

Call for Papers: Animal Models, Model Animals? Meanings and Practices in the History of the Biomedical Sciences.

Location: Centre for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine (CHSTM), University of Manchester (UK)

Date: Friday 21st September 2012.

Workshop overview

Proposals are invited for a One-Day Workshop examining the changing uses of animal models in biomedical research to be held at the Centre for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine (CHSTM), University of Manchester, on Friday 21st September 2012.

Recent years have seen increasing scholarly interest in the discursive and material analysis of animal models. This workshop will bring together scholars working in this area to address how biomedical modelling of human diseases in nonhuman animals differs from the use of models in other contexts. Biomedical animal models require human disease to be transposed to nonhuman animals, a process that is by no means linear. Furthermore, models possess dual identities operating to describe new knowledge whilst simultaneously prescribing what knowledge can be known. These multiple roles raise many questions to be addressed at the Workshop. How are animal models created, communicated, institutionalised? How do animal models obtain utility within experimental research practice whilst sustaining clinical relevance? How are these processes informed by, and how do they inform, the construction and maintenance of communication between experimental and clinical understandings and definitions of specific diseases? To what extent has the development of an animal model, and its subsequently institutionalization as a standard model, served to open up or close down innovation within specific trajectories of disease research? What is lost and what is gained when an animal model becomes a model animal? How, when, and why did experimental animals become models? What labour have animal models performed outside of experimental research, for example by sustaining or focussing large scale funding about a particular approach? How have models been aligned with clinical research, therapy, and the human patient? Though the language of ‘models’ is broadly a mid to late twentieth century phenomenon, emerging with and catalysed by molecular biology, genetics and the human genome project, we also seek to explore continuities and discontinuities with earlier approaches to experimental animal research.

Papers will focus exclusively on higher organisms, exploring the unique complexities and challenges which their use poses to meaning making in the biomedical sciences. Participants are encouraged to explore how the invention of an ‘animal model’ and/or the intervention of a ‘model animal’ impacted upon the transmission and translation of understandings of disease and therapy from laboratory to clinic.

The workshop is supported by the European Science Foundation DRUGS NETWORKING PROGRAMME (www.drughistory.eu). Papers addressing the key themes of this network (Antibiotics, Chronic Illnesses, Biological Drugs, and Psychochemicals) are particularly welcome. The language of the conference is English.

General enquiries and expressions of interest can be made to:

Rob Kirk (robert.g.kirk@manchester.ac.uk) or
Michael Worboys (michael.worboys@manchester.ac.uk).

Proposals of up to 400 words should be submitted to the same by **31st May 2012**.

For further information see:

<http://www.chstm.manchester.ac.uk/>

<http://www.chstm.manchester.ac.uk/newsandevents/conferences/animalmodels/>



