

Statement of Values about Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment

As part of its mission, the Society for Historians of the Early American Republic is committed to fostering a democratic ethos in scholarship and cultivating close, respectful, and productive exchanges between serious scholars at every level of experience and recognition. The Society recognizes that a truly democratic and respectful ethos values the inherent worth and dignity of every person, encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her potential, and fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members. SHEAR is committed to fostering a scholarly community free from discrimination based upon race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, or status as a veteran.

Discrimination occurs when a person or group repeatedly uses remarks, behaviors, or practices to show intolerance against an individual's race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, or status as a veteran. For example:

- Making jokes, insinuations, slurs, or humiliating comments based upon an individual's identity.
- Criticizing or displaying intolerance in regards to an individual's differences, including his or her accent, clothing, customs, and beliefs.
- Denying opportunities based upon an individual's identity.

In upholding the highest intellectual standards of the historical profession and encouraging the broad diffusion of historical insights, SHEAR acknowledges that ideas or words from the era and topics that we study are ethically problematic in the twenty-first century. We also recognize that such ideas and words may be used in contexts that serve legitimate scholarly purposes. Still, dedication to scholarly rigor is not a legitimate defense in the case of bona fide discrimination.

The Society also is committed to fostering a scholarly community free from sexual harassment, recognizing specifically the ways in which unwanted and unwelcomed sexual contact harms the lives and often the careers of those subjected to it. A victim of sexual harassment can be a man or a woman. The victim can be of the same sex as the harasser. Sexual harassment also injures the discipline: talented individuals become limited in fulfilling their potential as they avoid places and people in order to feel safe, limiting their contributions to our collective intellectual work and reinforcing ongoing inequities within the profession.

Unwelcomed actions such as the following, even though not unlawful in and of themselves, are unacceptable in SHEAR settings, whether conveyed through spoken or written word, including e-mail, text messages, and social media:

- Verbal interactions of a sexual nature;
- Touching or grabbing of a sexual nature;
- Repeatedly standing too close to or brushing up against a person;
- Repeatedly asking a person to socialize when the person has said "no" or has indicated he or she is not interested;

- Jokes, teasing, insinuations, gestures, and humiliating comments or remarks of a sexual nature.

Discrimination and harassment offend the Society's core values which include a commitment to the open exchange of ideas, freedom of thought and expression, and equal opportunity and inclusion. By fostering dignity, understanding, mutual respect, and diversity, Society members and guests will contribute to a more democratic, respectful, and productive environment that recognizes the inherent worth and dignity of every person.