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"Negotiating disciplinary identities: Navigating a career at the intersection of history, chemistry, and education"

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As a historian of chemistry, I have been interested in how professional identities are constructed and negotiated—whether between chemistry and chemical engineering, between academia and industry, or between the multiple roles women often balance at home and in professional life. In my own career, I also move among several identities at the intersection of history, chemistry, and education: I was trained as a chemist, qualified as a chemistry teacher, and later completed a PhD in the history of chemistry. My current position is in a teacher education department, where I draw on my background in chemistry, chemistry education research, and the history of chemistry in my teaching. I am convinced that the history of chemistry has much to offer future chemistry teachers, and many of my projects have focused on integrating historical perspectives into the teaching of both chemistry and chemistry didactics. My experiences working at the crossroads of disciplinary boundaries have been both enriching and challenging. Different research fields come with distinct purposes, methods, and perspectives, and integrating them into a coherent, shared aim has often proven difficult. In this presentation, I will draw on several of my projects to illuminate some of the dilemmas that arise when working across disciplines—for better and for worse—particularly those related to chemical elements, the periodic system, and professional identities.