



Medicine, Emotion and Disease in History **Research Seminars, May-June 2010**

Monday, 24 May 2010
6pm. Lock Keeper's Cottage.

Dr Wiebke Thormählen
University of Southampton

'Motion and Emotion: Eighteenth-Century Treatises on Musical Performance at the Intersection of Mechanical Body and Expressive Soul'

Abstract:

This talk will review eighteenth-century models of the mind-body interaction through the practice of music-making. Highly influential performance treatises written around mid-century bear witness to the idea that art, and music in particular, impacted the body directly, precipitating its emotional affect through physiological means. More significantly, these texts suggest that the performer induced states of emotion in himself through physical poses and movement. Here, emotional affects reliant on the passions were explained as a direct result of the mechanical movement of the body, illustrating a popular understanding of the unity of body and soul, of innate senses, the imagination and emotion.

Tuesday, 1 June 2010
6pm. Lock Keeper's Cottage.

Dr Louis Charland
University of Western Ontario

'Science and Morals in the Affective Psychopathology of Philippe Pinel'

Abstract:

Building on what he believed was a new 'medico-philosophical' method, Philippe Pinel made a bold theoretical attempt to find a place for the passions and other affective posits in psychopathology. However, his courageous attempt to steer affectivity onto the high seas of medical science ran aground on two great reefs that still threaten the scientific status of affectivity today. Epistemologically, there is the elusive nature of the signs and symptoms of affectivity. Ethically, there is the stubborn manner in which fact and value are intermingled in affectivity. Both obstacles posed insuperable difficulties for Pinel, who never really managed to extricate his affective psychopathology from the confines of the Lockean intellectual paradigm.