

British Masculinity in the 'Gentleman's Magazine', 1731 – 1815 By Gillian Williamson. Palgrave Macmillan (£63 hardback)

This is a great post with which to kick off 2016, for all readers who believe the history of early modern and 18thC women should be considered (and practised) as part of a broader history of sex and gender. WSG member [Gillian Williamson](#) has published her study [*British Masculinity in the 'Gentleman's Magazine', 1731-1815*](#) with Palgrave Macmillan (£63 hardback). Gillian is an independent historian. She read classics at the University of Cambridge then worked in corporate finance. She returned to academic study after editing a lottery-funded local history book.

Launched in 1731, the monthly Gentleman's Magazine was the dominant periodical of the 18thC, drawing its large readership from across the literate population of Great Britain and the English-speaking world. Its readers were highly responsive. By the 1740s their letters, poems and family announcements, especially obituaries, filled at least half its pages, sitting alongside articles by a circle that included [Samuel Johnson](#). It was a Georgian social network as readers engaged in a continuous dialogue with each other, but not all these readers were as comfortably established as gentlemen as the title implied.

Gillian's study traces how, from launch to the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, the magazine developed as a vehicle for the creation and national dissemination of a new middling-sort masculine gentlemanliness in a Britain that was increasingly commercial, fluid and open. You can read a sample chapter [here](#).