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Spring Issue:

abstracts (October 1),

completed papers (January 1)

Summer Issue:

abstracts (January 1),

completed papers (April 1)

Fall Issue:

abstracts (April 1),

completed papers (July 1)

Early Career Researchers Special Issue:

abstracts (May 1),

completed papers (August 1)

Winter Issue:

abstracts (July 1),

completed papers (October 1)

About

Gender forum is an online, peer reviewed academic journal dedicated to the discussion of gender issues. As an electronic journal, *gender forum* offers a free-of-charge platform for the discussion of gender-related topics in the fields of literary and cultural production, media and the arts as well as politics, the natural sciences, medicine, the law, religion and philosophy. Inaugurated by Prof. Dr. Beate Neumeier in 2002, the quarterly issues of the journal have focused on a multitude of questions from different theoretical perspectives of feminist criticism, queer theory, and masculinity studies. *gender forum* also includes reviews and occasionally interviews, fictional pieces and poetry with a gender studies angle.

Opinions expressed in articles published in *gender forum* are those of individual authors and not necessarily endorsed by the editors of *gender forum*.

Submissions

Target articles should conform to current MLA Style (8th edition) and should be between 5,000 and 8,000 words in length. Please make sure to number your paragraphs and include a bio-blurb and an abstract of roughly 300 words. Files should be sent as email attachments in Word format. Please send your manuscripts to gender-forum@uni-koeln.de.

We always welcome reviews on recent releases in Gender Studies! Submitted reviews should conform to current MLA Style (8th edition), have numbered paragraphs, and should be between 750 and 1,000 words in length. Please note that the reviewed releases ought to be no older than 24 months. In most cases, we are able to secure a review copy for contributors.

Article Publishing

The journal aims to provide rapid publication of research through a continuous publication model. All submissions are subject to peer review. Articles should not be under review by any other journal when submitted to *Gender forum*.

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There are no submission or page charges, and no colour charges.

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Editorial

1 The topicality and complexity of issues of gender and sex/uality as key factors in the political arena has become apparent in recent political elections in different parts of the world. Matters of performance are determining criteria for the successful distribution and realisation of political aims. In this context questions about re-defining the political arena arise, as the proliferation of new media platforms provides alternative possibilities for voicing political ideas and building political movements outside of the classical institutions. In accordance with the complexity of the subject, the articles in this issue of *gender forum* engage with the interplay of gender and politics from diverse perspectives.

2 In “Gender Politics With Margaret Thatcher: Vulnerability and Toughness”, Anneke Ribberink traces the history of one of the most controversial political figures in British history. Referring to biographical sources and historical data, the author foregrounds the pressure inflicted upon Thatcher as a female leader in a specifically gendered historical and cultural environment, and analyses Thatcher’s political performance of toughness in the context of the patriarchal system in which she rose to power. Indeed, Ribberink claims “that Margaret Thatcher’s career can best be understood when interpreted as a combination of vulnerability and toughness, in which toughness was a shield against vulnerability.”

3 In contradistinction to Ribberink's investigation into the performative implications of female political leadership, Anna Schober's article, “Undoing Gender revisited”, probes into questions of parody as performative strategy of subversion within politics. Drawing on theories by Judith Butler, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri Anna Schober reflects upon the promises and limitations of subversive performances in an altered political landscape where “each individual is able to participate in various collective bodies at the same time and is inclined to change affiliations more quickly and more often.” According to Schober the change of the premises of politics because of the diversification and de-institutionalisation of fields of collective action, can be linked to a new impact of “lifestyle, i.e. a refined exhibition of differences in dressing-up, self-performance, inhabiting space and referring to aesthetic traditions (which) has become more important for the fabrication of connectivity.”

4 This phenomenon is taken up in Jianxin Liu’s article on “Gendered performances and norms in Chinese personal blogs”, showing how Internet blogs have become *the* preferred sites of personal lifestyle exhibition and self-performance. The author's analysis of popular blogs proves in how far “[p]erformances of gendered identities in Chinese personal blogs are

intertwined with or even constitutive of, power relations and struggles in Chinese society.” Thus the individual blogs can turn into political platforms building subversive collectives.

5 Anne Lauppe-Dunbar’s excerpt from her forthcoming novel, *Dark Mermaids*, provides yet another take on the complex interplay of politics and gender, as the book is based on the doping scam ‘Theme 14.25’ in the former German Democratic Republic. The extract featured in this issue takes the form of a flashback, condensing the sinister atmosphere set out in the novel’s first chapter, which was published in our most recent issue “Private Eye, Public Eye”.