa Setoguchi (Off-year Workshop Committee)  
akihisa.setoguchi@nifty.com

Rob Wilson (Program Co-Chair)  
rwilson.robert@gmail.com

## Are you subscribed to the ISHPSSB Listserv <ISHPSBL>?

If not, you may have missed information posted for members which became outdated by the time this Newsletter was ready. Subscribe online by following these instructions:

Send an email message to:

LISTSERV@lists.umn.edu

with the following in the body of the message:

SUBSCRIBE ISHPSSBL YourFirstName YourLastName

Check for updates online: <http://www.ishpssb.org>

This listserv is maintained by Trevor Pearce. If you want to submit something, write to him under: [ishpssbmoderator@gmail.com](mailto:ishpssbmoderator@gmail.com)

## Have you renewed your membership?

ISHPSSB members typically renew their memberships when they register for the biennial meeting. Those who do not attend a meeting sometimes fail to renew. To renew your membership, go to: <http://ishpssb.onefireplace.com>.

If you experience any difficulties, please contact Anya Plutynski at [secretary@ishpssb.org](mailto:secretary@ishpssb.org)

As a benefit, members receive a variety of journals at reduced rate, including ISIS and JHB.

If your membership has expired some time ago (approximately 6 months), you may be put in the “archives” of the membership database. In order to be removed from the archive, you must contact Anya Plutynski at [secretary@ishpssb.org](mailto:secretary@ishpssb.org)

## Credits

This newsletter was edited and reviewed by Maria Kronfeldner, Michel Morange, Anya Plutynski and David Suárez Pascal.

The logo of the society was generously contributed by Andrew Yang.