



WTMC

*Netherlands Graduate Research School
of Science, Technology and Modern Culture*

Field Notes January 2022

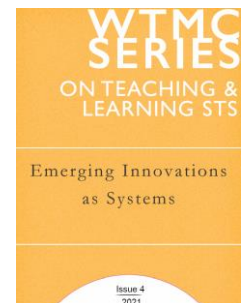
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Fall workshop 2021

The Fall Workshop on “[Emerging Innovations as Systems](#)” took place from 3 till 5 November 2021 at Soeterbeeck. This successful WTMC PhD Workshop was an event for WTMC participants in the first instance, the first in situ meeting after more than one year. Teachers (Cyrus Mody, Koen Frenken, Kornelia Konrad, Stefan Kuhlmann, Ellen Moors, Gonzalo Ordóñez-Matamoros) and PhD researchers considered the tradition of studying emerging technologies and innovation systems, which has historically been very strong in the Netherlands.



Brainstorming on future of WTMC

While WTMC enjoys an excellent reputation both as a PhD graduate school and as a network, there are a number of persistent structural issues. To address them, on 11 November 2021 the WTMC Board, the chair of the Education Committee, members of the Research Committee, the training coordinators and the director met in Utrecht. Issues discussed include a structural financial deficit; high fees and complex membership conditions; bureaucratic administrative procedures. How could WTMC incorporate STS-related groups in the Netherlands that are not (yet) members? How can we better utilize the strong international interest (institutional and individual) to participate in WTMC events and the network (see demand for online events 2020/21)?

In Spring 2022 the new director (Esther Turnhout) will present a set of suggestions and the Board will develop an action plan (short-term; long-term), not at least in view of a new “Joint Agreement” between establishing and participating institutional members in 2023/24.

WTMC Interim Evaluation

As a graduate research school, WTMC was subject of a research evaluation of our institutional host, the Faculty Behavioural, Management, and Social Sciences (BMS) of the University of Twente, following the Strategy Evaluation Protocol (SEP 2021-2027). Given the successful WTMC evaluation 2017, this exercise was organized as interim evaluation. A self-assessment was prepared, incl. a SWOT analysis (also used as input to the brainstorming mentioned above). Anique Hommels, Lotte Krabbenborg, Ivan Veul and Stefan Kuhlmann represented WTMC during the evaluation site visit on November 2. A verdict by the international evaluation committee is expected for early 2022.

WTMC Annual Meeting 2021

Our Annual Meeting 2021 took place on Friday 10 December, finally organised as an online event (the originally planned in situ meeting in de Balie, Amsterdam, had to be cancelled).

We started with an update about WTMC policy issues and incoming events. Stefan Kuhlmann, Academic Director of WTMC (2018-21), introduced [Esther Turnhout](#) (UT) who is taking over this role as from January 2022.



Then we discussed the book “Eating in Theory” by Annemarie Mol, commented by Alexandria Poole and Phil Macnaghten, chaired by Andreas Weber. In the afternoon we continued the discussion on “STS and Method” started at the Annual Meeting 2020: Sarah de Rijcke chaired a Round-table “STS, Social Sciences, Methodology?” with Maarten Derksen, Sarahanne M. Field, Willem Halfman and Bart Penders. In dominantly positivist epistemic communities – like large parts of contemporary psychology – critical reflection has started about the limits of quantitative research designs and measurement. What can such reform movements learn from STS? And vice versa: what can the interdisciplinary field of STS learn from such reform efforts? Then an inspiring panel of five WTMC PhD candidates (Mike Grijseels; Sarah Rose Bieszczad; Joyce Hoek; Anneke Boersma; Nina Schwarzbach; chair: Jackie Ashkin) reflected on “Researching (in)between: perspectives on doing a PhD in & around STS”. What does being part of the STS community mean for PhDs? What kind of (epistemic, social, infrastructural) work does it entail?

In the last session, continuing the reflection on methodology, we heard and discussed with key note speaker James Wilsdon (Univ. Sheffield) his ideas about “STS and Metascience” (chair: Annalisa Pelizza).

Writeshop Spring 2022

On Friday 25 March, WTMC will organize the next Writeshop at [Social Impact Factory, Utrecht](#). WTMC Writeshops are meant for *WTMC PhDs who are in the second, third or fourth year of their PhD trajectories*. Stephan Schleim, [Associate Professor](#) of Theoretical Psychology at the University of

Groningen and author of different books on philosophy, psychology, and the neurosciences, will act as senior discussant.

Workshops 2022

The next Spring Workshop will take place 6-8 April 2022, in Soeterbeeck. The Autumn Workshop (7–9 November) will be organized as online event.

Summer School 2022 “Opening up Diversity”



The Summer School (22-26 August, Soeterbeeck) will be led by anchor teacher Prof. dr. [Sabina Leonelli](#) (Univ. Exeter). What role does diversity play in research? “Let a thousand flowers bloom” is an expression often used within the academic world, to underscore the impression that cultivating a wide variety of perspectives on as many topics as possible is the best way to foster research. The Summer School will consider what diversity amounts to in relation to science and technology, the ways in which this notion can be mobilised, and what appeals to diversity can and cannot do for STS research.

WTMC Board and committees

As from 2022 Mike Grijseels and Florian Helfrich will serve as PhD members on the Board. Many thanks go to Ivan Veul and Tessa Roedema who have done a great job in that function in 2020 and 2021!

Selen Eren and Jackie Ashkin have served on the Educational Committee 2020-21, big thanks for their valuable contributions! As from January 2022 Yingying Han will represent the PhD researchers, welcome Yingying! We are still looking for a candidate to fill the **vacant second position**.

Congratulations

See also overview at [WTMC website](#).

- PhD defended: **Willemine Willems**. [Connected at the joints; Calibrating knowledge, morals and health care](#). 10 September 2021. Maastricht University (supervisors: Tsjalling Swierstra, Jessica Mesman, Philip Vergauwen).
- PhD defended: **May-li Mertens**. [Responsible Prediction under Critical Uncertainty](#). 29 September 2021, University of Twente (supervisors: Marianne Boenink, Philip Brey).

Stefan Kuhlmann, Esther Turnhout, January 2022