

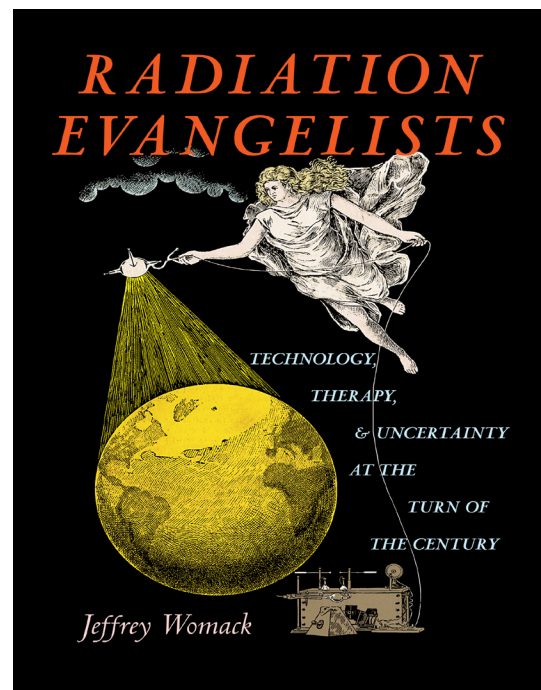
NJIT's Albert Dorman Honors College  
Fall 2021 Colloquium Series Presents

# Optimism and Self-Immolation

What can today's technological innovators learn from the history of radiation therapy?

October 1, 2021 @ 11:30 am – 1 pm  
Campus Center Atrium

In 1896, doctors conducted the first experiments with using x-rays to treat cancer. Two decades later, a generation of therapists dying of x-ray exposure eagerly turned to...more radiation, contaminating portions of New Jersey and Pennsylvania with radioactive waste in the process. Drawing from his book, *Radiation Evangelists*, historian Jeffrey Womack will discuss how good medical innovation goes awry and what we can learn about innovation, uncertainty, and ethics from the doctors with the amputated hands.



Jeffrey Womack, Ph.D., studies technology, medicine, and public health, examining why people succeed—or fail—to understand the hazards around them. His work includes the Mütter Museum exhibits “[Going Viral: Infection Through the Ages](#)” and “[Healing Energy: Radium in America](#),” as well as “[Nuclear Weapons, Dystopian Deserts, and Science Fiction Cinema](#),” in *Vulcan: the Journal of the History of Military Technology*, and [Radiation Evangelists: Technology, Therapy, and Uncertainty at the Turn of the Century](#), available from the University of Pittsburgh Press.

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\*This colloquium fulfills the Medical Humanities colloquium requirement.