




CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF
MEDICINE AND THE BODY
IN THE RENAISSANCE

INSTITUTIO SANTORIANA
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UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI PARMA



STUDIO FIRMANO
PER LA STORIA DELL'ARTE MEDICA E DELLA SCIENZA

CSMBR
ONLINE
EVENTS

16
SEPTEMBER
2025
5.00 pm CET

WITH AND
BEYOND
TAXONOMY

LINNAEUS ON GENERATION, ECONOMY OF NATURE, AND THE HUMAN CONDITION

STAFFAN MÜLLER-WILLE • University of Cambridge

The historiography of the life sciences has appreciated the work of the Swedish naturalist Carl Linnaeus (1707–1778) mainly for his contributions to the discipline of systematics. His introduction of binomial nomenclature and the so-called Linnaean hierarchy are largely seen as foundational for the practice of botany and zoology, but have overwhelmingly problematized as a legacy

of a static, typological worldview that abstracts living beings from their natural and cultural contexts. In my talk, I am going to provide an overview of the extensive, but lesser known work that Linnaeus produced alongside his systematic writings. It touches on themes that we would classify as belonging to ecology, reproductive biology and anthropology today, all the while

demonstrating that his thinking was much more relational and dynamic than we usually take for granted.