

QUEEN MARY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

CENTRE FOR THE HISTORY OF THE EMOTIONS



Lunchtime Seminars, 2012-13

SEMESTER I

10<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2012

**Rob Boddice (Freie Universitaet Berlin)**

'The Other Body in Pain; or, Sympathy in the Physiological Laboratory'

This paper explores late nineteenth-century physiologists' reflections on emotional conditioning as preparation for the aesthetics of the opened body. It also deals with the change in those preparations wrought by the knowledge and application of anaesthetics. This is aiming towards an understanding of how the sight of suffering – the aesthetics of pain – was mitigated, justified, rationalised, and subjected to emotional control.

31<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER 2012

**Stephen Spencer (QMUL)**

'You should not be afraid, for the Lord will be with you in your battle': The Representation and Function of Fear in the Narratives of the First Crusade

Over thirty years ago Jan Verbruggen rejected depictions of the undaunted knight lusting for battle in vernacular poetry by highlighting examples where warriors were recognised as fearing death in historical narratives, including those pertaining to the First Crusade. While the nature of these texts may not allow us to empirically reconstruct what it actually felt like to be a crusader, it is still possible to explore the emotional personification of the idyllic Christian protagonist. Focusing on the fear of death, this paper investigates whether fear was represented as an appropriate or inappropriate emotion for crusaders to display – whether the novelty of the First Crusade and the unfamiliarity of the Muslim adversary created a context in which fear featured as an acceptable sentiment.

21<sup>st</sup> NOVEMBER 2012

**David Kerekes**

Mezzogiorno: Life. Death. Southern Italy

No geographical map distinguishes Montefalcione as being different from any number of isolated mountain villages in southern Italy. It has ancient customs and its own saints and feast days, like other villages. Yet Montefalcione in Campania is the setting for a unique meditation on family and the Italian Diaspora, reconstructing three generations of village life through myth, superstition, and the anecdotal history of the author's own family. Author David Kerekes will read an extract from his novel *Mezzogiorno: Life. Death. Southern Italy* (Headpress, 2012) and talk a little about its background, and the inspiration to write it.

12<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2012

**Hera Cook (University of Birmingham)**

Distress, Neuroscience and History: Living in the Blitz

This paper examines one of the first group therapy sessions held in England, which took place following a period of heavy bombing during WWII. The paper asks what neuroscientific research might contribute to the analysis of this event. Some of the women involved were experiencing acute distress and the rest of the group expressed empathy and attempted to help. It considers whether concepts such as emotional contagion or mirror neurons add to historical understanding and ask what role scientific definitions of emotion play in the interpretation.

**Seminars take place on Wednesdays at 1pm in Arts Two, Room 3.17.**

**The Arts Two building is number 27 on the map below and is accessed via the Westfield Way entrance.**

These relaxed and informal research seminars are scheduled to finish at 2pm but participants are welcome to stay and extend discussion beyond that time if they are available to do so.

Lunch is provided. To book your place, please email [emotions@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:emotions@qmul.ac.uk) at least a week in advance of the event, specifying which seminar(s) you wish to attend.

