Society for Women in Philosophy
2013 Distinguished Woman Philosopher

Alison Wylie, PhD
In celebration of Alison Wylie

A life of the mind, digging in the dirt.
Beginnings

Swindon, UK, 1954
With brother Rob in Oxford, UK
WELCOME TO CANADA
Where We Don’t Care Who You Marry, So Long As You Both Watch Hockey
Alison at 15

Summer 1969
Ontario
Summer digs at Ft. Walsh, Saskatchewan, 1974
Undergraduate philosopher

Mount Allison University, Sackville, NB 1976
Graduate Studies

M.A. 1979: Anthropology, SUNY Binghamton

Ph.D. 1982: Philosophy, SUNY Binghamton
Program in the History and Philosophy of the Social and Behavioral Sciences
Dissertation: Positivism and the New Archaeology
Director: Rom Harré
Summer
doctoral research,
digging in Tucson, AZ
1977/78
Postdoctoral Fellowship
Institute for the Humanities
University of Calgary
1981-1983

With dancer/choreographer Anne Flynn at a performance of “Hempel’s Dilemma,” 1982
I first met Alison when I was a Masters student at the U of C – nearly thirty years ago. Alison’s influence has been a crucial part of my professional development, and of my image of what a philosopher is, and can be. When we met, Alison was pretty much at the start of her career, but it was already obvious to everyone that she was just an extraordinary force. It wasn’t just her phenomenal work ethic – how does she do it? – it was the way that she drew students in by being interested in what they thought, and supportive of their work. No matter how tentative (or, it must be said, overconfident) a student’s fledgling efforts were, Alison was never dismissive or harsh, she never sent students away to read what the important people have had to say on a topic, she encouraged us to ask for courses, to write, to engage in dialogue, to present at conferences, to submit for publication, just as though we were already philosophers, until, almost without noticing it, we were. And there was Alison again; doing the same sorts of things in the profession that she had been doing for us as students, treating us as valued peers. There are other professors who do all of these things, of course, but few do them so naturally or with such ease as Alison does, as though there is nothing exceptional about fostering enthusiasm and skill in philosophy. But there is. There is just something extremely exceptional about being the sort of philosopher that Alison is.

*Edrie Sobstyl, Dec. 19, 2013*
The UWO Years

University of Western Ontario

Assistant Professor (1985-1989)
Associate Professor (1989-1993)
Professor of Philosophy (1993-1998)
The Archaeology of Gender
22nd Annual Chacmool
Conference
Chacmool Archaeology Association,
University of Calgary, 1989
Meeting Alison
PROGRAMME

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17TH

5:30-7:00 REGISTRATION

All A sessions are in SS106, All B sessions are in SS105 and all C sessions are in SS110

7:00-8:10 SESSION I

A

ST106

Heidi Grasswick, U of Minnesota
“Theorizing Epistemic Communities”
com: Ann Levey, U of C
chr: Jill Gatfield, U of C

B

ST105

Nergis Canefe Gunluk, York
“Excesses of the Female Body and Performative Experience: Critical Readings of Lesbian Spectatorship”
com: Karen Pilkington, Berkeley
chr: Michelle Newman, Drama, U of C

C

ST110

Amy Mullin, U of T
“Diversity in Woman and Women: Alternatives to Assimilation”
com: Edrie Sobstyi, U of A
chr: Alison Wylie, UWO

8:20-9:30 SESSION II

A

ST106

Anne Gatesby, York
“Social Practice & Scientific Knowledge: A Feminist Critique of Cardiovascular Research”
com: Alison Wylie, UWO
chr: Sharon Clough, SFU

4:15-5:45 KEYNOTE SPEAKER
Room ST143
Diana Tietjens Meyers, U of Connecticut
“Difference and Empathy: A Critique of Impartial Reason”
chr: Lorraine Code, York

5:45-6:30 BUSINESS MEETING
Philosophy Dept., 12th Floor, Social Sciences Bldg.

6:30 CASH BAR

7:30 BANQUET
Faculty Club, MacEwan Student Centre

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19TH

9:30-10:45 SESSION I

PAIRED SESSIONS

A

ST106

Sharyn Clough, SFU
“Just the Facts Ma’am: The Relation Between Evidence and Essentialism in Feminist Critiques”
chr: Kathleen Okruhlik, UWO

B

ST105

Elizabeth Boetzkes and Jennifer Parks, McMaster
“A Re-Vision of Commercial Surrogacy”
chr: Colleen Stainton, U of C

“A Mismatched Caring: Women’s Stories of High Risk Reproductive Care”
chr: Laurie Hardingham, U of C
”I found a photograph that I took of you in June 1996—a few years after we met—you were showing me around the Stanford Center for Advanced Behavioral Studies, where you were spending the year.”

Miriam Solomon
Warmest congratulations on being selected SWIP Distinguished Woman Philosopher! I can't remember exactly when I first met you, but I got to know you in the early 1990s at a series of conferences and talks at UWO, Boulder, the British Society for Philosophy of Science, and of course PSA. I have always admired your adventurousness, your healthy disrespect of academic hierarchies, your engaged and interdisciplinary work, and your wonderful poise in presentations. You are still a role model for me. One of your great talents is the ability to understand and find value in the work of others. I have benefited greatly from this and from the professional opportunities that you have steered my way. Your editorship of Hypatia took the journal to a new level--from an excellent publication to an outstanding one--packed with articles and features and with gorgeous covers. You are a cherished friend and colleague and I look forward to many more years of conferences and talks and committee work and celebrations with you!

Miriam Solomon, Dec. 08, 2013
Another encounter on the prairies

Minneapolis 1995
The Minnesota WISE Initiative
Janet Spector, Commission on Women, University of Minnesota
Mindy Kurzer, Food, Science & Nutrition, University of Minnesota
Wendy Grebner, Aerospace Engineering & Mechanics, University of Minnesota
Susan Page, Department of Chemistry, University of Minnesota

Why Get Smart? A Workshop to Make Science Fun for Girls
Chair: Karen Mason, Minnesota Science Teachers Association
Kathy Koepfer, YWCA and Girls Incorporated, St. Paul

Women in 20th Century Physics
Chair and Commentator: Helena Pycior, Department of History, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
“Lise Meitner (1878-1968): At the Edge of Historical Amnesia”
Ruth Lewis Sime, Sacramento City College, Sacramento
“Taking Advantage of Disadvantage: Maria Goeppert Mayer and Nuclear Physics”
Karen Johnson, Department of Physics, St. Lawrence University
“Marie Curie in America”
Susan Quinn, Author

 Nuclear Physics and Radiochemistry, 1918-1939: Women's Success and the Emergence of a Discipline
Teresa Hopper, Program in History of Science, Princeton University

GENDERED ASSUMPTIONS
“Influences on Women Graduate Students in Engineering and Science: Rethinking a Gendered Institution”
Carol Hollenshead, Stacy Wenzel, Barbara Lazarus, Indira Nair, University of Michigan

“The Math Effect Revisited”
Marjorie Meiley, Women’s Studies, Concordia University, Canada

RECEPTION
Sponsored in part by the Commission on Women and The College of Liberal Arts, University of Minnesota

BANQUET
Just Say No: Educating Females for the 21st Century
Jane Curry, Comedy and Commentary from “Pandora College”

SUNDAY, MAY 14, 1995

8:00 a.m.
Continental Breakfast

10:30 a.m.
Concurrent Sessions

Biology and Bodies: Policing the Boundaries
Chair: Alison Wylie, Department of Philosophy, University of Western Ontario

“Gender, Technology, and the Rise of Neo-Naturalism”
Kathryn Morgan, Department of Philosophy and Women’s Studies, University of Toronto

“Racism and Sexism in Science: Levels of Integration—The Genes & Gender Perspective”
Geraldine J. Casey, Women’s Center, John Jay College of Criminal Justice

“Interspecies Pregnancy”
Susan Squer, Department of English and Women’s Studies, The Pennsylvania State University

“Im/Partial Visions of Life: Gender Ideology in Molecular Biology”
Bennie B. Spencer, Department of Women’s Studies, University at Albany-State University of New York

ALTERNATIVE PRACTICES
Chair and Commentator: Roberta Whiteham, Department of English and American Indian Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison

“Starting from the Practises of Women Scientists”
Nancy Tuana, Department of Philosophy, University of Oregon

“Feminist Science Inside and Outside of Academia: Women Reshaping Meanings of Nature and Knowing”
Lisa H. Weissel, Women’s Spirituality Program, California Institute of Integral Studies

“Ojibway Women, Plant Knowledge, and the Practice of Traditional Medicine”
Patricia Jason, Department of History, Lakehead University, Canada

FEMINIST CRITIQUES OF SCIENCE REVISITED
Chair and Commentator: Naomi Schenman, Department of Philosophy, University of Minnesota

“Feminist Science Criticism and the Problem of Demarcation”
Sharyn S. Dough, Department of Philosophy, Simon Fraser University, Canada
Edie Sotul, School of Arts and Humanities, University of Texas at Dallas

“What’s at Stake in Feminist Critiques of Science?”
Elizabeth Hedrick, Department of English, University of Texas at Austin

Warwa Njaruza Njam, Department of Science and Technology Studies, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

“Gender and Body Image in Historical and Contemporary Medical-Scientific and Feminist Discourses”
Pamela Wakefield, Sociology/Women’s Studies, Lakehead University, Canada
Washington University
St. Louis, MO
1998-2003

Professor of Philosophy
Program for Social Thought and Analysis
Life-long influences begin here, including the inception of The Philosophy of Social Science Roundtable

Left, Alison with Roundtable co-founders, James Bohman and Paul Roth, St. Louis, 2004
I have known Alison Wylie for 30+ years, but we became particularly good friends with her arrival in St. Louis. I regard Alison as a (benign) force of nature; when she appears on the scene, good things just start to happen. Noteworthy among these is the Philosophy of Social Science Roundtable. Although there had been off and on discussions about doing something to try to revive philosophy of social science, it was Alison’s landing in St. Louis that really galvanized the three of us—Alison, Jim Bohman and me--into action. The rest—meaning the (formerly St. Louis, now international) Philosophy of Social Science Roundtable—is, as they say, history. Alison’s boundless energy, her acute intelligence, and her endless resourcefulness have made her an asset to everyone who has had the opportunity and pleasure to work with her. And although I confess to basking in the 70s here in Santa Cruz, I join in spirit with all who have braved the chill winds of the East to salute Alison on this occasion.

Paul Roth, Dec. 19, 2013
I often refer to Alison as my favorite former colleague. She came to Washington University when my career was just starting, and helped teach me what it is to be a good member of our profession. As a citizen, Alison was immediately recognized as among the most trusted and judicious members of our department, and she treated me, a lowly assistant professor, with such friendship and respect, that I was able to briefly forget that academia is a hierarchy. Alison also broadened my intellectual horizons with lasting effect. Though her AOS may have sounded narrow (feminist philosophy of archeology, really?), I'd never known someone with more ecumenical interests. Regardless of the topic, Alison would listen to lectures with equal seriousness, and her questions always managed to get to the heart of things, engaging the speakers' positions, rather than pursuing any agenda of her own. Through her work, I have learned to re-conceive narrowness of interests (rigid designation, really??), and I also came to see how standpoints are not just a theory, but a practice. I continue to miss having Alison as a colleague. I have kept her with me, however, as a model of how to be a philosopher. 

Jesse Prinz, Dec. 13, 2013
Meanwhile in the Department of Small Worlds and Fuzzy Photography….

...Jesse and Shari respond to a query regarding the merits of evolutionary psychology, Central APA, NOLA, Feb. 2013.
FEMINISM AND NATURALISM
Working Conference
SEPTEMBER 24-26, 1999

Organizers: Lynn Hankinson Nelson and Alison Wylie
Sponsors: University of Missouri-St. Louis and Washington University in St. Louis
In a pattern to be repeated at FEMMSS conferences a decade later, the **Canucks** take over feminist philosophy of science.
Conference participants in alphabetical order:

William Bechtel (Washington): On the Naturalistic Turn
Richmond Campbell (Dalhousie): Naturalized Moral Epistemology
Sharyn Clough (Rowan): Out-naturalizing the Naturalists
Catherine Hundleby (University of Western Ontario): Naturalist Feminist Standpoint Epistemology
James Maffie (Denver/Boulder): Sources of Epistemic Normativity
Lynn Hankinson Nelson (UM-St. Louis): Naturalism, Socialized and Normative
Phyllis Rooney (Oakland University): Feminism and the Full Facticity of the Facts
Paul A. Roth (UM-St. Louis): Feminism and Naturalism: If Asked for Theories, ‘Just Say No’
Joseph Rouse (Wesleyan): Feminism and the Two Poles of Philosophical Naturalism
Miriam Solomon (Temple University): Epistemic Justice
Nancy Tuana (University of Oregon): The Prospects for a Feminist Naturalism
Alison Wylie (Washington University): Naturalizing Epistemic Virtues
Back row: Alison, Linda Nicholson, Joe Rouse, Alison Jaggar, Nancy Tuana
Front row: Edrie Sobstyl, Shari Clough, Cate Hundleby
Left, **Alison** with Lynn Hankinson Nelson, and Nancy Tuana
Right, **Alison** with Rich Campbell and **Shari**
Alison is a great sender of postcards, this one to Shari, from 2001, featuring Canadian content, PLUS, Andy Warhol, presaging the NYC years.
THE NEXT BIG THING

Value Free Science: Ideal or Illusion?
Center for Ethics and Values in the Sciences, at the University of Alabama, Birmingham
February 23 - 25, 2001
Shari Clough and John Dupre, and in the background, some other guy 😊
I first met Alison Wylie when I was finishing up my PhD at Stanford University in 1995. She was a senior research fellow at the Clayman Institute for Gender Research, and agreed to serve as the external examiner on my dissertation committee. She went above and beyond the responsibilities of an external examiner, however, and provided detailed feedbacks and recommendations; some of those recommendations made it into the revisions, others were incorporated into my first book, but what I most remember, getting on towards two decades later, is that they were all both insightful and helpful. For a while after finishing my thesis, my contact with Alison was only sporadic, but since moving back to the West Coast it has been my real pleasure to get to know her better. I am of course disappointed that I can’t be here today to help celebrate Alison being named the Distinguished Woman Philosopher, a well-deserved honor.  
It’s impossible, of course, to sum up someone of such broad interests and diverse contributions as Alison Wylie in a few sentences. Alison has been one of the very first philosophers of science to make clear to the mainstream of the discipline that feminism provided a perspective that could not be ignored. She has almost single-handedly opened up a major field of scientific inquiry to philosophical attention, and a field that is pivotal in debates about human history and the nature of gender difference. And speaking as a close friend and colleague of many years, she is one of the most personally and politically admirable human beings I know.

*John Dupre, Dec. 22, 2013*
On the occasion of the release of Miriam’s book *Social Empiricism*.

Philadelphia, 2002
Postcards from Alison, continued

Moving to the Big Apple, 2003

Imagine all the people living life in peace.
New York Stories

Professor,
Barnard College,
Women’s Studies;
Columbia University,
Philosophy
2003-2005

At home in her deluxe apt in the sky, 2004
WOMEN, WORK, AND THE ACADEMY

STRATEGIES FOR RESPONDING TO ‘POST-CIVIL RIGHTS ERA’ GENDER DISCRIMINATION

Written by Alison Wylie, Janet R. Jakobsen, and Gisela Fosado

The Barnard Center for Research on Women
Association of Feminist Epistemologies, Metaphysics, Methodologies and Science Studies

The first biennial meeting, Nov. 2004
University of Washington

Alison’s keynote: “The feminism question in the social sciences: Epistemic virtues and the method debate”

Right: Cate, Shari, and Edrie, reunited.
Westward Ho!

To the other Washington, 2005

Professor, Philosophy and Anthropology;

Adjunct Professor in the Department of Gender, Women and Sexuality Studies.

With Libby Potter and Sam in Northern California
Alison as house guest, Chez Kaplough, Corvallis, OR

Above, avec slippers, Dec. 2005
Right, avec chickens, Summer 2010
Organizer/Chair: Alison Wylie, University of Washington

Norms and the Goals of Science, Helen Longino

Solomon’s Science Without Conscience, Alan Richardson

The Devil is in the (Historical) Details, Naomi Oreskes

Solomon’s Empirical/Non-Empirical Distinction, Sharyn Clough

Commentary and Response, Miriam Solomon
The Non-Violent FEMMSS 2!

Feb. 2007, Tempe, AZ
Alison, Shari, and Libby
It is a huge pleasure to see Alison so rightly honored as a Distinguished Woman Philosopher. Her long history of innovative interventions in and development of standpoint theory, the philosophy of archeology, the ethics of archeological research, and now in the powerful new forms of collaborative research have had wide influence in several disciplines, and have shaped my own thinking many times. Moreover, she is one of our several "Philosopher Queens" who have again and again, selflessly and wisely, organized and administered important feminist philosophy conferences, not to mention such institutions as Hypatia and the Pacific APA. I send her my very best wishes for her continued flourishing.

Sandra Harding, Dec. 22, 2013

Alison and Sandra, Feb. 2007, Tempe, AZ
And, as is the tradition, Shari, Edrie, Cate.

FEMMSS 2, Feb. 2007
Postcards from Alison, continued

June 2009

Business as usual
... and in her spare time

The Philosophy of Science Association Women’s Caucus

Breakfast meetings!
Here’s one from PSA 2008 with Andrea Woody and Nancy.
And.... Hypatia!

Celebrating the 25th anniversary of the journal

With Joan Callahan
Seattle, Fall 2009
Constructive Engagement: Aboriginal and Scientific Communities in Collaboration

June 2010
Alison with George Nicholas, Sonny McHalsie, Dave Schaepe, Laura Arbour, Doris Cook, and Louise Fortmann
86th Annual American Philosophical Association Pacific Division

Presidential Address
Seattle, WA
April 6, 2012.
... later that same weekend

Celebrating with Sally Haslanger

Carus Lecturer

April 7, 2012
Which brings us to 2013

a VERY BIG year
On the occasion of Canberra’s 100th anniversary, Alison was invited to give the Mulvaney Lecture at ANU.

March 20, 2013

“Collateral evidence: Ethnographic analogy revisited”
In April we handed off dear Hypatia to the new editorial team.

Above, Sally Scholz, Shelley Wilcox, Shari, Alison, and Ann Cudd
Right, Alison signing off, Seattle April 2013
Delivering the *British Society for the Philosophy of Science*, Plenary lecture: "Collateral Evidence: The Vagaries of Evidential Reasoning in Archaeology” brought Alison back to the UK in July.

Right, with Nancy Cartwright, “Are you coming?”
And now today, she is being honoured as the Society for Women in Philosophy Distinguished Woman Philosopher

Dec. 28, 2013, Baltimore, MD
Some final words from current students:

Women in philosophy like Alison Wylie make me feel hopeful about the discipline's future. Not only is she a kind and charitable human being, she also pursues academic projects that make a difference. Alison is an inestimable role model.  

Michelle Pham, Dec. 16, 2013
What she said.

With love,

Shari