



## **Gender in Catastrophic Times**

**Online symposium, Thursday 23 September – Friday 24 September, 2021**

The 2020s have thus far been defined by catastrophe. The decade began in the midst of widespread environmental devastation, with bushfires across Australia choking entire cities until whole towns fled the flames, followed by fires in the Amazon and across the west coast of the United States as well. 2020 has since been designated one of the hottest years on record. Political crises have been rampant, too. The world has witnessed the continuing blight of white supremacy, epitomised by the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor at the hands of police officers, which fuelled the global Black Lives Matter movement. Australia is beset with the ongoing damage of colonisation, such as the over 400 Indigenous deaths in custody since the 1991 Royal Commission in Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. Even 2021 began in political turmoil, with the world watching as the U.S. Capitol building was stormed by right-wing extremists. The beginnings of this decade have been characterized by catastrophe in multiple ways, even before we consider the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic that has caused inconceivable loss of life world-wide and exposed many deep-seated social inequalities.

In this symposium, we turn to past instances of difficult times to understand how societies have responded to and survived catastrophe. We specifically seek to understand gender in catastrophic times: how is gender mediated *through* and *by* catastrophe? How has gender contributed to or even caused catastrophe? And how have people reconsidered or reframed gender and gender norms in light of catastrophe? We seek to understand this not for a cynical recirculation

of trauma, but in the hopes of searching for a means of emerging from the current disasters through which we are living.

The *Lilith* Editorial Collective invites proposals for 20-minute papers that reflect on and explore these themes and more. We invite proposals from scholars across academic disciplines, and particularly encourage postgraduate and early career researchers to submit proposals. We also encourage scholars outside of Australia to apply: please indicate in your submission if you are based outside of Australia, and we will endeavour to schedule your paper at an accessible time. Keynote speakers for the symposium will be announced soon. Symposium participants will be invited to submit article-length versions of their papers to *Lilith: A Feminist History Journal* for a 2022 special issue.

As a special measure for this year's symposium, the AWHN will be awarding two prizes: best paper by a student currently enrolled in a higher research degree programme (inside or outside of Australia); and best paper by an early-career academic who received their PhD in the past five years. These prizes take the place of the travel bursaries that would typically be supported given the symposium's online format. Prize winners will receive \$300 and a citation from the judges on the strengths of their paper; the runner-up in each category will receive \$200.

All participants in the symposium who want to be considered for these prizes will need to submit a written version of their paper (maximum 3000 words not including referencing) by 5pm Sunday 19 September AEST. The papers will then be reviewed by the judging panel. The prizes for best papers will then be awarded at the close of the symposium on 24 September.

The symposium will be held online over **Thursday 23 September and Friday 24 September 2021**.

**Please email a 200-word abstract and 150 word biographical note to [lilithjournal@gmail.com](mailto:lilithjournal@gmail.com) by 30 April 2021.**