



## **Dr Ken Alder, Milton H. Wilson Professor of the Humanities and History, Northwestern University**

Dr Ken Alder is the Milton H. Wilson Professor of the Humanities and History at Northwestern University (Evanston, IL). He earned his Ph.D. in the history of science from Harvard in 1991. The central theme in his work is the history of measurement—both of nature and of human beings—and the many ways in which quantitative values reflect social values.

Ken Alder's second book, *The Measure of All Things: The Seven-Year Odyssey and Hidden Error that Transformed the World* (The Free Press, 2002), examined the origins of the metric system in Revolutionary France. The book has been translated into twelve languages and won three best book prizes: the Davis Prize from the History of Science Society, the Dingle Prize from the British Society for the History of Science, and the Kagan Prize from the Historical Society, and was listed as a notable book of the year by *The New York Times*, *The Economist*, *The Sunday Times* (London), *The Sunday Telegraph*, *Granta*, and *The Spectator*. The French translation by Martine Devillers-Argouac'h also won the Caillé award for best translation.

Ken Alder has also published books on the origins of modern engineering in Revolutionary France, and the history of America's obsession with the lie detector. He is also a novelist. For this work Ken Alder has been granted fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Science Foundation, the Guggenheim, and the Institute for Advanced Study. He has been a visiting professor at NYU, the Max Planck Institute, the Écoles des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, and the École des Mines. In 2012 he was elected a fellow of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences.