

GRACE KARSKENS

Keynote Address

Men, women, sex and desire: family history on Australia's first frontier

Abstract

This will present some of the findings of her research on relationships, marriage and families in the early settler community at Castlereagh, on the Nepean River in New South Wales. Why did people want to get married? What impact did the shortage of women have on the marriage stakes in early colonial New South Wales? What happened when older men married fourteen and fifteen year old girls? What about the fact that there were so many young convict men around? How big were their families and what became of all those children? And how far were men and women prepared to go for love and passion?