

Editorial note

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On 24 March 2014 we celebrated the first volume of *Gender Questions* with a launch that took place in Kgorong. This well-attended event included addresses by Prof Moeketsi, the Executive Dean of the College of Human Sciences, as well as Prof Labuschagne, the Executive Director of Research and Innovation at the University of South Africa. All the speakers acknowledged the challenges involved in launching a new journal, and they were impressed by the intellectual rigour and the assortment of topics that characterised the first volume.

The second volume of *Gender Questions* once again testifies to the impact that Gender Studies scholarship continues to have on a wide range of academic disciplines. This is evident both in the research articles and the book reviews we have selected for this issue. Feminist and queer theory has profoundly enriched scholarly engagements in spheres ranging from criminology to literary studies. Its influence can be felt in seemingly diverse areas: It has shaped the construction of identities, as well as the ways in which we read poetry, for instance.

A number of the articles focus on the gendered politics of representation. Jeffrey Allen Nall turns a critical gaze on representations of childbirth in contemporary American television shows and films. María Martínez Lirola explores the dynamics that shape the representation of immigrant women in the Spanish context. Given South Africa's unfortunate experiences with xenophobic violence, this article lends an international voice to a conversation that remains an important one in our local context. Literary representation is scrutinised in Deirdre Byrne's article on contemporary South African women's poetry. Amritesh Singh interrogates representational strategies in a context that is far removed, both spatially and temporally, namely the Elizabethan era in England. The fact that Gender Studies scholarship can be utilised to shed light on texts produced in such different spaces further speaks to its theoretical reach and malleability. Although she focuses on another British writer, Zita Farkas' article is primarily concerned with the politics of reception. In order to enrich the Gender Studies debate, we have deliberately selected a mix of local and international gender researchers. In Livhuhani Manyatshe and Mzikazi Nduna's contribution, the context shifts back to Johannesburg in an article that deals with mothers' disclosure of paternity.

The fluidity of gendered identities informs the book review of *Changing gay male identities*, while the fascinating field of feminist criminology is the topic of another book review. Gender Studies remains alive and well, as modules that are taught as part of undergraduate and postgraduate-level university courses. We at the University of South Africa are particularly proud of the cutting-edge, interdisciplinary Honours degree in Gender Studies, which is coordinated by the Institute for Gender Studies. Two of the book reviews deal with texts that are useful for lecturers who teach such courses: One review is of an entry-level text that covers the basics of Gender Studies, while the other can also be a resource for postgraduate students. The latter text, *Feminist theory reader*:

Local and global perspectives, reflects the spread between local and global viewpoints that our article selection also aims to achieve.