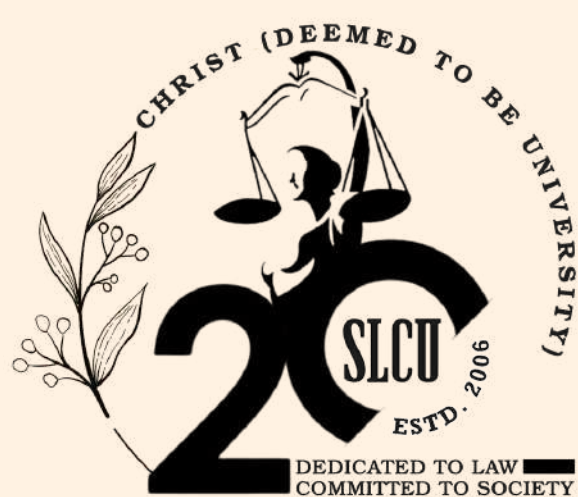




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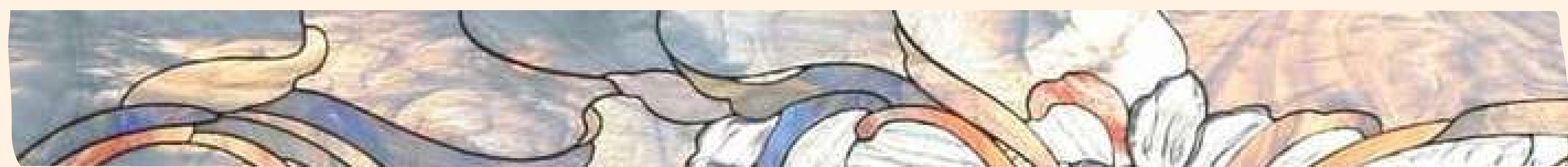


FLUID

NEWSLETTER #6

GENDER AND WAR







ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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SCHOOL OF LAW

School *of* Law is a part of CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bangalore. The parent University, an educational institution, is an academic fraternity dedicated to the motto of 'Excellence and Service' and has an already proven history of success in education. CHRIST (Deemed to be University), formerly Christ College, is the first institution in Karnataka to be accredited by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), UGC, and currently has an A+ grade as accredited in 2022 for quality education. School of Law is an institute imparting legal education not only to students from various parts of the country but also from the Middle East and Mauritius. The courses are approved by the Bar Council of India.



GENDER STUDIES COMMITTEE

The Gender Studies Committee at the School *of* Law, CHRIST (Deemed to be) University endeavours to create a space for students to unlearn indoctrinated ideas, engage in thoughtful discussions on gender identity, feminism and queer theory, and deliberate on issues that are at the intersection between "the private" and "the public". The Committee involves itself in framing policies, reviewing legislation, and collaborating with national and state-level interdisciplinary departments, ministries and commissions. It also conducts events such as academic reading circles, guest lectures, certificate courses, and open forums. At the heart of this effort lies 'FLUID', the student-led annual newsletter, dedicated to exploring one's openness, adaptability and willingness to break down traditional binaries, and discovering the complexities and nuances of gender.



FLUID: ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

FLUID is an exercise in exploration, breaking boundaries and binaries, and challenging ourselves to think on our thinking of gender. In a highly gendered world, every choice we make interacts uniquely with the world. FLUID aims to provide a space to explore these nuances, to go beyond the confines of academic curricula to freely express opinions, views, beliefs, and conceptions regarding the world. It acts as a medium to expand the pool of knowledge around the reality of gender and sexuality in the world through academic and creative endeavours. The team behind FLUID underscores its commitment to personal autonomy when it comes to defining oneself, in consort with a resistance to predetermined labels.



SUGGESTED THEMES

i. The Effects of Western Imperialism on Gender and the Third World

Western imperialism largely describes women from the apparent “third world” or “Global south” nations, (phrases employed to generate social classification) as weak and marginalised and hence, in need of Western intervention to improve their condition or status. The aforementioned presumption obscures the agencies, lived realities and experiences of women. This sub-theme investigates the methods that certain powerful nations utilise to pull a veil of feminist ideas, contemporary trends such as pinkwashing and LGBTQ+ rights, on their military, demographic and geopolitical agendas in nations that apparently lack the superior norms and standards of egalitarian approaches. The concept also explores the unnecessary trajectories of the fetishisation and exotication of women, where their identities are reduced to mere victims of oppression, tradition or hypersexuality. Through this motif, we invite critical and constructive engagement to understand how the third-world nations have taken adequate measures to resist Western



imperialist imposition with respect to gender equality, redefine their perceptions and norms about the same and lastly, reclaim their rights over their own contextual narratives, thereby not imitating or borrowing from alien frameworks.

ii. Historical Warrior Women: The Disconnect Between the Mythology and the Power Conceded

History has long been a paradox in its treatment of women. Throughout the passage of time, there have been stories about queens who led armies and ruled kingdoms, goddesses who have been the embodiment of power and strength, and warrior women who have conquered empires. Their stories have been passed down from one generation to another and their names, immortalised in the form of folklore, literature and traditions. In mythology and culture, a woman is given a substantial amount of power, given the virtues of knowledge, wisdom and immense strength. Despite these depictions, real world society is famously known to deny women equal political authority, basic rights and respect and social autonomy. This sub-theme explores why it is that humanity projects such traits onto women in folklore, but the second they are displayed by women in everyday life, it



something to question. If societies were capable of imagining, celebrating, and even venerating women as leaders and protectors, why were these ideals so rarely reflected in the lives of ordinary women? The answer to this question is not simply about the patriarchy, but the way history has considered these women as exceptions to the general population rather than examples. We see how their achievements were admired, but challenged the prevailing ideals of women in society. The distinction between symbolic recognition and substantive empowerment remains deeply relevant, revealing a significant disconnect between cultural ideals and social realities.

iii. The Politics of Armed Struggles of Women and Queer Groups: the Obligation of “Righteousness”

The myth of the “perfect victim” is one that haunts the marginalized. While there are groups that openly oppress them, there are also those who acknowledge the oppression, but police the responses of the said marginalized communities. With women, they are branded ‘difficult’ when they fight for their rights, and for the queer community, they are ‘deviant’ and ‘dangerous’. Through this sub-theme, we aim to explore the



assumptions that govern the reception of feminist and queer groups that do not fit into a neat box of righteousness, of non-violence and peaceful protest. It looks at the credibility afforded to movements such as the suffrage movement or the Stonewall riots by their contemporaries, as well as our perception of them in retrospect. We also look into the politics behind the support and visibility given to modern movements when they do not fit the mould and take up arms, the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of demands when they are asked for ‘nicely’ and in a pacifistic manner, and the compromises made by groups in order to maintain respectability.

iv. Codes of Conduct of Warfare: Protections Afforded to Women and Children

The Geneva Convention was not the beginning of legally enforceable Codes of Conduct for Combatants in War; it is merely an evolution in a series of codes before it, from Dueling Laws in the Victorian era to the Japanese Bushido Code, all of which presuppose their wordings as the source via which “Honour”, according to them, emanates. Through this Sub-Theme, we seek to explore the impact and views of these



codes” on gender. This includes protections for Women and Children, inclusion of Gender Minorities such as transgender individuals, and the legal repercussions of breaking such laws. The sub-theme will also explore whether such Honour Codes are actually practiced in reality or were treated as mere de jure pieces of paper to glorify the state and assert its moral superiority over its enemies; how such Honour-Codes often, in the aim of “protecting women,” reduced them down to objects of conquest and protection rather than capable and independent human beings, and how such ideals of “Honour” affect gender and law in today’s Conflicts.

v. The Exploits of National Armies Beyond the Battlefield and their Costs to Civilians

Civilians are the greatest sufferers in war. The costs suffered by these civilians are heavily outweighed by the goals that national armies set out to achieve in war. With wars raging across the globe affecting the lives of countless innocent civilians, the greed of those in power continues to subject vulnerable groups like women and children to more violence. This subtheme explores the impact of the exploits of national armies on women and



children to more violence. This subtheme explores the impact of the exploits of national armies on women and children. Army forces exploit civilian women by using sexual violence and torture as a weapon, forced labour and survival exploitation. These grave issues can be brought under this sub theme. We also examine the systematic assertion of domination over each other imposed by national armies, in a quest to prove that they are on the right side, often leading to great harms to the civilians on either side. Armies also project their dominance in several ways that go beyond the battlefield, such as Economic drain, Damage to infrastructure, Displacement and refugee crisis, Psychological Trauma and Diversion of supplies and Aid. These are areas that can be explored more on.

vi. Gendered Propaganda and Gender as a Tool of Propaganda in War

From Uncle Sam to Bharat Mata, gender roles have been eternally exploited by states around the world for the purpose of morale boosting and resonating with the ingrained and socialized sense of gender. This varies from calling on men's masculinity to project strength and dominance on "un-masculine" opponents



protect one's "Mother Land from 'Savages.'" This sub-Theme aims to untangle the use of Gender Stereotypes from War Propaganda and examines the causes, motives, impacts, and examples of gender being used as a propagandistic tool in war. This analysis of propaganda ranges from wartime posters, speeches, television campaigns, pamphlets, military strategies, and memorandums to increase the number of recruits in the army. Though this Sub-theme does not limit itself to propaganda created by the military, but extends to the Zeitgeist and Pop-culture at the time of War – how it portrays Gender, who does it see fit to serve the Nation on the Frontlines, for what cause, and who must stay behind. The Sub-theme also aims to explore how gender has changed across generations, and how the propaganda that relies on it has changed with it, to always make sure they are in parity.

vii. Mental Health Dynamics in Post-War Situations

Wars, battles, conflicts and disputes have a long-lasting impact on the parties or individuals who are not directly participating in or transacting with the major forces. An instance of this is the deeply embedded trauma of the post-partition displacement in



country, which involved the maiming, sexual harassment and inhuman treatment of women, who were treated not as humans, but as objects, means to fulfil desires or to feed into majoritarianism. This sub-theme explores the interdisciplinarity of mental health and gender equality in post-war societies. Additionally, it examines how conflict-related traumas, displacements, violence, loss of livelihoods, food crises, inaccessibility to education, and other emerging social trends have disproportionately affected gender-diverse individuals in distinct ways, including economic statuses, employability, political participation and so on. This topic also emphasises the need to establish structures of transformative justice, community leadership and collective rehabilitation for those who have witnessed such atrocities either directly or indirectly. Lastly, through the attention of readers to this subject matter, we aim to reconstruct social practices so as to promote justice, equality, dignity, mental, and physical well-being.

viii. The Physical Infrastructure of Armies: The Implicit Exclusion of Women

When we think about the Army, Navy or the Air Force, our



naturally gravitate towards men. This is not because women or people of other genders are not as capable, or as competent, but because, for a very long time the military has been a “man’s profession”. Although history has seen several powerful women rulers and leaders, such as Rani Lakshmibai, or even Queen Victoria, for that matter, they were the exceptions rather than the norm. Most military institutions were trained and led by men, while women were expected to support them by working as nurses, cooks and so on, and this has shaped the way military institutions developed and how they are today. Everything, right from the barracks, training equipment and even medical equipment, was made keeping an average male body in mind, and even though time has progressed, and women have entered the armed forces, and many are being encouraged to serve in different parts of the military, the infrastructure hasn’t evolved at the same pace. While there has been an undeniable improvement, they still face several challenges in providing gender-inclusive equipment and training, which not only tend to women, but also to those of other genders. Through this sub-theme, we would like to explore all the challenges faced by women in the armed forces, how even though women are now permitted to be a part of the military, the



of proper infrastructure drives them away and how proper infrastructural development and gender- appropriate training will normalise armies with a multitude of people carrying on their profession in a safe and dignified manner.

ix. Women, Peace and the Security Agenda

Peace is a lot more than the mere absence of war and battle. It can mean dignity of people, safety and freedom of people. Keeping this in mind, the UN introduced the WPS Agenda- the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in the year 2000 through the Security Council Resolutions 1325. It centers women, not just as the victims of war, but as agents capable of being leaders, decision makers and peacemakers. This sub-theme explores how women are often collateral damage during wars. They endure the loss of their family members, sexual violence and destitution. An example may be the state of the women during the Partition of India in 1947. Many of these women suffered life long trauma- both mental, and emotional. Another ongoing situation, is the unfortunate state of the women and young girls in Afghanistan, experiencing heinous restrictions on their fundamental rights and freedoms. We also explore how women are very often the



vulnerable and prone to heinous crimes during conflicts, but their needs or their opinions are rarely considered in peace negotiations and peace-building exercises. The WPS Agenda was brought about to protect women during conflicts and encourage them to participate in peace-making. Through our sub-theme, we would like to examine why it is important to include women in peace-making, how war affects men, women and soldiers differently, how women's participation can impact long lasting peace and security and more.



CONTRIBUTOR'S GUIDELINES

We invite submissions from interested contributors in any academic, literary or creative format. Where they fall into the following categories, the below-mentioned guidelines are to be adhered to:

Articles and Opinion Pieces

1. Font Style: Garamond,
2. Body Font Size: 12,
3. Headings Font Size: 14,
4. Line Spacing: 1.5, Justified format
5. Citation Style: 21st Edn. Bluebook (for legal articles), 7th Edn. APA (for interdisciplinary or humanities papers)

Short Stories and Poems

1. Font Style: Garamond,
2. Body Font Size: 12,
3. Line Spacing: 1.5



Art and Photography

1. High Resolution Image, 800 - 5000 pixels on the longest side
2. File Format: JPG/JPEG
3. Maximum File Size: 5MB
4. Photographs must have appropriate lighting and be shot with a high resolution camera or smartphone, without watermarks

General Notes

1. Co-authorship is permitted
2. If any contributor wishes to maintain anonymity for the purpose of publication, kindly inform the Editorial Board at the time of submission and the same will be duly noted and respected.
3. All submissions must be emailed to the Editorial Board at newsletterteamgsc@gmail.com with the following details:
4. Author(s) Name, Course Name and University Details (if applicable)/Institutional Affiliation.



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The Editorial Board shall consist of the Committee Members, Conveners and Faculty Coordinators of the Gender Studies Committee, School *of* Law, CHRIST (Deemed to be University). The acceptance of submissions is subject to approval by the Editorial Board of the Committee. All decisions taken by the Board will be final.

The Editorial Board retains the exclusive right to reject any submissions it deems necessary. While all forms of creativity are encouraged, student contributors are expected to adhere to the ethics and guidelines of the University.



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PLAGIARISM AND AI POLICY

There is a strict prohibition of both plagiarism and the use of Generative AI in the creation of submissions to the newsletter. A threshold of 10% is set for plagiarism to account for quotes and similar phrasing, and a threshold of 15% is set for AI-generated content to filter out false positives. Any plagiarised or AI-generated work shall be immediately rejected by the Editorial Board.

Being able to produce original work is a gift.



**“AT THE END OF THE DAY, EVERYTHING IS
GENDERED AND IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY
TO, IF NOTHING ELSE, SEE IT.”**