

## Workshop

### FROM THE LIBRARY TO THE LABORATORY AND BACK AGAIN – REAPPRAISING EXPERIMENTAL HISTORY OF SCIENCE

March 14 – 16, 2016

Most of us know science only through their textual or visual representations. Unfortunately the actual work of doing science remains largely obscure. The making of scientific facts certainly involves much more than reading, thinking and writing. To a large degree it requires meticulous physical experimentation within the material world. Since the early 1990s historians of science involved in *Experimental History of Science* have drawn consequences from this insight and employed the physical performance of experiments as practical means to reveal hitherto unrecognized dimensions of knowledge making of the past.

Various lines of development have been taken since, accompanied by controversial discussions. This workshop investigates the state of art in using experiment as a method in the history of science. It draws on examples from alchemy/chemistry, pharmacy/medicine and experimental physics, from antiquity to the 20th century. We will address question such as: What is the place of experiment in the recent "material turn" of historical investigation? How can history improve or challenge modern scientific understanding? What historiographic challenges do these methodologies offer? How can modern scientific methods help historical understanding? When, and why should one act as a historian, and when as an experimenter?

The workshop is organized by the *Office for History of Science* at the Dept. for History of Science and Ideas (*Idé och lärdomshistoria*) Uppsala University. It includes an excursion to a historical physics laboratory (The. Swedberglaboratoriet) as well as experiments and demonstrations at active laboratories at Uppsala University. One day will be spent at the Hagströmer Medico-Historical Library at Karolinska



Photo of Chemistry Laboratory by Susan Savad

Institutet, Stockholm. The results of the workshop, as well as individual contribution of participants will be published in a special issue of *Ambix* guest-edited by Hjalmar Fors, Lawrence Principe and H. Otto Sibum.

#### *Participants*

Nils-Otto Ahnfelt, Uppsala University  
Hjalmar Fors, Uppsala University/Karolinska Institutet (organiser)  
Sébastien Moureau, Warburg Institute  
Lawrence M. Principe, Johns Hopkins University  
Jennifer M. Rampling, Princeton University  
Haileigh Robertson, University of York  
H. Otto Sibum, Uppsala University (organiser)  
Nicolas Thomas, Institut National de Recherches Archéologiques Préventives

#### VENUE: RAUSING ROOM

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