

AUSTRALIAN BOOK REVIEW

GENDER FELLOWSHIP

Guidelines

WHO CAN APPLY?

Any writer with a publication record (books, creative writing, essays or journalism) is eligible. Applicants must be Australian citizens or have permanent resident status in Australia. *ABR* staff and Board members are ineligible. Contributors to the magazine are encouraged to apply.

WHAT IS *ABR* OFFERING?

The Fellow will receive \$7,500, divided thus – \$3,000 on commencement of the Fellowship and \$4,500 on publication. The Fellow will receive one economy return airfare to Melbourne (if necessary). No contribution to accommodation costs is possible. The Fellow will work closely with the Editor of *ABR*.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

During the course of the Fellowship, the Fellow will produce a non-fiction article of 6,000 to 8,000 words on gender in contemporary Australian creative writing in all its forms. (See over for more details about the Fellowship.) A firm requirement will be the completion of the article within four months of acceptance. The article will appear in both the print and online editions of *ABR*. The Fellow will also be available for media coverage and a promotional event. The Fellow will not write elsewhere about the subject during the course of the Fellowship.

FAMILIARITY WITH *AUSTRALIAN BOOK REVIEW*

Applicants must demonstrate considerable familiarity with *ABR* – its style, its tenor, its direction. If you are not familiar with the magazine you should become so before applying. Previous Fellowship articles will give you a clear sense as to how we present these major features. Visit our [website](#) to purchase copies or to [subscribe](#) to the print edition or *ABR Online*.

SELECTION PROCESS

The Fellow will be chosen by Anne Edwards, Andrea Goldsmith, and Peter Rose. We will announce the decision in February 2017. No correspondence will be entered into once the decision has been announced. *ABR* reserves the right not to award a Fellowship in a particular round.

HOW TO APPLY?

Send us a succinct but comprehensive proposal (2–3 pages maximum), plus a CV of no more than two pages. Note that we are looking for proposals – not finished articles or chapters. Applications must be received by 1 February 2017. There is no application fee. Applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss their proposals with the Editor before submitting them:
(03) 9699 8822 or editor@australianbookreview.com.au

SUBMIT PROPOSALS TO:

fellowships@australianbookreview.com.au

CLOSING DATE

1 February 2017

GENDER IN CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIAN CREATIVE WRITING

What forms do the representations of women and men, and of gender and gender relations take in contemporary literature? In respect to film and theatre, claims are made that men's imaginations, perspectives on life, and existential concerns still dominate characterisations of women and their experiences continue to be largely the creations of men. Parallel criticisms have been mounted about the lack of diversity more generally applying to both characters and actors in contemporary Western cinema.

Women writers are to be found in substantial numbers in most if not all literary genres, and evidence suggests that their fiction is no less likely than that of men to be published and reviewed in the main media. But a simple count of authors by sex tells us little about the nature, quality, and style of the writing, or about the content in terms of choice and treatment of subjects and the portrayal of male and female characters and their relationships. The cultural lenses through which writers and readers (and publishers and critics) see the world continue to be heavily influenced by beliefs, attitudes, and assumptions about gender and gender differences which are then reflected in the portrayal of men and women as characters in fiction.

This rarely takes the form of simple gender stereotyping along traditional dualistic lines. But, since relations between men and women are a universal feature of literature, how the men and women characters are represented is of fundamental significance. Certainly there is far greater variability and complexity in the range of characters of each sex that writers now create (and which extends to the more complex LBGTI gender and sexual identities our society today recognises), and if one character seems to be close to a standard stereotyped female or male, this is likely to be deliberate and for a particular purpose, rather than the unthinking projection of a taken-for-granted cultural form.

While in modern times gender may be manifested in much more subtle and diverse ways, it retains the power to shape a work of fiction, infuse the narrative, and affect the intellectual and emotional responses of the readers, who come to the book as themselves gendered beings.

What are some of the different ways that writers create and make use of these more diverse and nuanced constructions of gender? Are there gender differences between (some) male and (some) female writers in the forms that this can take? Are there gender-based patterns to be discerned between female and male writers in different literary genres? What examples are there of creative writing that seeks to ignore or go beyond gender as a determinant of a human being's character and existence?

The primary focus for this fellowship is gender in contemporary Australian creative writing in all its forms. While this is a substantial topic in itself, the scope may be broadened by including a comparative dimension and considering Australian writing in previous periods or contemporary fiction in other English-speaking countries.