

Situating and Interpreting States of Mind 1700-2000 An Interdisciplinary Conference

14-16 June 2012
Northumbria University

Keynote Speakers

Professor Joel P. Eigen (Charles A. Dana Professor of Sociology, Franklin and Marshall College, Pennsylvania)

Professor Melinda A. Rabb (Professor of English, Brown University, Rhode Island)

Dr. Judith A. Tucker (Lecturer in the School of Design, Leeds University)

This cross-period and interdisciplinary conference seeks to situate and interpret states of mind from the eighteenth century to the twenty-first questioning how the space, place and historical context in which mental states are experienced shaped the narratives produced by individuals. Interweaving perspectives from across such disciplines as literature, history, philosophy, art history, performance, fine art, creative writing, psychology and sociology, the conference will explore accounts of states of mind including mental illness, dreams, sleep-walking, imaginative states and self-awareness. The conference seeks to assess how these varying states of consciousness are expressed and how such narratives are influenced by historical change, continuity or the reconfiguration of these forms of expression.

We would like to invite abstracts for papers from across disciplines on the theme of the conference, particularly related, but not limited, to the following key strands:

Experience and Representation of Mental Illness

- the gap between individual experience and interpretations by medical and legal practitioners
- the relationship between mental distress, agency, literature and cognition
- representations of mental derangement and criminal responsibility

Liminal States of Mind

- representations of liminal states of consciousness
- the relationship between experiences and representations of dreams and sleepwalking
- categorisation of imaginative states in cognitive science and philosophy
- concepts of interiority, selfhood and imaginative processing of real or fictional worlds

Self-awareness and Place

- relationship between self and place, particularly regarding the past and decay
- artistic expressions of situating self-awareness
- creative representations of landscape as a geographic metaphor

Abstracts of 300 words for 20-minute papers should be submitted by 31 January 2012 to the conference organisers: anita.oconnell@northumbria.ac.uk or leigh.wetheralldickson@northumbria.ac.uk. See www.northumbria.ac.uk/statesofmind for details.