

SIU Med School Sponsors Annual Pearson Medical History Lecture

Mental illness in 19th century America is the topic for the 15th annual Emmet F. Pearson Memorial Medical History Lecture at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine. The free, public lecture is at 6 p.m. Thursday, August 19, in SIU's South Auditorium (second floor), 801 N. Rutledge St. in Springfield.

"Committed to Reform: Mrs. Packard's Attack on the Asylum" will be presented by Linda Carlson, Ph.D., social sciences librarian, at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. Elizabeth Parsons Ware Packard was committed to an Illinois insane asylum by her husband because she disagreed with his religious views and had different ideas about how to raise their children. Three years later she was declared sane and released. Packard spent the remainder of her life working to raise public consciousness about the treatment of asylum inmates and influencing the change to commitment laws in Illinois and other states.

Carlson earned her doctorate in history at Southern Illinois University Carbondale, her master's at University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and her bachelor's at Blackburn College.

The event is jointly sponsored by the SIU medical humanities department and Friends of the Pearson Museum. Dr. Emmet F. Pearson, who is memorialized by the lecture, was a Springfield physician who also was a professor emeritus in the internal medicine and medical humanities departments at SIU. He died in June 1996. SIU's medical museum is named in his honor.

For more information, call SIU's medical humanities department, 545-4261 weekdays.