

Department of Science and Technology Studies

SEMINAR SERIES 2017 -18

Reframing Photography for the History of Science: The Case of Astrophotography




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University of Regensburg
2016 Pfizer Prize Award
Best Scholarly Book,
History of Science Society

I explore the consequences of treating photographs as material objects, rather than as flat, glossy surfaces. Using the case of late nineteenth-century astrophotography and its practices, I hope to restyle how historians of science and art frame photography. When the objecthood and materiality of astrophotography are brought into greater focus, we begin to see the importance of things like their maintenance, preservation, and fragility, especially in the face of ever encroaching dangers like loss, breakage or even chemical or organic decomposition. From the perspective of handling, then, we can see that photography rarely presented things as given, but rather had to be processed in order to present objects of astronomical interest.

 12:30 to 2:00 PM, Tuesday Oct. 3rd

 Petrie 317

 Light lunch provided