

Philippe de Montebello and David Levering Lewis won the National Humanities Medal in 2009

HISTORY OF SCIENCE WORKING GROUP

This ongoing research group fosters dialogue among historians, philosophers, sociologists, and classicists who work on “issues related to science, technology, and medicine from the dawn of civilization to the present,” according to Professor Matthew Stanley of the Gallatin School of Individualized Study. The working group organizes monthly workshops for graduate students and faculty from NYU and elsewhere, as well as public lectures on the history of science and technology. Now in its fourth year and funded principally by Gallatin, the History of Science Working Group “has brought together historians of science from all over the metropolitan area who previously had no regular opportunity to interact,” says Professor Stanley. “Our group has provided a very fruitful ground for interaction and collaboration to maximize the talent in the city.”



THE HISTORY OF THE TELESCOPE: EXPLORING THE BOUNDARIES BETWEEN SCIENCE AND CULTURE

In 2010, Professor Myles Jackson of NYU’s Polytechnic Institute and The Gallatin School of Individualized Study organized a two-day conference to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the invention of the telescope. As Jackson and his colleagues from Harvard, Princeton, and elsewhere argued throughout the weekend, far from being just a crucial scientific instrument, the telescope since Galileo has served as a potent symbol of aristocratic patronage as well as a genuine threat to received ideas about how the heavens work. The conference ended with a performance by actor Jay Sanders and Tony-award winners Maryann Plunkett and Fritz Weaver of excerpts from Richard Goodwin’s play, *Two Men of Florence*, which premiered in Boston with Jay Sanders in the role of Galileo.



BELLEVUE LITERARY PRESS AND THE MEDICAL HUMANITIES

NYU is at the forefront of the emerging medical humanities, the exploration of the way that the humanities and the medical sciences engage each other and deepen our understanding of culture, the body, and the mind. The Bellevue Literary Press at NYU’s Medical School is directly responsible for much of this interaction, or as Editorial Director Erika Goldman says, “Bellevue Literary Press focuses on bringing together and promoting a dialogue between the ‘Two Cultures’ of the arts and the sciences through literary publishing.” Bellevue was the publisher of the 2010 Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, Paul Harding’s *Tinkers* – the first work of fiction from a small press to win the Pulitzer in almost thirty years. The Medical School also sponsors the *Bellevue Literary Review*, a literary magazine under the editorship of Dr. Danielle Ofri which publishes twice yearly and features short stories, poetry, and essays on health and healing, illness and disease.

In the spring of 2010, the Humanities Initiative and Bellevue Literary Press hosted a pair of panels on the medical humanities, ranging from the history of illness metaphor in literature and the complexities of the doctor-patient relationship, to the role of the visual arts in medicine and the history of *Gray’s Anatomy* – the former featuring remarks by Laura Ferguson, the Medical School’s first artist-in-residence. The Humanities Initiative has also facilitated ongoing scholarly conversation on the medical humanities. Coordinated by Erika Goldman, Prof. Jerry Lowenstein (Medical School) and Bradley Lewis (Gallatin), The Humanities Initiative’s Working Research Group on Health, Humanities, and Culture “fostered the creation of a community that has brought people together from the Medical School and the Square, allowing for an ongoing dialogue that has enriched all of our individual projects,” according to Goldman.



“The humanities allow us to better interact with each other and show us that it is this interaction between seemingly disparate people and ideas that lets us glimpse an enduring web of connection ...To study the humanities is to see the magic in reality.”

LAUREN KUHN, CAS
CLASS OF 2012, ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE