

NOGLSTP *Bulletin*

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NOGLSTP, PO BOX 91803, Pasadena CA 91109, phone/fax: 626 791-7689, www.noglstp.org

Smallpox Vaccination not for Immunosuppressed

If you're over 35, you and your parents never gave a second thought about that itchy rite of childhood called the smallpox vaccine. But in these modern times of potential biological terrorism, informed consent, and techno-savvy consumers, there has been much controversy and discussion regarding vaccination. A quick look at the Center for Disease Control Website (www.cdc.org) is quite informative about both the disease, and the vaccine.

Smallpox, a serious, contagious, and sometimes fatal infectious disease is caused by the variola virus that emerged in human populations thousands of years ago. Except for laboratory stockpiles, the variola virus has been eliminated, and hasn't been seen in the wild since the 1970's. However, due to the heightened concern that the variola virus might be used as an agent of bioterrorism, the U.S government is taking precautions for dealing with a smallpox outbreak.

Generally, direct and fairly prolonged face-to-face contact is required to spread smallpox from one person to another. Smallpox also can be spread through direct contact with infected bodily fluids or contaminated objects such as bedding or clothing. Rarely, smallpox has been spread by virus carried in the air in enclosed settings such as buildings, buses, and trains. Humans are the only natural hosts of variola. Smallpox is not known to be transmitted by insects or animals.

A person with smallpox is sometimes contagious with onset of fever (prodrome phase), but becomes most contagious with the onset of rash. At this stage the infected person is usually very sick and not able to move around in the community. The infected person is contagious until the last smallpox scab falls off.

The vaccine that soldiers and emergency workers have been given recently is the same vaccine that was used to eradicate naturally occurring smallpox years ago. The risks of taking the vaccine are the same as they were back then, except we now know more about what types of health conditions create higher risks. Groups facing higher risks include small children, pregnant women, people who have ever had eczema, people taking immunosuppressants, and people infected with HIV. Because the smallpox vaccine contains live vaccinia virus, it can spread to other parts of the body and to other people. Immunosuppressed people— (from cancer, cancer therapy, organ transplants, and illnesses such as HIV/AIDS) -are especially at risk of the vaccination infection rampaging through the body, or contracting the vaccination infection from another person.

According to the CDC website, this vaccine will be available for civilians soon. Be a diligent scientist, and digest all the facts and consider all the factors when deciding whether you will take the shot.

Save the Date



AAAS AMSIE

Feb 13-18, 2003

Denver CO

Science as a Way of Life

**American
Association for
Advancement of
Science**

**Annual
Meeting and
Scientific
Innovation
Exposition**

February 16, 2003:

**NOGLSTP
Business Meeting**

**11:30am-1:30pm
Marriott/Nat Hill Room**

**NOGLSTP
Reception**

**4:30 pm -6:30 pm
Marriott/Nat Hill Room**

Inside this Issue:

Smallpox Vaccination not for Immunosuppressed	1
Save the Date—2003 AAAS ASMIE	1
Reproduction Fantasy becomes Real Life	2
Lockheed Martin Adds Sexual Orientation to its Non Discrimination Policy	2
University of Toronto Faculty Position Advertisement	2
Who are we?	3
NOGLSTP Volunteer Opportunities	3
Membership Renewal Form	3/4
Queer Scientist of Contemporary Note	4
About NOGLSTP	4

Reproduction Fantasy becomes Real Life

A Book Review and Current Events Commentary
by Barbara Belmont

So, I've piddled away part of my winter vacation reading another Nicola Griffith book *Ammonite*. *Ammonite* was actually Griffith's first science fiction novel, before *Slow River* (see *Summer 2001 NOGLSTP Bulletin* book review). The plot line is the typical lesbian sci-fi adventure fantasy: anthropologist protagonist discovers herself and the secrets of a planet inhabited by female-only survivors of a centuries-old colony earthlings. The planet's secret is that it harbors a virus which infects all humans. The infection is fatal 100% of the time for men, but 75% of the women survive it. Only women can survive this infection, thereby leaving only women on the planet, yet this human population has thrived and grown over the hundreds of years it's been there. As in other feminist science fiction fantasy societies (*Daughters of a Corral Dawn*, *The Wanderground*), the characters in *Ammonite* — who have survived the virus — have the ability to procreate without means of, um... gametes from the opposite sex. In *Ammonite*, the fete is accomplished in a state of deliberate and deep meditation shared by the two partners, in which all body functions, including ovulation, are synchronized. More scientific methods — cloning techniques and ovum merging — play a roles in *Daughters of a Corral Dawn*, *The Wanderground*.

Obviously, the possibility of reproduction without sperm has been a scenario in the fantasy and science fiction genre for many years, and has appealed to lesbians who want children without the semen, paternity, or unknown genetics issues. It appears that fantasy has become reality, marked by two recent news announcements. The first is controversial Clonaid's announcement in early January that a cloned baby girl was born to a lesbian in the Netherlands. This was Clonaid's second claim of a successful cloning in a week. The Clonaid spokeswoman said that the baby will be raised by the mother and her partner, and that it will be up to the mother to decide whether to allow DNA confirmation of the cloning. The other recent announcement is that scientists at the Reproductive Genetics Institute have developed a way for any cell in the human body to be used to fertilize another woman's egg. Originally devised to help men with no sperm to genetically father children, the technique uses an electric pulse generator to activate oocytes or fuse embryonic and somatic cells (after haploidization). Such fusion could be just as easily be used on ovum and somatic cells from two women, enabling lesbian couples to have a baby with genes from both partners.

What do I think about these developments? I don't think making exact genetic copies of people through cloning is a good ethical or biological idea, due to the low survivability of the embryos and the possibility of amplified genetic damage in the final product. So I'm against reproductive cloning. Although I'm the type of person who could love any child as my own, I acknowledge that the possibility of being a true genetic co-parent must be attractive to many lesbian couples. So, I'll take a wait and see position on the fusion technique.

By the way, *Ammonite* was pretty interesting, from a science-geek's point of view. Griffith did a decent job of describing the cellular and biochemical interactions observed by the mutual meditators, and has set up a great scenario for adventures in a series of future novels. When I get a chance to read another novel (sometime next year), I'll be sure to look for any by her.

Lockheed Martin Adds Sexual Orientation to Nondiscrimination Policy

Lockheed Martin, the biggest defense contractor in the United States, has reversed a long-standing policy and will give gay and lesbian workers civil rights protections, and their partners will receive health benefits.

Vance D. Coffman, Lockheed's chief executive, said the decision was made by the company's executive council, and that sexual orientation would be added immediately to the company's nondiscrimination policy. Domestic partner benefits will be introduced early this year. Last year, a small group of shareholders attempted to have the company add the civil rights protections for gay workers. Shareholders endorsed a company motion to reject it.

In August, Lockheed received a "zero" rating from the Human Rights Campaign, which advocates for gay civil rights. HRC said the company's anti-discrimination policies were inadequate to meet the needs of its gay employees.

Lockheed spokeswoman Meghan Mariman said the company's position changed because so many of its competitors -- including Honeywell International, Boeing Co., Raytheon Co., International Business Machines Corp. and Microsoft Corp. -- added sexual-orientation policies and domestic-partner benefits, and Lockheed began to worry that it would lose valuable employees to them.

Source: 365Gay.com

advertisement

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
Department of Nutritional Sciences,
Faculty of Medicine
Assistant/Associate Professor
Community/Population/Public Health Nutrition

The Department of Nutritional Sciences in the Faculty of Medicine invites applications for a tenure-track position in an area of nutrition research focused on current issues in community, population, or public health. The Department encourages applications from candidates with a strength in nutritional epidemiology, survey methods or qualitative research. Level of appointment will be consistent with the candidate's qualifications. Successful candidates will be expected to establish an independent, externally funded research program and to participate in teaching.

Applicants should send curriculum vitae, description of research interests, and the names and addresses of 3 references by March 1, 2003 to: Dr. Michael C. Archer, Chair, Department of Nutritional Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto, FitzGerald Building, 150 College St., Toronto, ON, Canada M5S 3E2.
m.archer@utoronto.ca Phone: 416-978-8195. Fax: 416-971-2366.

The University is strongly committed to diversity within its community and especially welcomes applications from visible minority group members, women, Aboriginal persons, persons with disabilities, members of sexual minority groups and others who may contribute to further diversification of ideas. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however, Canadians and permanent residents will be given priority.



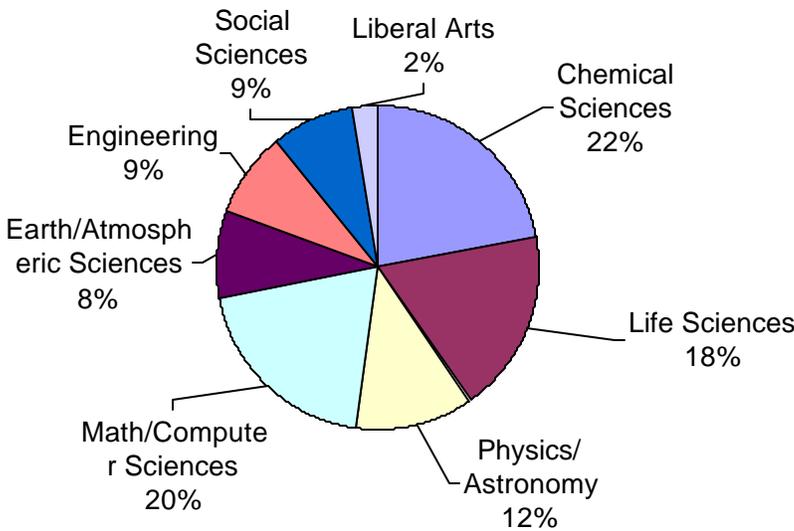
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at
www.noglstp.org/memberservices.php

IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES?

Check your mailing label. If it says 200302-200304, it is time to renew your dues. If it says 200206-200301, or trial2, it is past time to renew or join, and this will be your final newsletter unless we hear from you. We need and appreciate your continued support. You may renew online (and pay with a credit card), or fill out the form below (and on the other side of this page), and return it with your check to NOGLSTP, PO Box 91803, Pasadena CA 91109. Remember to add \$5US if you are subscribing outside of the US. Thank you. You may also use this form to inform us of any address or area code changes.

Who are we?

From time to time, we like to have a look at our member demographics just to see what kind of scientists and technical professionals comprise NOGLSTP. As you can see from the chart below, chemists comprise the majority profession of NOGLSTP, with the mathematicians and computer scientists running a close categorical second. In previous years, the life scientists were our majority profession. We're a highly educated group of LGBT people, with over 45% of our members having PhD or MD degrees. Approximately 30% of us stopped our education at the BA/BS level, while 22% pursued a Masters. Of course, NOGLSTP welcomes all who support its cause, even non-scientists!



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Membership Form

To renew your NOGLSTP membership or become a member of NOGLSTP, support its activities, and receive a newsletter, complete this form and send it with a check or money order to:

**NOGLSTP
PO BOX 91803
Pasadena CA 91109**

Annual Membership Dues are:

\$15-35 (sliding scale) (tax deductible after the 1st \$10)

\$10 for students and unemployed*

*inquire about our limited free memberships to 'starving students'

\$5 extra for memberships outside of the US (for the extra postage) (US Funds only, please!)

Renewal New Info change only

Name: _____

Address: (don't forget your zip code!)

Telephone: _____

Email/URL: _____

Technointerest or profession: _____

Latest Degree/Subject: _____

Do you want your name and phone/email printed on a membership roster to be released to other NOGLSTP members?
 YES NO

Do you want your email/URL to be placed on the NOGLSTP web page?
 YES NO

Don't forget to fill out the other side



Inquire at office@noglstp.org

NOGLSTP Volunteer Opportunities

- ▽ Edit The NOGLSTP Bulletin, our quarterly newsletter
- ▽ Write articles for The NOGLSTP Bulletin
- ▽ Compile of a list of professional societies to which our members belong, including any official or unofficial lesbian/gay/trans special interest groups
- ▽ Solicit and secure grants to support expansion of NOGLSTP events/activities
- ▽ Facilitate a relationship between NOGLSTP and your professional society
- ▽ Start a local chapter in your geographic area

Queer Scientist of Contemporary Note—Clare Waterman-Storer

An alert NOGLSTP e-list subscriber has drawn our attention to cell biologist Clare Waterman-Storer, who was profiled in the November issue of the American Society for Cell Biology newsletter (Volume 24, Number 11).

An Assistant Professor at Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla CA, Dr. Clare Waterman-Storer is the Director of the Laboratory for Cell Motility Studies in the Department of Cell Biology. This laboratory conducts research in elucidating the role of cytoskeletal dynamics in cell migration and contact inhibition of cell locomotion using multimode high-resolution light microscopy of living cells and in vitro biochemical techniques. What this means is that she studies the molecules that are involved with cell motility—particularly microtubules, actin, and all the proteins responsible for regulating them. In particular, she is interested in the structural and regulatory interactions between actin and microtubules—how they touch and move each other and how they affect each other. Her laboratory is specifically interested in how these molecules interact during the control of motility and how those interactions impact such diverse areas as cancer, wound healing, and early embryonic development. In order to address these questions, Waterman-Storer uses a microscopy method she developed as a post-doc, called Fluorescence Speckle Microscopy (FSM), with which she can image both the microtubules and actin directly. She can also quantitatively assess what happens to these structural proteins in living cells when she makes changes to the signaling and regulatory proteins that bind to them.

Membership/Renewal Form (continued):

Please list any other professional organizations that you belong to:

Special Techno-Interests or Expertise:

For New Members: How did you learn of NOGLSTP?

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP US WITH? (CHECK ANY THAT INTEREST YOU)

- BOARD OF DIRECTORS
- HOLD OFFICE
- AAAS
- FUNDRAISING
- NEWSLETTER ARTICLES
- EDIT NEWSLETTER
- PRODUCE NEWSLETTER
- NEW PAMPHLET TOPICS
- GRANT WRITING
- G/L/B/T CAUCUS OF PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES (which one?)
- OTHER _____

Waterman-Storer received her BA in Biochemistry from Mt. Holyoke College, then pursued an MS in Exercise Science at University of Massachusetts, with the intention of becoming a strength trainer for professional athletes. She got involved with the Biology Departments' research on muscle dynamics, and ultimately joined the University of Pennsylvania's new muscle research program where she earned her PhD in Cell Biology. Her development of FSM during her post-doctoral studies at Penn revolutionized cell motility imaging. This past December, she was honored by the American Society for Cell Biology with the Women in Cell Biology Junior Career Recognition Award.

Dr. Waterman-Storer sports a tattoo of a mitotic spindle on her bicep, and lives near San Diego with her long-time companion, Lori, who is public school ESL teacher.

Sources:

http://www.ascb.org/news/vol25no11/ie/November-02_18.html

http://www.scripps.edu/newsandviews/e_20010423/waterman1.html

<http://www.scripps.edu/cb/waterman/CVfeb2001.htm>

ABOUT NOGLSTP

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF GAY AND LESBIAN SCIENTISTS AND TECHNICAL PROFESSIONALS, INC., is a nation-wide organization of lesbian and gay scientists and technical professionals, regional and caucus groups, and others interested in technical matters and the gay and lesbian community. NOGLSTP's goals include dialog with professional organizations, providing information, improving our member's employment and professional environment, opposing homophobia and stereotypes, educating the gay, scientific and general communities, and fostering intercity contacts among our members. National Organization of Gay and Lesbian Scientists and Technical Professionals, Inc. is a tax-exempt educational organization under IRS section 501(c)3, incorporated in the State of California (TAX ID # 95-4358685). Written correspondence may be addressed to: NOGLSTP, PO BOX 91803, Pasadena CA 91109-9813. For more information, see our web page at <http://www.noglstp.org/>

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Newsletter

The **NOGLSTP Bulletin** is published quarterly. Articles are encouraged and gratefully received. e-mailed articles to the NOGLSTP office c/o editor@noglstp.org are preferred. Next publication deadline: March 30, 2003

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