

Call for Proposals

Special Issue: Health, Healing and Caring

Gender & History is an international journal for research and writing on the history of femininity, masculinity and gender relations. This Call for Papers is aimed at scholars studying any country or region, and any temporal period, including the classical, medieval, early modern, modern, and contemporary periods.

This Special Issue will explore the gendered history of healing and caring from the perspective of the sick and suffering, and various types of healers and caregivers. It aims to move beyond institutional histories of biomedicine, canonical medical knowledge, and allopathic approaches to health. We seek to showcase research that reflects upon the gendered dynamics of palliative care and the formation of diverse communities and economies of health and healing. We recognize that historical reckonings of health and bodily knowledge in many locales have been dominated by sources maintained in state, colonial, and missionary archives, and by notions of medicine shaped in white settler institutions. In an effort to destabilize these reckonings and to uncover marginalized forms of knowledge and practice, we encourage research informed by diverse methodologies and an imaginative approach to source material.

In recent years, medical anthropologists have shed light on the complex and unequal co-production of biomedical knowledge and “traditional” forms of medicine while feminist sociologists have illuminated the gendered dynamics of caregiving and the devaluation of its everyday and emotional labor. How might historians engage these cross-disciplinary methods and insights to reconstruct more nuanced and more expansive histories of healing and caring? What happens to our gendered histories of illness and medicine when we de-naturalize biomedical formations and examine palliative care in addition to therapeutic treatment? How has gender shaped which forms of healing and caring are recognized and institutionalized, and how has such privileging changed over time?

We understand that historically a wide array of people have provided healing and caring including family members, shamans, spirit mediums, healers, Elders, herbalists, diviners, faith healers, and wise-women and men as well as midwives, nurses, aids, and doctors. Their practices have ranged from diagnosing illnesses, administering medicines, and performing procedures to offering spiritual and psychological counsel. They have also included forms of body work such as grooming, feeding, bathing, massage and manipulation, and handling the dead.

Papers are invited from established scholars as well as new, emerging, and unaffiliated scholars who consider a variety of historical moments and locations, or transnational and even global processes related to themes such as the following:

- Intersectional approaches that examine how social identities and inequalities rooted in gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, class, religion, and nationality have long shaped people's access to health resources and care and, in turn, given rise to disparate patterns and experiences of well-being and illness.
- Reconstruction of deep histories of gendered healing and caring, extending back well before the twentieth century, that reveal how healing and caring practices have been central concerns for both individuals and societies and how those concerns have often animated and reconfigured cultural institutions, political ideologies, and economic relations and markets.
- Consideration of the connections and tensions between various modes of healing and palliation, and how those relations have informed the frequently gendered and racialized separation of "professional" and "modern" medicine from modes designated as "traditional," "informal," "alternative," or "home-based."
- Examination of how people have transmitted healing and caring epistemologies and practices across generations and geographic distances, including how women have sought to maintain or assert control over their health and how various archives have worked both to represent and obscure those efforts.
- Engagement with concepts from disability studies, queer theory, and crip theory to better understand the history of illnesses and diseases that have often been both gendered and stigmatized such as depression, hysteria, reproductive maladies, infertility, and sexually transmitted infections.

Interested individuals are asked to submit 500-word abstracts, a brief biography (250 words), and a cv by 31 August 2019 at 5pm PDT for consideration.

Abstracts will be reviewed by the guest editors and successful proponents will participate in a symposium at Vancouver Island University in British Columbia, Canada, on 8 May 2020. Papers must be submitted six weeks prior to the symposium. Papers should be 6000-8000 words in length. After the symposium, papers will go through the journal's peer review system. As with any article, there is no guarantee of publication.

The editors are in the process of applying for funding to defray the cost of the travel to the symposium for new, emerging, and unaffiliated scholars.

Please send abstracts, biographies, and CVs by email to genderhistory@viu.ca or by mail to The Editors, *Gender & History*, Vancouver Island University, 900 Fifth Street, Nanaimo, BC V9R 5S5.

The Special Issue will be edited by Drs. Kristin Burnett, Sara Ritchey, and Lynn M. Thomas.

Special Issue Timeline

Abstracts to SI editors -- 31 August 2019

Papers circulated to symposium participants -- 15 March 2020

Symposium at Vancouver Island University (Nanaimo, British Columbia) -- 8 May 2020

Full submissions to SI editors (papers submitted on ScholarOne) for peer review -- 31 August, 2020

Revised submissions (and any image permissions) to SI editors -- 31 May 2021

Publication -- October 2021