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McCann, Lucy (2024) Gender and Sexuality Reading Group discussion on February 29 2024 - Review of Moulton's article "'Both Your Sexes'". Other. Birkbeck, University of London. (Unpublished)

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First meeting of the new Gender and Sexuality Reading Group

The first meeting of the new Gender and Sexuality Reading Group took place on Tuesday 29 February and featured a stimulating discussion of **Mo Moulton's** 2023 article **“Both Your Sexes”: A Non-Binary Approach to Gender History, Trans Studies and the Making of the Self in Modern Britain.**¹

Our conversation centred on Moulton's idea of a 'non-binary methodology'. We discussed the challenges we face when researching the past around terminology that might be disrespectful today, and also how Moulton's methodology can be used in disciplines other than history. We considered how, and indeed whether, Moulton's idea of a non-binary methodology adds to our existing understandings of gender as a category of analysis. It was noted that the article relies on an analysis of masculinity vs. femininity and uses the binary lens of “both your sexes”.

We also reflected on Moulton's choice of Byrne as a subject. We discussed how Byrne led us to question the distinction that is often drawn between inner selfhood and external performance and how these often interact for individuals' construction of the self.

We also assessed the potential limitations inherent in the use of a white, middle-class, western subject. We noted the importance of co-constitutive identities that coincide with gender such as race and neurodivergence and how these affect how we experience gender. We discussed whether a non-binary methodology needs to account for these intersecting identities in order to be truly expansive.

Finally, we discussed how the piece led us to re-think aspects of our own research. We noted that our caution around the perceived need for a higher standard of evidence to read that a historical figure may be transgressing gender boundaries may lead us to neglect following this as a line of inquiry.

We welcome suggestions for readings for the next GSRG meeting which will be scheduled for late April/early May. We're opening up the group to postgraduate students from external institutions, so please pass on the email addresses of any colleagues or friends who might be interested.

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¹ Mo Moulton, “Both Your Sexes”: A Non-Binary Approach to Gender History, Trans Studies and the Making of the Self in Modern Britain’, *History Workshop Journal*, Vol. 95 (Spring 2023), pp.75–100.