# Research Assistant Opportunities in STS

YORK UNIVERSITY

## RAship on Google & Data Valuation (2004-2022)

**Contact: Kean Birch** kean@yorku.ca

I want someone to collect, read & code in NVivo, Google's 10-K & 10-Q Financial Reports; earnings calls; court cases (on personal data value); and academic literature on data valuation at Google.

Financial Reports: online - corporate website
Earnings Calls: most already collected (except 2021-2022)
Court Cases: online - LexisNexis database/Google Scholar
Academic Literature: Google Scholar

Estimated time: 150 hours @ $35 (15 hours per week over 10 weeks; or 10 hours over 15 weeks)
**Total pay: $5,250**

Summer or Fall 2022

## RAship on SSHRC Insight Grant funded project: *A Romantic Natural History: Material Entities and Cultural Transformation* (2022-2027)

**Contact: Joan Steigerwald** steiger@yorku.ca

The Romantic period was a historical moment of extraordinary transformation. Often described as the beginning of modernity, it was marked by early projects in political democracy, secularism, moral philosophy, human history, psychology, anthropology, aesthetics, and the study of language. These emerging human sciences were in turn affected by changes in the natural sciences. This research project foregrounds material entities that have appeared in my past work on this period and makes them, instead of human subjects and social institutions, the main characters of its historical narrative. It asks: How are we to comprehend the complex dynamics between material entities and cultural transformation? In its attention to material entities, the proposed research project addresses tensions in modern scholarship in the humanities and social sciences between recent concerns with the material and the non-human world, on one side, and long-standing concerns with historical, social, and cultural framings of

human understandings of the world, on the other. It questions oppositions between material objects and subjective perspectives, the nonhuman and the human. The project focuses on material entities newly encountered through natural historical inquiry in the Romantic period that cannot be simply individuated as objects and that cannot be understood as distinctly natural, artificial, or cultural. Examples include: the infusoria found in experiments and speculations on the origins and elements of life; sensitive plants crossing the plant-animal divide; living instruments such as frog legs and human sensory organs; racialized "Caucasians" and their others; hieroglyphs as natural languages. At the time, such hybrid material entities were regarded as crossing the boundaries of kinds of things, as at once unsettling and exciting, and as thus opening broad historical, cultural, and epistemic questions. Case studies will act as sites for fostering interdisciplinary research, examining the interplay of the study of material entities, cultural values, scientific inquiry, philosophical problems, and literary genres. Case studies of material entities provide a means to stage encounters between the different modes of inquiry, the different perspectives, the different kinds of texts and creative works seeking to comprehend them, reading each through and against its others.

## RA Work

Research for the project will be based on electronic databases that will be used to find primary and secondary source materials relevant to the case studies

The databases used in this research will be of three main kinds:

- The turn of the 19th century saw a flourishing of a range of new periodicals that offered extended reviews of new books and works as well as original contributions in various areas of science, philosophy, literature, and the arts: general review periodicals that review recent works across the arts and sciences; periodicals of academic societies in the arts and sciences; specialist periodicals in natural history and the sciences.
- Library and internet databases of books offer access to primary sources from the 18th and 19th centuries.
- Library research guides and internet databases will be used to identify relevant secondary materials on the material entities, historical figures, works, and concepts that are the foci of the project.

The project will involve RAs from STS, SPT, and Humanities. I will meet with RAs individually to assist them in using the databases and appropriate search terms. To foster interdisciplinary research methods, RAs working on the project will also meet together periodically to discuss their research findings, review the appropriateness of the material entity for a case study, identify primary sources discussing the material entity, select examples of primary sources to be used in the case study, and assess relevant secondary source materials.

Each RA position will be $5,490/per year for 180 hours work, beginning September 2022. Ras will also be funded to attend conferences to present their research, such as the 4S or SLSA, including airfare and hotel accommodation.