



The 2009-2010 Klopsteg seminar series in SCIENCE IN HUMAN CULTURE presents:

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THE POSTGENOMIC CONDITION: TECHNOSCIENCE AT THE LIMITS OF LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC IMAGINARIES

MONDAY
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HAGSTRUM ROOM
UNIVERSITY HALL 201
4:00 - 5:30 PM

EVANSTON CAMPUS
RECEPTION TO FOLLOW

ABSTRACT

Drawing upon ethnographic study of the International Haplotype Map Project and media analysis of genetic ancestry testing, this talk conceptualizes the forms of power at play in current efforts to construct a liberal anti-racist genomics. Specifically, it distinguishes between two problems of power and science: one characterized by what Michel Foucault labeled *states of domination*, and the other by what he described as *relations of power*. It argues that when states of domination exist, as in the case of the Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment, liberal efforts to extend new powers to research subjects may redress power imbalances between researchers and their subjects. However, when the distinction between scientists and research subjects are made less clear, as in contemporary efforts to construct an anti-racist genomics, efforts to extend liberal democratic rights can produce novel problems both for the conduct of science, and for the conduct of selves.

BIO

Jenny Reardon is an Associate Professor of Sociology and Faculty Affiliate in the Center for Biomolecular Sciences at the University of California, Santa Cruz. She received her Ph.D. in Science and Technology Studies from Cornell University in August 2002. Professor Reardon's research and scholarship investigates how novel forms of technoscience (such as genomics and nanotechnology) are constituted along with novel forms of governance and modes of constructing human identity. Her first book, *Race to the Finish: Identity and Governance in an Age of Genomics*, was published with Princeton University Press in 2005. She is currently working on a book manuscript entitled *The Post-Genomic Condition: Technoscience at the Limits of Liberal Democratic Imaginaries*.

