**The Nova Scotian Institute of Science 150th Anniversary Lecture**

"Communicating Knowledge to New Audiences: Victorian Popularizers of Science"

Speaker: Dr. Bernie Lightman
Professor of Humanities, Editor of the journal *Isis,* and Director of the Institute for Science and Technology Studies, York University

Monday, May 7, 2012
7:30pm
Alumni Hall, University of King's College,
6350 Coburg Rd., Halifax
Reception to follow.
http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/Science/NSIS/poster_May7_Lightman.pdf

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**Abstract:**

The origins of modern "popular science" are to be found in the early nineteenth century. In fact, "popular science" did not exist before 1800. This presentation will discuss the conditions that made "popular science" possible for the first time in Britain in the nineteenth century. Two of the most important factors were the communications revolution, leading to an explosion of books on science for the general audience, and the creation of a series of new science museums and exhibitions. The combination of these two factors resulted in what is referred to by historians as the age of the "cult of science." During the second half of the nineteenth century, science was everywhere in Victorian culture and society. Dr. Lightman will also discuss the most important popularizers of science in this period, many of whom were not professional scientists.

**Speaker biography:**

Bernard Lightman is Professor Humanities at York University, where he is Director of the Institute for Science and Technology Studies. He is also the Editor of the History of Science Society's flagship journal, Isis. Lightman's most recent publications include *Victorian Popularizers of Science*, *Evolutionary Naturalism in Victorian Britain*, and *Science in the Marketplace* (co-edited with Aileen Fyfe). Lightman is also general editor of a monograph series titled *Science and Culture in the Nineteenth Century*, published by Pickering and Chatto. He is currently working on a biography of John Tyndall and is one of the editors of the John Tyndall Correspondence Project, an international collaborative effort to obtain, digitalize, transcribe, and publish all surviving letters to and from Tyndall. On November 26, 2011, Dr. Lightman was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada.