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0521802067 - The Confinement of the Insane: International Perspectives, 1800-1965

Edited by Roy Porter and David Wright

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The Confinement of the Insane

The rise of the asylum constitutes one of the most profound, and controversial, events in the history of medicine. Recently, academics around the world have begun to direct their attention to the origins of the confinement of those deemed 'insane', exploring patient records in an attempt to understand the rise of the asylum within the wider context of social and economic change of nations undergoing modernization.

This edited volume brings together fourteen original research papers to answer key questions in the history of asylums. What forces led to the emergence of mental hospitals in different national contexts? To what extent did patient populations vary in terms of their psychiatric profile or their socio-economic background? What was the role of families, communities and the medical profession in the confinement process? This volume therefore represents a landmark study in the history of psychiatry by examining asylum confinement in a global context.

ROY PORTER was Professor of the Social History of Medicine at the Wellcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine at University College London. Recent books included *Doctor of Society: Thomas Beddoes and the Sick Trade in Late Enlightenment England* (1991); *London: A Social History* (1994); *'The Greatest Benefit to Mankind': A Medical History of Humanity* (1997); *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World* (2000) and *Bodies Politic: Disease, Death and the Doctors in Britain: 1650–1914* (2001). He was a co-author of *The History of Bethlem* (1997), and of *Gout: The Patrician Malady* (1998). He was widely published in a variety of fields, including eighteenth-century medicine, the history of psychiatry and the history of quackery. The author and editor of over a hundred books, Roy Porter died on 3 March 2002.

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Dedicated to the memory of
Professor Roy Porter, 1946–2002

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