



PHOBIA

Constructing the Phenomenology of Chronic Fear, 1789 to the Present

**An international conference hosted by the University of
Glamorgan Research Centre for Literature, Arts and Science**

Friday 8th to Saturday 9th May 2009, ATRium, Cardiff

Plenary Speakers:

Laura Otis,
'Terrifying Readers: The Scariest Moments in
19th-Century Literature'

Andrew Thacker,
'Modern Spaces, Modern Phobias'

Other speakers include:

Matthew Beaumont

Anthony Mandal

Ulrika Maude

Keir Waddington

Michael Worboys & Neil Pemberton

The history of phobias as disease entities is intimately connected to the phenomenology of modernity. Whereas the emergence of spatial phobias such as agoraphobia in 1871 and claustrophobia in 1879 coincided with growing urbanisation and the development of the modern metropolis, Sigmund Freud's modern subject theory situated phobia at the heart of his psychoanalytical practice.

The fin de siècle was rife with cultural and social fears about the present and the future, and the twentieth century—with its two global conflicts, its natural disasters and the threat of terrorism—has ushered in a period of postmodern panic. Fear and anxiety are omnipresent in the modern age.

But when, how and why does fear become chronic, morbid or abnormal? And in what ways has fear been conceptualised by medical practitioners, cultural theorists and artists? This interdisciplinary conference looks at the different ways in which writers, artists, historians, art historians, cultural and human geographers, scientists and medical practitioners have constructed, represented and theorised phobia and chronic fear.

To book one of the final places at this conference e-mail **Martin Willis** on mwillis@glam.ac.uk. Visit the Conference website for further details at: www.glam.ac.uk/literatureandscience

Sponsored by the **Wellcome Trust** and the **Society for the Social History of Medicine**