

Fitzwilliam College History Essay Competition 2024

Fitzwilliam College is pleased to announce its third annual Essay Competition in History. We invite applicants to send in essays of **no more than 2,500 words** on the following theme:

1869

Fitzwilliam College traces its origins to 1869, when the University of Cambridge launched an initiative to facilitate access to Higher Education for the many students who could not afford the costs of college membership. The initiative was part of the broader transformation of education in Britain, as the changes wrought by industrialisation and urbanisation created a need to cater for a growing, increasingly diverse and literate population. Earlier decades had already witnessed the establishment of King's College London, Durham University, and the University of London, for instance, and colleges for women were beginning to open in Cambridge and Oxford. These radical social and economic changes were themselves connected to the intensification of globalisation in the second half of the nineteenth century, which placed Britain at the heart of an ever-tighter web of economic relations between the world's continents.

But the same year also witnessed the birth of Mohandas – later Mahatma – Gandhi, who would come to challenge Britain's colonial rule and lead India on the path to independence; the death of Alphonse de Lamartine, the poet and politician who had proudly proclaimed France's Second Republic in 1848, but whose final years were lived under the more authoritarian Second Empire; the marriage of Emperor Meiji, which consolidated Japan's monarchy as the country began a new process of industrialisation; and the establishment by Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton of the National Woman Suffrage Association in a United States still recovering from the Civil War.

In 1869, as throughout history, old and new worlds collided. We invite applicants to examine, in their essays, a topic of their choice, connected to the changes taking place in or around the year 1869. Essays may focus on a particular event, a person, a political movement, or even a process of social, economic or cultural change, but they should consider the interaction of 'old' and 'new' forces which the chosen topic illuminates.

Competition Rules

This essay competition is for students in their penultimate year of education - Year 12 (Eng + Wales), S5 (Scotland), Y13 (NI) or equivalent overseas. International applicants are welcomed but the essay must be written in English. Applicants will be required to enter their details online and to either upload one PDF copy of their essay electronically **or** post a hard copy to:

Schools Liaison Officer
Fitzwilliam College
Cambridge
CB3 0DG

by **6pm on Friday 1st of March 2024**. If the PDF file is too large to submit to the online form, please email your submission to essaycompetitions@fitz.cam.ac.uk. Further submission information can be found on the essay competition website: <https://www.fitz.cam.ac.uk/admissions/events-prospective-students/essay-competitions>.

Your submission must be entirely your own work. When submitting your essay you will need to provide contact information for one of your teachers and if necessary we may contact them to verify that your submission is entirely your own work. Students are only permitted to enter one competition and may only submit one entry to their chosen competition. There is a strict limit of five submissions per school for each essay competition. If more than five students from the same school enter the same competition, a teacher from that school will be contacted and asked to select the five entries; failure to do so will result in all submissions from the school to that competition being disqualified.

Essays should be less than 2500 words long, and contain a list of works consulted and cited at the end. This bibliography is excluded from the word limit, but any footnotes are included. Guidance on referencing is available on the website. Applicants must ensure that pages are numbered and that their full name is on each page.

Prizes:

The prize fund (per competition) is £300 with a first prize of £200 and highly commended applicants being awarded a £25 book voucher. A prizegiving ceremony will be held in summer 2024.

For further information about the competition please contact:

essaycompetitions@fitz.cam.ac.uk.

For questions about the History course, please contact:

admissions@fitz.cam.ac.uk.