

Foreword

New Interpretations

Welcome to the first issue of *Engendering the Past; New Interpretations*. This journal is created by a collective formed of postgraduate History students from the University of Glasgow. We reinterpret historical timeframes using gender as a tool of analysis. We maintain that gender is a useful tool of analysis not only for historical research but for a variety of disciplines. We were inspired to produce the journal as we felt there was a space needed for a theoretical gender approach in historical and various interdisciplinary postgraduate works. We chose to organise ourselves as a collective in order to avoid academic hierarchy and to open the journal to a wide range of international contributions from the postgraduate community. As a collective we reflect on the wider societal relevance of our research; we believe, as postgraduate students, we can make valuable contributions to debates in our field of studies.

We, as a collective, established the journal on the basis of providing a space for international, interdisciplinary postgraduate work on gender and sexuality:

We are dedicated to examining gender across space and time, whilst understanding the meaning of gender depends on its historical and social context; the same can be said for sexuality and patriarchy.

We encourage contribution from a variety of subjects. We maintain that an interdisciplinary approach is the future of academic culture.

We hope to create an international community of postgraduate scholars committing their research to gender analysis.

Synopsis

Our first issue; *New Interpretations*, reflects some of our most distinguished research. In our individual fields of interest, we have used the analytical tools of gender, sexuality, and patriarchy to reinterpret the past. The volume will begin with Amanda Gavin's article, which explores male same-sex sexuality in Renaissance Italy. She analyses the responses to sexual encounters between males, and how this became a site for the construction of masculinities. Similarly, Robyn Skelton's contribution reflects on the experience and identity of Victorian women in same-sex unions. It comments on the ways in which nineteenth century society restrained women's sexuality, and the effect these 'romantic friendships' had on normative marriage. Continuing with the theme of homosexuality, Amy Watson's piece is a comparative look on the repression of homosexuality in England, the USSR and the United States, arguing that homosexual behaviour was oppressed first and foremost due to the want to protect normative, heterosexual masculinity. Aine O'Malley's article then continues with the theme of masculinity. Her piece explores how the First World War can be considered a turning point in the construction of a new, interwar masculinity, and how this compares to the prescribed masculinity of the Edwardian and Victorian period in England.

Following on from Aine's contribution, Amber Stout's work will focus on man-midwives and how the profession went from being a women-only space to one that medical men became a large part of, and in turn how this shaped women's involvement in childbirth. Corinne Groeneveldt's piece also looks at the traditions of childbirth. Her contribution examines the progression of the Churching ritual within Christianity from the early modern to the modern period, and how these changes are linked to the decline of religion in England. Jessica Albrecht's article explores two nineteenth century feminists as examples of the notions of reproduction and motherhood, gendered citizenship and suffrage in nineteenth century feminism in France. Similarly discussing themes of reproduction and biopower, Anna McEwan's piece reflects on the German Democratic Republic (GDR) and whether it was a free space for women. For this analysis, she explores reproductive legislation and cultural signifiers, which attempted to control women's sexualities for reproductive and political purposes.