

Project abstract

New Visions and “New” Animals: Standardizing Laboratory Animal Science in Post Second World War Norway

My PhD explores the development of laboratory animal production, supply and use in twentieth century Norway. In particular my work investigates how the discourse of standardization operated to bring into being different structures to facilitate the production and use of laboratory animals in biomedical research and pharmaceutical production. In early 1950s specific interested parties from medical and veterinary sciences drew upon standardization discourses already in vogue in the international biomedical community to advocate for the establishment of a national supply of laboratory animals due to the precarious situation in Norwegian biomedical sciences. This led to the development of professional qualifications for animal technicians, and an educational process that legitimated itself via standardization discourses. Importantly, the process of regulating animal husbandry via the establishment of standard (care) practices was linked to animal welfare, which leads me to consider the role of ethics in shaping the use of laboratory animals. In addition, the project explores the interrelations between scientific, industrial and state concerns in promoting national health, and argues that laboratory animals was (re-)established as *socially relevant beings* when constituted as indispensable for the progress of medical sciences. It does so at the level of the material practice of the laboratory by asking how were laboratory animals *themselves* constituted as standardized and thus reliable technologies of drug standardization.