

Gender Studies Programme, The Chinese University of Hong Kong Mini Conference of UG and MA Theses in Gender Studies 2026

Abstracts

UG Thesis

可愛、被控與被消費：日系地下偶像的性別表演

Presenter: CHAN Lok Yin

Abstract: TBC

From Stove to Camera: Rural Female Short-video Bloggers' Skill Transformation, Domestic Power Shifts and Gender Negotiation

Presenter: CHEN Yuanrou

Abstract:

Short-video platforms (Douyin, Kuaishou) have rapidly proliferated across China, enabling rural women to transition from the private domestic sphere symbolised by the “stove” to the public digital domain symbolised by the “camera”. This qualitative study examines how becoming short-video creators transforms rural Chinese women's skills, domestic power dynamics, and gender negotiations. Findings reveal that while content creation brings tangible transformations, such as new capabilities, income streams, and heightened visibility, but these changes remain shaped by familial dynamics, community norms, and platform algorithms. Empowerment, though real, remains incomplete, with structural inequalities persistently constraining comprehensive transformation. This research not only deepens feminist scholarship on digital labour but also offers practical insights for platform operators, policymakers, and development organisations.

Is This Really a Choice? Generational Differences in Gender Negotiation Between Autonomy and Discipline Among Middle-Class Housewives in Urban China

Presenter: HU Ziyang

Abstract:

This thesis examines how middle-class housewives in Hong Kong and Guangdong negotiate the meanings of autonomy, care, and gendered responsibility in everyday family life. Women's withdrawal from the labour market is often interpreted either as a result of structural gender inequality or as an individual lifestyle choice. However, less attention has been paid to how women themselves narrate and justify the decision to become housewives. The thesis focuses on generational differences in how women understand and legitimize this life arrangement within middle-class family contexts. The research adopts a qualitative approach based on semi-structured interviews with housewives across a range of ages. By analysing women's narratives of choice, motherhood, and responsibility, the thesis will examine how autonomy and gender norms are negotiated in the construction of contemporary housewife identity.

Role Conflict and Stereotypes of Female Taekwondo Athletes

Presenter: HUI Ming Yin

Abstract:

This study explores the role conflict and stereotypes faced by female Taekwondo athletes, a sport traditionally perceived as masculine due to its emphasis on strength and aggression. Despite growing female participation and international success, these athletes often encounter societal expectations that contradict the qualities required in Taekwondo, such as fierceness and resilience. Using qualitative methods, including interviews and observations with five female athletes and coaches at different career stages, this research investigates how they navigate identity, societal perceptions, and gender bias. It also examines broader questions about whether women's involvement in masculine sports challenges or reflects evolving societal values. The findings aim to contribute to discussions on gender equality, diversity, and the evolving role of women in competitive sports.

Gendered Space and Spatial Injustice: The Politics of Public Toilet Provision in Urban Hong Kong

Presenter: LAU Chun Kin

Abstract:

Access to public toilets is a basic but often overlooked dimension of urban equity. In Hong Kong, queues outside women's toilets in shopping centres, transit stations, and public venues are a routine experience, indicating that "equal" provision does not necessarily result in equal access. Although building standards often assume a 1:1 male-female provision ratio, this approach does not account for gendered differences in time spent in toilets and reliance on cubicles, shaped by physiological factors (e.g., menstruation and pregnancy), social expectations, and caregiving responsibilities. Drawing on literature on public toilet inequity and gendered space (e.g., Greed, 2003; Chan, 2010), this thesis examines how male and female users perceive the adequacy and fairness of public toilet access in urban Hong Kong. Using qualitative data from semi-structured interview or two focus group discussions (around 7 participants), and analysing the data through Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis, the study compares experiences of waiting, cleanliness, privacy, comfort, and perceived safety. It also considers user responses to relevant policy documents and standards (e.g., FEHD guidelines and the Director of Audit's report), contributing user-centred evidence for more gender-sensitive toilet planning and management.

A study of women's roles and body discipline in Charlie Kirk's anti-abortion rhetoric

Presenter: LEONG Wing Shan

Abstract:

Following the U.S. Supreme Court's 2022 decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, conservative youth leader Charlie Kirk (2022–2025) described women's bodies in his anti-abortion speeches as something that must carry moral responsibility, not as fully free or autonomous. He often

stressed fetal personhood and told women to “take responsibility” for their sexual choices and results. This study uses Foucault’s ideas on body control and biopower, together with feminist ways to analyze language, to examine how Kirk’s words push women back into traditional roles like mother and wife, while weakening women’s right to control their own bodies. The research looks at selected parts from his YouTube debates, campus talks, and interviews. Findings show how conservative talk after 2022 controls young women’s bodies and thoughts. This helps understand gender power issues in today’s American politics, especially in the post-Roe context.

Exploring Discrimination Against Women in Sports Participation in Hong Kong: Experiences, Forms, and Influences

Presenter: LIN Keqin

Abstract:

Hong Kong’s sports development is boosted by relevant popularization and elite cultivation policies, yet prominent gender disparities in women’s sports participation and deep-rooted gender discrimination remain underexplored in systematic qualitative research. Existing studies focus more on participation rate gaps than the discriminatory roots, lacking in-depth analysis of women’s subjective experiences and the cultural-social underpinnings of such bias. Adopting semi-structured interviews with 15-20 Hong Kong women of diverse ages, sports involvement and backgrounds, this qualitative study explores the specific forms of gender discrimination in their daily sports participation, its impacts on their continued sports willingness, and the underlying social-cultural factors via thematic analysis. It aims to fill the local research gap, amplify women’s voices, and provide empirical evidence for promoting a more gender-inclusive sports environment in Hong Kong.

From 2D Romance to 3D Desire: Gender, Consumption, and the Gray Zone of the Otome Game Economy

Presenter: SIT Hiu Nam

Abstract:

This research examines how intimacy in otome games extends from virtual romance into offline commercial practices in contemporary China. Focusing on paid cosplay commissions and otome-themed nightclub events, it explores how “2D” affective attachment is transformed into “3D” embodied consumption. Drawing on a gender studies perspective, the research investigates why women participants seek emotional fulfillment, companionship, and desire through these commercialized interactions, and how such practices are shaped by broader patriarchal structures, platforms, informal economies, and gendered power relations. Methodologically, the study adopts a qualitative approach, combining semi-structured online interviews with women who have paid cosers to accompany them on dates or who have participated in otome-related nightclub activities. The data are then analyzed thematically to examine issues of digital intimacy, emotional labor, consent, boundary negotiation, the

relationship between fan culture and nightlife, and the emergence of grey-zone economic practices.

Gender Negotiation in Intimate Relationships: The Practice and Meaning of Housework Division in Cross-border Hong Kong-Mainland Couples

Presenter: TANG Fai Yuen Tom

Abstract:

This study examines how Hong Kong–Mainland cross-border couples navigate everyday domestic life amid the structural asymmetries of cross-border marriage. Drawing on legal violence theory, emotional labour theory, and the micropolitics of power, the research introduces "emotional translation" to capture the work of mediating language, culture, and bureaucratic systems across borders. Based on dyadic interviews with couples at different migration stages, the analysis reveals how immigration status shapes daily interactions—who speaks, who labours, and whose arguments carry weight during conflicts. The findings show that legal asymmetries become woven into intimate life, with patterns established during the waiting period often persisting beyond it. By shifting focus from marriage formation to ongoing domestic negotiation, this research illuminates how structural inequalities are lived and negotiated within cross-border families.

Loving in Parallel Worlds: Emotional Paradoxes within Hong Kong's 'Wives Circle' of Yumejoshi

Presenter: WAN Hin Wing

Abstract: TBC

Gender Negotiation in Intimate Cohabitation: Experiences and Meanings among Couples in Hong Kong

Presenter: WONG Man Ngai

Abstract:

Cohabitation has become increasingly visible in many societies alongside broader transformations in family formation. However, its meanings and functions vary significantly across institutional and cultural contexts. In East Asian societies such as Hong Kong, where marriage remains a central institution linking family formation, social legitimacy, and intergenerational expectations, cohabitation often occupies an ambiguous position between informal intimacy and socially recognized partnership.

This thesis examines how young heterosexual couples in Hong Kong negotiate gender roles and relationship responsibilities in everyday cohabiting life. Drawing on qualitative data from semi-structured interviews with cohabiting couples, the study analyzes how household labour, financial arrangements, and emotional work are organized through daily interactions.

The findings suggest that gender negotiation in cohabitation rarely occurs through explicit

discussion. Instead, responsibilities gradually emerge through everyday routines, situational convenience, and ongoing relational adjustments.

Cross-case comparison identifies three patterns of cohabiting relationships—pragmatic partnership, care-based arrangement, and negotiated flexibility—illustrating how couples interpret fairness and cooperation in practice.

By focusing on everyday practices, this study contributes to a micro-level understanding of how gender norms are negotiated and reproduced within institutionally ambiguous intimate relationships in contemporary Hong Kong.

Rhetorical Compliance or Partial Shift? Women Players, Agency, and Gender in Yan Yun

Presenter: YEUNG Yan Yi, Evelyn

Abstract:

This research examines how women players articulate agency in relation to *Where Winds Meet* (Chinese: Yanyun Shiliusheng, 《燕云十六声》). It asks whether the game's apparent gender progressiveness reflects a meaningful shift in representation or a rhetorical adjustment to contemporary discourse directed at women players. The study combines textual analysis, discourse analysis, and digital ethnographic observation to examine three layers of material: the game's narrative and character construction, official promotional videos and announcements, and discussions by women players on Xiaohongshu. Rather than treating the game's appeal to women players as a stable quality, this research approaches it as a contested process shaped by textual design, platform promotion, and player interpretation. The project argues that *Where Winds Meet* demonstrates partial change in its gendered imagination, yet this change remains uneven and contradictory. At the same time, women players actively negotiate meanings of gender, subjectivity, and legitimacy in contemporary game culture.

Local Family Planning Enforcement under the One-and-a-Half-Child Policy: Intergenerational Trauma in Zhuji

Presenter: YU Zhiqi

Abstract: TBC

MA Thesis

Routinized Error-Avoidance: Young Women's Bureaucratic Media Work in China's Digital Governance

Presenter: CHEN Duhaoyu

Abstract:

Against the backdrop of China's digital governance transformation and pervasive cyber feminism, increasing numbers of young women with varying exposure to feminist ideas have been incorporated into the state's digital media apparatus as grassroots employees. In their context, they confront a paradoxical state stance: public gender equality advocacy exists alongside the rigorous censorship of feminist discourse. While existing scholarship focuses on the structural dilemmas of female officials or feminist resistance outside the system, less attention has been paid to the everyday experiences of young women working within state-affiliated media institutions. Drawing on semi-structured interviews with young female employees from central and local government media accounts, newspapers, CCTV, and CPC-affiliated outlets, this study examines how they navigate institutional and platform-based censorship in routine content production. The findings show that most respondents prioritize avoiding political errors rather than advancing gender issues, translating external censorship into anticipatory self-censorship. This bureaucratic media work tends to depoliticize feminist consciousness, although limited discursive agency occasionally emerges through subtle adjustments in language and framing within the boundaries of permissible expression.

Approximating Blood and Love: Female Violence and the Reconfiguration of Decadent Aesthetics in Ti West's X Trilogy

Presenter: XIN Gege

Abstract:

This paper examines Ti West's X film series—X (2022), Pearl (2022), and MaXXXine (2024)—and its two central female characters, investigating how the trilogy, within the context of patriarchal cinematic traditions and contemporary horror, combines decadent aesthetics with shifting gender narratives. In doing so, it revises established paradigms of feminist horror and endows decadent aesthetics with renewed gendered meanings.

Drawing on feminist horror theory and decadent aesthetics, the study conducts close readings of visual symbols, color tone, music and narrative structures, also employing the theories of *écriture féminine*. It analyzes the decadent visual style and the construction of gendered oppressive spaces across the trilogy, ultimately examining the role that violence plays within gendered narratives.

The research is guided by three central questions: (1) How do the three films respectively construct gendered spaces of oppression across different historical periods, and in what ways is a decadent aesthetic atmosphere rendered on screen? (2) How does women's use of violence to reclaim agency and subjectivity reconfigure the meanings of decadent aesthetics, and how do actresses and their characters break through the constraints of the film industry to realize a

form of *écriture féminine*?(3) What cultural and political role does violence ultimately play in gendered narratives, and how does it shape our understanding and imagination of real-world gendered violence?

Overall, this article investigates how the X trilogy, through new forms of female-centered narration in contemporary horror cinema, forges a new mode of female subjectivity within patriarchal and contemporary horror traditions, reshaping the visual and narrative construction of gendered oppressive spaces and offering a crucial case study for rethinking how we imagine and interpret gendered violence in the real world.

How discursive power is contested through Chinese content creators constructed transgender-related discourse in response to J.K. Rowling's public comments on transgender women from 2020 to 2025 on Douban and Weibo

Presenter: YAU Cho Ming

Abstract:

From 2020 to 2025, there were large discussions related to J.K. Rowling's transgender discourse on Western society, which was also introduced in Chinese social media sites Douban and Weibo, also evoking a large gender debate of transgender issues under a localized context. Douban and Weibo are the main digital public spaces that express participatory culture and translation influences on the debates and contests of discursive voices related to transgender discourse. This research examines how Chinese content creators contest discursive power through their constructions of transgender-related discourses in response to J.K. Rowling's public comments on transgender women from 2020 to 2025 on Douban and Weibo. It focuses on discourse analysis of gender debated discussions from content creators via Douban and Weibo, with the qualitative research of interviewing two groups of content creators of cisgender identities and transgender identities. The research explores how transgender issues became a complicated and conflicted narrative on Chinese digital spaces, further reflecting the discourse dynamics of the gender binary in Chinese society.

她們為什麼目光躲閃？——中國內地女性觀眾對於影視作品中的女演員裸露表演的態度研究

Presenter: YE Xinping

Abstract:

本研究在女性主義電影理論和觀眾研究的視域中，探究在中國內地的影視審查制度背景下，女性觀眾對影視作品中女性演員裸露表演的態度。在官方渠道刪改裸露畫面的情況下，女性觀眾仍能通過境外觀影、盜版資源等非正規途徑接觸相關內容，形成了一種規避制度審查的特殊觀影體驗。同時，不同女性觀眾對裸露表演的感知和理解也不同，有人對內地過審的畫面也有相似的解讀。基於此，本研究提出三個核心研究問題：內地女性觀眾如何看待審查制度對男女演員裸露畫面的區別對待？她們觀看女演員裸露表演時的心理感受如何？在審查制度對男女演員的裸露表演存在「雙標」和「一刀切」的情況下，當代女性觀眾接受怎樣的女性身體呈現與角色塑造？將以有境外出行經驗的內地

女性為研究對象，採用問卷調查、半結構化訪談和文本分析法，旨在呈現出當代內地女性觀眾批判性與情境化的觀影需求，從女性主義視角填補中國女性觀眾研究的空白。