

Paranoia and Pain: Embodied in Psychology, Literature, and Bioscience

University of Liverpool, 2-4 April 2012

Organising Chair:

Dr Maryam Farahani (School of English)

Organising Board:

Dr Neville Cobbe (School of Biological Sciences)

Dr Maryam Farahani (School of English)

Dr Ian Schermbrucker (School of Psychology)

Conference Chair:

Dr Nick Davis (School of English)

Keynote Speakers:

Professor Christopher Eccleston (Centre for Pain Research, University of Bath, England)

Dr Emma Mason (English and Comparative Literary Studies, University of Warwick, England)

Dr David Miller (English Literature, University of Stirling, Scotland)

Professor Andrej Stancak (School of Psychology, University of Liverpool, England)

Dr Anna Szczepan-Wojnarska (Cardinal Wyszynski University of Warsaw, Poland)

Paranoia and Pain: Embodied in Psychology, Literature, and Bioscience (University of Liverpool, 2-4 April 2012) is an international cross-disciplinary conference, seeking to raise an awareness of various intersections of literature and science. The conference aims to explore overlapping paradigms of paranoia and pain in psychology, biological sciences, and literary texts/contexts.

How is paranoia related to pain? How is pain expressed with/without paranoia? How are these two terms exposed in various contexts? How does our understanding of the psychophysiology of pain interrelate with literary accounts of paranoia and pain? What does research in the field of paranoia offer to literary studies surrounding this concept and vice versa? To what extent does pain echo paranoia; and is this echo physiological, stylistic, psychological, symbolic, or literal? How do these terms regulate our behaviour and expression of emotions in relation to broader concepts such as faith, ethics, and the value of human life? What does the study of these concepts offer today's generation of intellectuals with regard to human relationships and the way we communicate with each other? This international conference brings together experts from different fields to address these questions by incorporating individual presentations and panels that focus on cross-disciplinary studies.

Considering the diversity of themes and questions for this conference, individual papers as well as pre-formed panels are invited to examine the following three key areas, proposed by the conference organizers. Other inter- and multi-disciplinary topics, relevant to the conference, will also be considered:

1- Impressions:

Expression of paranoia and pain in literary/scientific contexts; Metaphorical and literal exposition of pain and paranoia; Paranoid texts, painful contexts; The image of paranoia and pain in poetry, prose, and visual arts; Textual culture and the symbolics of pain; Stylistics of pain and paranoia in communication; How does the narrative of pain/paranoia identify with studies of affect?

2- Intersections:

The biology of pain and the emotional interpretation; The biology/literature of anaesthesia; Physical symptoms, emotional translations; Aesthetics and affective perspectives on pain/paranoia; How have cultural attitudes to the experience of pain and/or paranoia changed over the course of history?

3- Dissections:

Faith and the formation of our ideas on pain/paranoia; Side effects of pain-relief medication; Ethics and the questions of double effect; Is it ever appropriate to withhold pain relief in order to extend the life of a sufferer where analgesics have the side effect of shortening life?

Submissions:

Deadline for 250-300 word abstracts for 20-minute papers and a 50-100 word biography for individual presenters (including each presentation within potential panels): 15 November 2011

Deadline for full draft of accepted papers and registration: 25 February 2012

After the conference a selection of presentations, developed and edited, will be considered for publication.

Please send submissions and enquiries to the organising board at:

paranoia.pain@gmail.com and painpara@liverpool.ac.uk

After great pain a formal feeling comes--
The nerves sit ceremonious like tombs;
The stiff Heart questions--was it He that bore?
And yesterday--or centuries before?

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)



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