NORTH
SOUTH
MEDICAL
RESEARCH:
CAN BIOETHICS LEARN
FROM PHILOSOPHY
OF SCIENCE?

Between 1960 and 1980, Philosophy of Science was transformed by the then-novel claim that its logically elegant theories of rationality should be tested against the actual historical judgments of the scientific community. Perhaps, the new approach suggested, a theory of rationality was suspect if it judged Ptolemaic theory to be better than Copernican theory. In Lakatos’ twist on Kant: History of Science without Philosophy of Science is blind; Philosophy of Science without History of Science is empty.

This talk will suggest that the elegant moral codes of contemporary Bioethics can and should be tested against the actual historical judgments of the medical-moral community – in other words, that Bioethics could learn a lesson from Philosophy of Science. In particular, PROFESSOR DERR will argue that the current CIOMS/WHO guidelines for research on human subjects yield exactly the wrong verdicts when applied to two landmark cases from the history of vaccine research.

WEDNESDAY
NOVEMBER 13, 2013
AT 5PM

HIGGINS LOUNGE (FISH BOWL)
DANA COMMONS
CLARK UNIVERSITY