The ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions (1100-1800) presents

READING THE FACE: IMAGE, TEXT AND EMOTION

2-4 June 2015
Macmahon Ball Theatre, Old Arts
The University of Melbourne
The face is one of the most intense sites for the expression and communication of emotion. That intensity generates millions of representations of the face, in a range of textual, dramatic, visual, cinematic and material forms.

This collaboratory will bring together research on representations of the expressive face, from the medieval to the modern world, from illumination and early print culture through to contemporary graphic novels, non-fiction and cinema. Speakers will consider how images of the face make meaning and communicate emotion, and will focus particularly on the question of facial hermeneutics: how do we read and interpret faces, whether they appear to us in visual, textual or cinematic form?
# SCHEDULE

**DATE:** 2-4 June, 2015  
**VENUE:** Macmahon Ball Theatre, Old Arts Building, The University of Melbourne

## TUESDAY 2 JUNE 2015

<table>
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<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.00 – 2.00</td>
<td><strong>REGISTRATION</strong> Macmahon Ball Theatre, Old Arts Building</td>
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| 2.00 – 2.30 | **Welcome to Country:** Michelle Mills  
**Introduction:** Stephanie Trigg                                                   |
| 2.30 – 4.00 | **Chair:** Stephanie Trigg  
Grace Moore  
Jane Davidson  
"Charles Dickens’s ‘Facial Pantomimes’"  
"Exploring the Pianist’s Face" |
| 4.00 – 4.30 | **AFTERNOON TEA** Arts Hall, Old Arts Building                                          |
| 4.30 – 5.15 | **Chair:** Jane Davidson  
Angela Ndalianis  
"Tron: Legacy and the Many Faces of Jeff Bridges"                             |
| 5.15 – 6.00 | **DRINKS AND WELCOME** Rachel Fensham (Head, School of Culture and Communication) Arts Hall, Old Arts Building |
| 6.00 – 7.15 | **Keynote Address and Public Lecture**, Macmahon Ball Theatre, Old Arts Building  
**Chair:** Stephanie Trigg  
**Conrad Rudolph** "Faces, Art, and Computerized Evaluation Systems" |

## WEDNESDAY 3 JUNE 2015

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| 9.30 – 10.40 | **Keynote Address**  
Chair: Lisa Beaven  
Jennifer Warwzinek  
"Facing the Eighteenth-Century Animal: From Swift’s Yahoos to Shelley’s Frankenstein" |
| 10.40 – 11.00 | **MORNING TEA** Arts Hall, Old Arts Building                                               |
| 11.00 – 1.00 | **Melbourne Portrait Group**  
Chair: Anne Maxwell  
Alison Inglis  
"Frederick Sandys’ Image of Proud Maisie: Poetry, Portraiture and Passion"  
Mark Shepheard  
"Faces, Friendship, and Formality: Emotion and the Court Portraiture of Anton Raphael Mengs"  
Vivien Gaston  
"She’s warm! She lives!: Visualizing the Text in Johann Zoffany’s Portrait of Elizabeth Farren as Hermione in Shakespeare’s ‘A Winter’s Tale’, c. 1780" |
| 1.00 – 2.00 | **LUNCH** Arts Hall, Old Arts Building                                                     |
| 2.00 – 3.30 | **Chair:** Grace Moore  
Anne Maxwell  
"Lavater and the Nineteenth-Century Photographic Portrait"  
Kathryn Woods  
"Facing Character in a Faceless Society: Physiognomy, Facial Appearance and Character in Britain 1650-1780" |
| 3.30 – 4.00 | **AFTERNOON TEA** Arts Hall, Old Arts Building                                              |
| 4.00 – 5.30 | **Chair:** Anne McKendry  
Stephanie Downes  
"Textual Expressions: Reading Faces in the Margins of Medieval Manuscripts"  
Stephanie Trigg  
"The Mutable Face of Fortune in Medieval Art and Literature" |
| 5.30 – 6.00 | **Open Discussion**  
**Chair:** Stephanie Trigg                                                             |
| 6.00 – 7.00 | **“From the Fire”: opening of art exhibition by survivors of the Black Saturday bushfires, supported by the Melbourne node of the ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions.**  
Dax Centre (Kenneth Myer Building) Genetics Lane, University of Melbourne  
**“Delegates are welcome to attend this opening but please note: if you are also going to the dinner you are advised to leave before formalities commence at 6.30.”** |
| 7.00     | **COLLABORATORY DINNER**  
University House @ The Woodward  
Level 10, Law Building, University Square, 185 Pelham St, Carlton                      |
### THURSDAY 4 JUNE 2015

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<th>Time</th>
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| 9.45 – 10.30 | **Chair:** Alison Inglis  
Lisa Beaven  “Fear, Fury and the Face: Emotion and the ‘Affetti’ in the Work of Nicolas Poussin” |
| 10.30 – 11.00 | MORNING TEA Arts Hall, Old Arts Building |
| 11.00 – 1.00 | **Chair:** Angela Ndalianis  
Heather Gaunt  ”Rationality versus Emotion: The Visual Arts in Health Education at the University of Melbourne”  
Elizabeth MacFarlane  ”Graphic Medicine: Doctors Reading Faces”  
Sarah Richardson  ”The Face as a Site of Reclaimed Power in the Work of Phoebe Gloeckner” |
| 1.00 – 2.00 | LUNCH Arts Hall, Old Arts Building |
| 2.00 – 2.45 | **Chair:** Stephanie Downes  
James Simpson  ”Textual Face” |
| 2.45 – 3.30 | **Chair:** Stephanie Trigg  
Bindi Cole Chocka  ”We All Need Forgiveness” |
| 3.30 – 4.00 | AFTERNOON TEA Arts Hall, Old Arts Building |
| 4.00 – 4.45 | **Respondent and Chair:** Andrew Lynch  
Open Discussion |
| 4.45 – 5.30 | CLOSE OF COLLABORATORY (Drinks) |

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Shiloh (played by the beagle Kari) in the 2006 film Saving Shiloh.  
Daniel Assael.  
Wikimedia Commons
In this paper, I would like to reconsider Nicolas Poussin’s representation of emotion, concentrating on the legibility of faces in his paintings and drawings, and the ways in which he deployed the ‘affetti’ or bodily gestures to convey emotional states. For Poussin, expression was closely connected to invention, and to his status as a narrative painter. But in a series of drawings and paintings in the 1640s and 1650s he explored a range of extreme emotion states, including fear, anger and horror. I intend to analyse these works in the intellectual context of the republication of Leonardo’s Trattato della Pittura in these same years.

Bindi Cole Chocka

**WE ALL NEED FORGIVENESS**

Bindi Cole Chocka is an Australian artist with Aboriginal (Wadawurrung) heritage. She uses photography, video, and installation in her artistic practice. Much of her recent work circles around the concept of forgiveness. We All Need Forgiveness is a 30-channel video installation: the artist’s friends were invited to ‘forgive’ someone they knew, each repeating the expression ‘I forgive you; I forgive you’. The result is a grid of thirty monitors, each carrying a grid of forgiveness on a small cloud of paper; in this way adding to the fabric of the installation. The physical presence of a sea of different faces combined with the building mantra of their voices presents a powerful emotional experience. We All Need Forgiveness was featured in the 19th Biennale of Sydney in 2014, You Imagine what you Desire. In this way adding to the fabric of the installation. The physical presence of a sea of different faces combined with the building mantra of their voices presents a powerful emotional experience. We All Need Forgiveness was featured in the 19th Biennale of Sydney in 2014, You Imagine what you Desire and is currently being exhibited in Bindi Cole Chocka’s solo show Chrysalis at Maroondah Art Gallery in Melbourne. In this artist talk, Bindi will discuss this work, its origins and reception.

Jane Davidson

**EXPLORING THE PIANIST’S FACE**

In this paper, the face of the music performer is explored as a site that reflects the performer’s efforts to both generate and illustrate several aspects of musical expression. This expression has been described by Juslin (2003) as comprising the product of the generative rules that constitute the music’s structure as well as stylistic deviation and resultant unexpectedness, motion principles, random fluctuation, and the manifestation of emotion. While the face is typically regarded as the conveyer of semantic content, particularly related to emotional communication, the current paper explores the broader range of expressive elements and considers how musician and audience create a meaningful shared experience by employing communicative facial gestures. To add historical range and individual differences to the discussion, performances by pianists from different epochs are considered. The performers under scrutiny include Hungarian Franz Liszt (1811-1886), of whom it was said that if he played behind a screen a great deal of the music’s poetry would be lost; the Polish American Artur Rubenstein (1887-1982) and highly popular contemporary Chinese pianist, Lang Lang (1982-). Each pianist is considered performing Liszt’s famous Liebestraum (Dream of love), Nocturne no. 3, based on a poem by Freiligrath, O lieb, so lang du lieben kannst (O love, as long as you can love).
Stephanie Downes

ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, English and Theatre, The University of Melbourne

“TEXTUAL EXPRESSIONS: READING FACES IN THE MARGINS OF MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPTS”

This paper offers initial findings from a new project on visual and textual representations of human facial expression in pre-modern literary and manuscript culture. It presents some examples of emotive faces in English books from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, which it explores in terms of their narrative potential. Were monochrome ink faces only decorative additions to late medieval manuscripts, or did they help to model an appropriate emotional response to the accompanying text, tempering a reader’s understanding of emotional tone or generic register? Drawing from discourses on facial expression in Middle English works by John of Trevisa and Chaucer, I show the variety of visual representations of the face in late medieval majuscules and marginalia, and explore the potential of faces embedded in narrative texts to function as affective guides.

Vivien Gaston

Art History and Art Curatorship, School of Culture and Communication, The University of Melbourne; Melbourne Portrait Group

“‘SHE’S WARM! SHE LIVES!’ VISUALIZING THE TEXT IN JOHANN ZOFFANY’S PORTRAIT OF ELIZABETH FARREN AS HERMIONE IN SHAKESPEARE’S ‘A WINTER’S TALE,’ C. 1780”

Johann Zoffany’s portrait of Elizabeth Farren as Hermione in Shakespeare’s A Winter’s Tale, c1780, National Gallery of Victoria, depicts one of the most controversial and memorable scenes in all of Shakespeare’s plays, the moment when a supposed statue comes to life. This paper will enquire into the relation of this imposing image to the text, in particular, the version by David Garrick, 1756, for the production in which Farren made her debut in 1777. Has the artist created an analogous experience to that narrated in words? How does a portrait, with its focus on the face, add resonance to the dramatic moment?

As a portrait, Zoffany’s work provides a new layer of interpretation on Shakespeare’s theme of the relationship of art and life. Because a portrait reinvents a pre-existing subject, it adds further power to the moment when the ‘statue’ of Hermione is transformed into her living self. There is a double re-animation: of Elizabeth Farren as a living actress and of Hermione coming to life. Through a range of examples, this paper will explore the interaction between portraits and the theatre in the eighteenth century. It will review changing interpretations of Hermione in the visual arts. Above all it will explore the emotion that is concealed and revealed in Zoffany’s depiction of Hermione’s face and how this contributes to the portrait’s dramatic power.

Heather Gaunt

Curator, Ian Potter Museum of Art, The University of Melbourne

“RATIONALITY VERSUS EMOTION: THE VISUAL ARTS IN HEALTH EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE”

The Visual Arts in Health Education (VAHE) program, developed at the Ian Potter Museum of Art, University of Melbourne over the past three years, delivers ‘curated’ educational experiences for graduate students in the areas of medicine, dentistry, physiotherapy, nursing, biomedicine, and veterinary science. Collaboratively shaped and integrated into the differing curriculum needs over these different disciplines, the sessions variously target objectivity and rationality in observation, through to evoking reflection and emotional self-awareness in students. But while the visual arts do seem to offer an almost infinite resource for teaching and reflection in these spheres, can we really have it both ways? Can exploration of the rational and emotional productively co-exist in this highly specific teaching context? The paper explores these ideas through the lens of the brief history of the VAHE program at the University of Melbourne, and an exploration of future directions for the program.
Alison Inglis
Art History and Art Curatorship, School of Culture and Communication, University of Melbourne; Melbourne Portrait Group
"FREDERICK SANDYS’ IMAGE OF PROUD MAISIE: POETRY, PORTRAITURE AND PASSION"

The British artist Frederick Sandys’ image of ‘Proud Maisie’ (c.1880-90) in the National Gallery of Victoria is famous as a depiction of Pre-Raphaelite womanhood. Sandys revisited the composition on at least fourteen occasions, following the successful exhibition of the first version at London’s Royal Academy in 1868. In a contemporary review, A. C. Swinburne praised the ‘splendid’ design, describing it in terms of the emotions he identified in the sitter’s features - ‘a woman of rich, ripe, angry beauty’ with ‘something of a tiger’s charm’ in the ‘passion of her fair face’.

This paper will investigate the possible reasons behind Swinburne’s identification of these particular emotions in Sandys’ image, including the role of the sitter, the actress Mary Emma Jones, in shaping this ‘staged’ presentation of female pride. Her influence upon Sandys’ other portraits of legendary heroines and femmes fatales (Helen, Medea, Vivien) or female personifications of emotion (Sorrow) will also be explored. Lastly, the paper will examine the relationship between the work of art and its ostensible subject, Walter Scott’s poem, ‘The Pride of Youth’, from The Heart of Midlothian [1818].

Elizabeth MacFarlane
Creative Writing, School of Culture and Communication, The University of Melbourne
"GRAPHIC MEDICINE: DOCTORS READING FACES"

As part of the steady rise in teaching humanities and narrative theory to medical students, a number of American and European medical schools now offer elective courses on graphic storytelling. In these classes, physicians in training read graphic illness and disability narratives like David Small’s Stitches, Cece Bell’s El Deafo, Marisa Acocella Marchetto’s Cancer Vixen and Ellen Forney’s Marbles, all complex, difficult and intensely emotional memoirs in the comics medium. These inherently multimodal texts prepare physicians for the task of negotiating multiple ‘languages’ in their jobs. Doctors, or perhaps ‘good’ doctors, must learn not only vast amounts of physiological information, but must be able to translate this information into (often metaphorical) language their patients can understand and receive. Doctors also use the texts to practise reading facial expressions and body language in order to fill in the gap between what a patient divulges verbally and a diagnosis. In comics scholarship, ‘closure’ refers to the work a reader must do to fill in the information between comics panels – the gutter – in order to create narrative coherence. This paper examines the fascinating connections between medical practice and the comics medium, and how they are being explored in the classroom.

Anne Maxwell
English and Theatre Studies, School of Culture and Communication, The University of Melbourne
"LAVATER AND THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY PHOTOGRAPHIC PORTRAIT"

In his Von der Physiognomik (1772) and subsequent writings on human physiognomy, the Swiss pastor Johann Caspar Lavater made it clear that the face was key to both identifying and understanding a person’s moral character. Significantly it was his own self-portrait that he used to set the standard for the kind of face that defined modern civil society. Based on a close reading of Lavater’s works and the observations of present-day critics my paper asks: what were the key ideas that Lavater contributed to nineteenth-century portrait photography with its emphasis not just on individual character and the bourgeois self, but also on the type, especially the criminal, mental and colonised type that was considered threatening to the bourgeois social order? And what in particular did he contribute to the portrayal of women’s faces, including those that celebrated women’s burgeoning agency?
### GRACE MOORE

**ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions, English and Theatre, The University of Melbourne**

**“CHARLES DICKENS’S ‘FACIAL PANTOMIMES’”**

In her posthumously published memoir, *My Father as I Knew Him*, Charles Dickens’s eldest daughter, Mary, recounted some of her father’s working habits, observed at a time when she was recovering from a major illness. Strikingly, Mary describes Dickens’s use of a mirror to rehearse ‘some extraordinary facial contortions’ associated with the characters he was developing for a novel.

While Mary does not offer a date for this incident, it is likely to have taken place in 1854 when she was recovering from the cholera. At this point in his career, Dickens was at work on *Hard Times*, a novel that juxtaposed the austerity of utilitarian education systems with the freedom of circus life. Mary describes this literary equivalent to method-acting as a ‘most curious experience’, continuing to note that with his natural intensity he had thrown himself completely into the character that he was creating, and that for the time being he had not only lost sight of his surroundings, but had actually become in action, as in imagination, the creature of his pen” (49).

Examining *Hard Times* alongside the memoir that he ‘edited’ — but in fact completely re-wrote — *Grimaldi the Clown* (1838), this paper will examine the theatricality of the face in Dickens’s writing. It is well known that Dickens’s earliest novels were heavily influenced by his enthusiastic transposition of stage conventions onto the page. I shall therefore argue that his deep interest in acting made Dickens an acute observer of facial expressions, whose work has had a lasting impact upon the representation and reading of faces in the novel.

### ANGELA NDALIANIS

**Screen and Cultural Studies, School of Culture and Communication, The University of Melbourne**

**“TRON: LEGACY AND THE MANY FACES OF JEFF BRIDGES”**

Over the last decade, motion capture has become a commonly used computer generated effects tool that is used to ‘capture’ the actions and movements of actors and objects and then translates their motions into a digital world onscreen. Whereas motion capture records the movement of actors (and objects), performance capture – also known as e-motion and facial motion capture – took the detailing of movements and expressions further still by honing in on capturing the more intricate, micro movements that involve hands and facial expressions.

In this paper I will examine the use of e-motion capture software to generate a younger version of Jeff Bridges in the film *Tron: Legacy* (2010) who would perform the role of the virtual character Clu. Pushing the boundaries of CGI and e-motion capture to new limits, the film integrated versions of 1980s Bridges with the ‘real’ Bridges of 2009-10. But how do we begin to discuss the emotions embedded in Bridges’ performances given that they’re separated by three decades?

The construction of the two Bridges – the digitised 1980s version and the ‘real’ twenty-first century version – open up a dialogue about the facial expressions as signifying markers of emotion. Can a digitally generated face emote? What is the relationship between Clu’s virtual expressions and those of the human these expressions once belonged to? This paper will follow a journey across the many faces of Jeff Bridges: the one face belonging to the reality of the twenty-first century, and the digitally reconstructed versions of Jeff Bridges’ face that extend back to the 1980s. Bridges’ virtual face opens up questions about the physical and metaphysical that are specific to the digital era, and which complicate the concept of emotion through digital intervention.

### SARAH RICHARDSON

**Creative Writing, School of Culture and Communication, The University of Melbourne**

**“THE FACE AS A SITE OF RECLAIMED POWER IN THE WORK OF PHOEBE GLOECKNER”**

Working across a range of media, from comics to a semi-autobiographical prose novel to medical illustration to digitally altered photographs of felt dolls in dioramas, Phoebe Gloeckner’s texts repeatedly return to the face as a site of affective expression and connection. Gloeckner maintains a complex position on the facticity of her life writing, suggesting that although her protagonist, Minnie, may share her face and many experiences, she both is and is not Gloeckner’s autobiographical avatar. Gloeckner uses the expressive face as a seat of power, demanding justice, asserting survival and self-assurance, resisting totalising narratives from abusive father figures. The focus on Minnie’s facial expressions is a reassertion of her inner life and subjectivity in oppressive or traumatising circumstances. Gloeckner employs the direct gaze of her characters in order to guide the affective experience of the reader, both challenging and evoking empathy. These looks are a reclamation of power and a claim to the value of her characters’ subjectivity and experiences. Gloeckner’s comics and writing consistently privilege connection and relationality. This attachment, and particularly the demand for empathy as a response to trauma, can be read through Elspeth Probyn and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s understanding of shame, drawing on Silvan Tomkins, as potentially productive. Tomkins sees the face as the ‘most visible residence’ of the self (shame is, after all, the ‘loss of face’). Tomkins understands shame as an encounter with strangeness, with a failure of recognition in an unreturned look. Gloeckner’s insistence on a direct gaze makes shame productive, by insisting on her characters’ agency and subjectivity within these ‘shameful’ stories.
“FACES, ART, AND COMPUTERIZED EVALUATION SYSTEMS”

FACES (Faces, Art, and Computerized Evaluation Systems) is a project that, after two years of research support from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), has established proof of concept for the application of face recognition technology to works of portrait art. In the application of face recognition technology to photographed human faces, a number of difficulties are inherent in a real or perceived alteration of appearance of the face through variations in facial expression, age, angle of pose, and so on. With works of portrait art, not only do all these problems pertain, but these works also have their own additional challenges. Most notably, portrait art does not provide what might be called a photographic likeness but rather one that goes through a process of visual interpretation on the part of the artist. After establishing the initial parameters of the application of this technology, the main goal of FACES has been to test the ability of the FACES algorithm to restore lost identities to works of portrait art, something our research has shown is clearly feasible. Our work has also suggested a number of other potential applications, both using the FACES algorithm and employing basic concept of FACES in an altered form.

“FACES, FRIENDSHIP, AND FORMALITY; EMOTION AND THE COURT PORTRAITURE OF ANTON RAPHAEL MENGS”

In 1752, Frederick Augustus II of Saxony compared his portrait by Mengs to the same painter’s portrait of the castrato Domenico Annibali. The singer and Mengs were very close friends, and Frederick Augustus discerned an additional quality to the portrait of Annibali: “Put a little of the friend into the portraits you make for me”, he then jovially requested. The conventions of the formal court portrait would seem to have left little opportunity for a painter to convey the emotions of the sitter: instead, such portraits tended to express status rather than sentiment, evoking the majesty of the sitter to inspire respect and awe in the viewer. As Mengs himself remarked to Frederick Augustus of his portrait of Annibali, ‘Sire, this is a friend; kings are not that type of person.’ In what way, then, was Mengs expected to ‘put a little of the friend’ into his more formal court portraits? To what extent could the image of the face in eighteenth-century court portraiture convey emotion and express what Leonardo da Vinci famously described as ‘the motions of the mind’? This paper will focus on Meng’s portrait of the Infante Don Luis de Borbón, recently acquired by the National Gallery of Victoria, a work in which Mengs blends physiognomic intensity with the formal traditions of court portraiture to produce a powerful personal image at a time of great emotional upheaval in the sitter’s public and private position as a prince of Spain.

“TEXTUAL FACE”

Recognition is the central, though underappreciated, perceptual and hermeneutic experience. Facial recognition is the best model of all other forms of recognition. In this short paper, I begin by adumbrating the points just made. I then turn to recognition scenes (for the most part facial recognition scenes) from the four great modes of European literature (tragedy, elegy, comedy and satire). I argue how these scenes simultaneously channel both emotion and hermeneutic attention.
Stephanie Trigg  
Program Leader, ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions; English and Theatre, The University of Melbourne

"THE MUTABLE FACE OF FORTUNE IN MEDIEVAL ART AND LITERATURE"

This paper addresses the inter-relationship of textual and visual representations of Fortune in medieval art and literature. An allegorical personification of mutability made familiar and popular by Boethius, Fortune is variously represented as having an impassive veiled or masked face (‘blind Fortune’), a changeable, fickle face (her face suddenly frowning), a two-sided face (laughing with one eye, weeping with the other), or even with two faces (one light, one dark). How do medieval poets and artists inject life into this familiar trope? And how are these visual and textual representations related to each other? This paper will explore several representations of Fortune’s face in medieval culture, from illuminated manuscripts of texts by Petrarch and others, to the work of poets like Hoccleve and Chaucer, who draw on Fortune’s visual tradition to experiment with the textual representation of her moving and changing face.

Jennifer Warwzinek  
Institute for English Philology, Freie Universität, Berlin; Early Career International Research Fellow, ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions

"FACING THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ANIMAL: FROM SWIFT’S YAHOOS TO SHELLEY’S FRANKENSTEIN"

This paper examines the affective encounter with animal others in several texts from the long eighteenth century, paying particular attention to the ways in which these encounters are mediated by face-to-face confrontation, or the absence thereof. Although the eighteenth century is normally thought to be a period in which writers and thinkers foregrounded the issue of human rights, especially in the lead-up to and aftermath of the American and French revolutions, the simultaneous insistence on sensibility and sentiment can be seen to disrupt anthropocentric models of ontology and epistemology. Jonathan Swift’s depictions of Yahoos and Houyhnhnms in Gulliver’s Travels, from 1726, similar to Mary Shelley’s later interrogation in 1818 of the line between the human and the monstrous in Frankenstein, begin to recognise animal sensibility in such a way that the limitations of rights to humans only becomes distinctly fragile. Laurence Sterne can also be seen, in his novel from 1759 entitled The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, to develop a form of personhood conceived not against but as a form of animal life, and Anna Laetitia Barbauld’s ‘The Mouse’s Petition’, from 1773, can be seen to create a cultural myth of kinship based on affective alliances. I will argue that these texts display a persistent concern with modes of suffering and existence that gesture towards what we today refer to as the posthuman.

Kathryn Woods  
School of History, Classics and Archaeology, University of Edinburgh

"FACING CHARACTER IN A FACELESS SOCIETY: PHYSIOGNOMY, FACIAL APPEARANCE AND CHARACTER IN BRITAIN 1650-1780"

This paper explores how the political, economic and social changes taking place during this period caused society to become increasingly ‘faceless,’ ironically causing the appearance of the face to become an important measure of ‘who someone really was.’ Specifically, it examines the processes involved in the recognition and social identification of ‘strangers’ from their facial appearance, and how print culture inscribed narratives of character and emotional meaning upon the face. It also includes some discussion of why the legitimacy of physiognomy, as a ‘science,’ declined in the early eighteenth century, before rising once again in the final decades of the period.
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READING THE FACE: IMAGE, TEXT AND EMOTION

2-4 June 2015
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Convenor: Professor Stephanie Trigg, The University of Melbourne
Contact: Leanne Hunt | leanne.hunt@unimelb.edu.au