FOREWORD I

This marvelous book is at once a history of the relationship between science and art and a meditation on its significance. It calls to mind Michel Serres's wonderful work on the Northwest Passage—that ocean route sought for so long as a path between Europe and America that did not have to go the long way around. Serres argued that there was always a passage between the natural sciences and the arts; Rogers takes us convincingly on the journey back.

Drawing especially on the work of Howard Becker, she demonstrates that science and art are similar kinds of human endeavor—they are works produced by elites to reach a specialized public. Under the covers, they are sociologically the same kind of enterprise: "Like art theorists considering what art consists of and science studies scholars querying definitions of science, we might consider the possibility that art and science are best thought of as particular types of attention, rather than features that indelibly mark them as one or the other" (p. 2). As she rightly stresses, the field of science and technology studies has been in the forefront of the sociological and conceptual fusion of the two.

As we go through the volume, we are drawn first to the stunning glass models of sea creatures made by the Blaschkas in the early twentieth century. These may seem from our present perspective to be fabulous curiosities deserving of a cabinet (designed perhaps by Mr. Wilson) of their

own; at the time they were invaluable tools for doing marine biology: the transportation and comparison models was much easier than that of biological samples. Later, Berenice Abbott's marvelous freeze frame photographs illustrating some laws of physics would be crucial pedagogical tools—and in turn, the images would themselves capture and constrain as well as feed the imagination of the nascent physicist.

As the volume moves on to tactical media (such as the Yes Men and their glorious hoaxes), we see the nexus of art, politics, and science. The work of Natalie Jeremijenko is perhaps core here—her ecology clinic, barking robot dogs in the Bronx uncovering point sources of pollution and her work on superfund sites of ecological devastation is clearly integrally about art and about science studies' deepest critiques of the nature of the scientific enterprise; as Rogers demonstrates, this is not a nihilist endeavor to attack science, but an attempt to use the tools of science to produce socially rich art. As Rogers argues, "STS scholars should consider how often the very points that we might be inclined to make about the nature of technology or the interaction between technology, expertise, and institutional power are present in artwork." Equally, bioart deploys the tools of the biosciences to unsettle the tunnel vision of many scientists concentrating on just the formal aspects of their work.

Overall, this book eloquently discuss the conjoint development of art and science and especially the rich connections between science studies and critical art. Her clarion call is that attention: "to the construction of art and science and their constitutive areas of knowledge reveals commonalities and frees us from inaccurate divisions so that we may better understand knowledge-making and its accompanying meanings." When C. P. Snow wrote about the two cultures (arts and sciences), he was just wrong—even though we have laid out the architecture of our universities (typically on a north/south divide) as if they were meaningfully distinct. As Bruno Latour (who has done so much to bring together science studies and art) has declared: "We have never been modern"; meaning in this context that the rigid disciplinary and ontological boundaries of the academic enterprise have never been more than shibboleth.

As Rogers demonstrates, science and art share at any one epoch a common toolkit for exploring our sociotechnical/natural world. As a science studies scholar, I have frequently felt that the best work on biodiversity,

climate science, biopolitics and the Internet was being performed by artists. Equally, I have felt constrained when writing for leading publications in my field to put artistic work to one side. Rogers's book gives us a much needed pathway for understanding how to weave them together.

This is a timely and vital message: science studies needs to better learn the skills of the artist in bringing critique to a wide audience (we tend to just talk among ourselves); artists need to feel freer to express their art through and with the natural sciences. At stake is our common understanding of the world; and our united efforts to change it.

I warmly commend this work to your attention.

Geoffrey C. Bowker
University of California at Irvine