

The Committee on the History and Philosophy of Physics Annual Report 2003

*Mark Lattery, CHPP Chair
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh*

Issues in the history and philosophy of physics are relevant to and implied by many discussions in the AAPT. Hence, the mission of the Committee on the History and Philosophy of Physics is to raise an awareness of history and philosophy, and its role in physics teaching.

The Committee is enjoying a period of growth. At the summer meeting in Madison, the Committee sponsored more sessions than at any annual AAPT meeting since 1995. These sessions included a field trip to YERKES Observatory, invited talks by historians and philosophers from UW Madison, a workshop on Thought Experiments in Physics Teaching, and a special session presented by the International History, Philosophy of Science Teaching Group (IHPST) on the history of the pendulum. At the winter meeting in Miami, women leaders in physics, such as Mildred Dresselhus and Myriam Sarachick, will provide a historical perspective of the field. Future plans include a History and Philosophy of Physics resource room, a very special session on modern physics featuring Gaurang Yodh (student of Fermi) and Charles Townes (Nobel Laureate), and sessions on the history of Los Alamos and Sandia labs.

The Committee actively seeks connections with other national organizations with similar interests, such as the APS and the IHPST. Representatives from these groups attended and presented at the last Committee meeting. Importantly, the Committee established a website to disseminate information about its activities (see <http://planck.phys.uwosh.edu/hpp/>). This site contains the CHPP mission statement, membership information, a list of CHPP-sponsored workshops and sessions at annual meetings since 1995, a list of *Physics Today* articles on the history and philosophy of physics, links to related sites, and a means to join the new listserv.

Through these and other activities, the Committee will make a collective, determined, and sustained effort to share the belief that the learning *of* science is supported by learning *about* science.