

MEDICINE GALLERIES SEMINAR SERIES

5 September – 7 November 2019

In the lead up to the opening of the new Medicine Galleries at the Science Museum in Autumn 2019, we are hosting a Medicine Galleries Seminar Series to celebrate and share the work of our Medicine Galleries Research Fellows.

All seminars are between **16:30–18:00**

Dana Studio
Dana Research Centre and Library
165 Queen's Gate
London, SW7 5HD

Presentations will be followed by a wine reception.

THURSDAY 5 SEPTEMBER: KAY NIAS – MECHANISING THE MOVEMENT CURE: ZANDER TECHNOLOGY, SWEDISH GYMNASTICS AND EXERCISE THERAPY IN THE LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURIES

THURSDAY 3 OCTOBER: SHELLEY SAGGAR -RESTORING *MANA*, RECOVERING STORY: RESEARCHING CULTURALLY SENSITIVE ITEMS IN THE WELLCOME HISTORICAL MEDICAL COLLECTIONS

THURSDAY 24 OCTOBER: ANGELA STIENNE - SITUATED BODIES: HUMAN REMAINS FROM THE WELLCOME COLLECTION AT THE SCIENCE MUSEUM

THURSDAY 7 NOVEMBER: FARRAH LAWRENCE-MACKEY - SENSING SPACE ON DIALYSIS

Please email research@sciencemuseum.ac.uk if you have any questions relating to the events.

ABSTRACTS

KAY NIAS – MECHANISING THE MOVEMENT CURE: ZANDER TECHNOLOGY, SWEDISH GYMNASTICS AND EXERCISE THERAPY IN THE LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURIES

Limited to documentary sources, previous research into the history of physiotherapy in Britain has heretofore offered institutional and professional accounts. The Science Museum's physiotherapy collection however, contains a rich assortment of objects from different times and cultures, from orthodox to outright quackery, that cannot be interpreted through these conventional narratives.

This paper will focus on 'the velocipede', a fascinating piece of therapeutic apparatus from the Science Museum's collection. Tracing the personal story and broader design history of the piece, this talk will discuss the mechanisation of therapeutic exercise in the nineteenth century as well as illuminate heretofore uncovered hubs of early physiotherapeutic innovation in Britain. Not only does this research offer a contextual backdrop for the physiotherapy collection but it also emphasises the importance of object research as an essential way to extend the current historiography.

SHELLEY SAGGAR - RESTORING MAWA, RECOVERING STORY: RESEARCHING CULTURALLY SENSITIVE ITEMS IN THE WELLCOME HISTORICAL MEDICAL COLLECTIONS

This paper takes as a case study the plaster cast copy of the life mask of a Maori man, Taupua Te Whanoa, in order to reveal how decolonial practice can reveal Indigenous agency, recover crucial markers of "relational belonging" and resist absences that work to silence marginalised voices in the gallery space.

I will trace the journey of a man, a story and a material object. In this way, I will attempt to nuance the often contested debate about "decolonisation" in museums in order to demonstrate that decolonial practice can offer a rich source of under-explored, but powerful stories – stories that have the potential to transform engagement with collections and institutional practice alike. Finally, I will attempt to expand on the definition of what constitutes a "culturally sensitive" item to include those that are material markers of contested histories. As such, I will show that UK museums have an opportunity to shape the wider decolonial imperative currently re-surfacing across public institutions and national narratives.

ANGELA STIENNE - SITUATED BODIES: HUMAN REMAINS FROM THE WELLCOME COLLECTION AT THE SCIENCE MUSEUM

In recent years, the acquisition, retention and display of human remains in museums have become a matter of contention. The conversation has focused on displaced bodies, looking at translocation on an international level, through the lens of repatriation, postcolonialism and ethics. However, translocation of collections can happen on a national level, and from one typology of museum to another. How does the *situatedness* of human remains affect their encounter, study, display and reception?

The Science Museum in London is host to over a thousand human remains; many of these are on long term loan since the 1970s from the Wellcome Collection in London. This seminar will bring forward new reflections on human remains in contemporary museums, using the human remains from the Wellcome Historical Medical Collection and their translocation to the Science Museum as a case study, as well as cases from the Musée de l'Homme in Paris, the Université Libre de Bruxelles and the British Museum in London.

Please note, this talk will include images of human remains.

FARRAH LAWRENCE-MACKAY - SENSING SPACE ON DIALYSIS

The Milton Roy Dialysis machine was designed to blend into the background of user's homes. It was aesthetically built with wood panelling with its alarms, dials and buttons

hidden behind neat cupboard doors. It was also made to operate more quietly than previous models.

Despite these alterations, the flatbed dialysis portion of the machine was not redesigned to fit into the space of the home. Patients continued to complain of an inability to sleep due to the sound of the machine's operation and the practical working of the machine remained invasive, uncomfortable and even painful.

Using the Milton Roy machine as a case study, this paper will discuss the ways in which dialysis machines disrupted the spaces of users' homes and bodies in the 1960s with a focus on visual, auditory and haptic experience.