

**Gender Studies Programme, the Chinese University of Hong Kong**  
**Mini Conference 2025 – Thesis of UG and MA in Gender Studies**  
**Abstracts**

**UG Thesis**

**Gendered Projection and Cultural Influence of Hong Kong's KOLs' Content Creation**

Presenter: Kray, Hau Chi Fung

**Abstract:**

This research explores how Hong Kong's cultural and social contexts shape KOLs' online performances and content creation, emphasizing gender perspectives. Despite numerous studies on KOLs, particularly female ones, research focusing on Hong Kong remains limited. The study adopts a qualitative approach, gathering data through participant observation and semi-structured interviews. The interviews include nine KOLs and two industry practitioners, with autoethnographic insights enriching the analysis. Key themes such as "Image Performance" and "Content Creation Dilemmas" will be examined, providing a nuanced understanding of the intersectional dimensions of KOL content creation in the Hong Kong context.

**How masculinity has been changed throughout JoJo's Bizarre Adventure**

Presenter: LEUNG Sau Kuen, Chantel

**Abstract:**

JoJo's Bizarre Adventure (JoJo) is a globally popular manga and anime series, famous for its unique style of drawing, bold colouring and unconventional character design. This manga is written and illustrated by Hirohiko Araki since 1987, and part 9 The JoJoLands is still going on. Because of its cultural significance, there is limited academic research on JoJo and its impact, particularly in its relationship with genders, sexuality, fashion style, body performance and the Japanese society. This study aims to analyse and study how masculinity is shown in JoJo and how it reflects the change of Japanese society and the idea of Japanese. How it challenges the gender norms through its narrative, costume and character design and iconic poses. A comparative analysis with other shonen manga, such as Hunter x Hunter and Akira further highlights its avant-garde approach. The study applies theoretical frameworks from scholar such as Judith Butler with the concept of gender performance, R.W. Connell with the study on masculinity, etc. to understand how JoJo's visual and narrative elements contribute to broader discussion on gender identity and cultural expression.

**當代女性的婚姻抗拒：小紅書上的性別態度與婚姻觀研究**

Presenter: Ng Hoi Wai Ivy

**Abstract:**

在當代中國，年輕女性的婚姻抗拒正成為一個顯著的社會現象，尤其在以小紅書為代表的社交媒體平台上得到了廣泛的關注與討論。小紅書作為一個女性主導的社交媒體平台，提供了一個重要窗口給予女性自由表達的平台。本研究旨在分析小紅書用戶如何表達對婚姻的抗拒立場，並探討這些論述與厭男情緒的關聯性。研究採用質性研究方法，結合內容分析與深度訪談，收集和分析 2024 年全年小紅書上的相關帖文與用戶評論。結果將揭示年輕女性對傳統婚姻制度的批判、個人經驗分享中的情感表達，以及性別對立類內容中的主題與特徵。

### **Analyzing the plight of male homosexuals in Hong Kong from “We Are Gay”**

Presenter: CHOI, Ho Fai Howard

Abstract:

In this thesis, research would be reviewed if they can apply to explain the situation that the script reflected. The research cited in this application can be categorized into sociology and psychology. Some of the sociology-related research was conducted through telephone surveys, individual interviews and group interviews. Some of the psychology-related scholar, experiments were used as the research method.

### **The Analyzing of The Gender Role in Idol Representation in Hong Kong's Pop Culture from The 80s' to modern society**

Presenter: Chong Elvis Ryan

Abstract:

The idol and fandom culture are keep changing from the 80s' to modern Hong Kong. From Leslie Cheung at 1980s' to Keung To at 2020s', the image of idol has changed a lot. In the 1980s, idols like Leslie Cheung has already pushed the boundaries of what it means of man, such as leaving long hair, wearing high heels etc. the research gap are existing literature are always focus on particular idol instead of a comprehensive view of changing of the gender role in idol representation. For modern Hong Kong idols, they are mostly influenced by the Korean pop culture such as boy bands and girl bands. However, at the same time some individual female artists has challenged the traditional gender image such as Joyce Cheng. She often project empowerment, independence of female. The methodology used is a qualitative method. The nature of method would be a mixed-methods framework combining content analysis with semi-structured interviews will be used to gain insights into both media representations and audience perceptions. And interview around 20 participants, including fans, industry professionals, and cultural critics.

### **Breaking the Tackling Stereotypes: Exploring Gender, Injuries, and Empowerment in Rugby**

Presenter: TSANG, Yuet Yi

Abstract:

Women's rugby holds transformative potential to empower women by fostering physical strength, assertiveness, and confidence. However, female rugby players often face significant social challenges due to pervasive stereotypes that label rugby as a traditionally masculine sport. As a result, women who participate in rugby are frequently subjected to assumptions about their gender identity, sexuality, and femininity. These stereotypes position them as inherently masculine or lesbian, exposing them to sexism, homophobia, and societal scrutiny. This thesis examines the intersection of these gendered assumptions with the lived experiences of both female and male rugby players, with particular attention to how rugby injuries shape their athletic journeys. Specifically, this study seeks to answer the question: How do experiences with injuries influence the rugby journeys of female and male players? As a qualitative research project, this thesis employs a qualitative research, drawing on in-depth interviews and focus groups conducted with the 2024–2025 HKUSF rugby players. Additionally, the research incorporates participatory methods as the researcher actively engaged with the rugby community. By exploring the narratives of these athletes, the study sheds light on the ways in which injuries act as pivotal moments in their rugby careers, affecting their physical capabilities, mental resilience, and social identity within the sport. Ultimately, this research contributes to broader discussions on gender, sport, and the embodied challenges faced by athletes in navigating the intersection of societal expectations and personal empowerment.

## **Breaking Boundaries: The Evolution and Impact of Unisex Fashion in Contemporary Society**

Presenter: CHEUNG, Tin Ho

### **Abstract:**

The emergence of unisex fashion is an important social movement, questioning traditional gender stereotypes and promoting inclusiveness in the fashion industry. Historically, the clothes were firmly divided into male and female styles, which often limits personal expression and strengthens binary gender standards. However, current trends indicate the growing acceptance of gender-ragged fashion, allowing individuals to express their identities beyond conventional categorization. Despite this progress, a gap in the comprehensive research investigating the social consequences of this shift, especially in terms of how unisex fashion affects the perception of gender identity and expression.

This study seeks to address the following research questions:

1. How did UNISEX fashion develop in modern society compared to historical contexts?
2. What cultural impacts have neutral gender -neutral clothing on personal identity and social standards?
3. How do consumers perceive and incorporate unisex fashion into their everyday life?

This research uses the approach of mixed methods and combines quantitative and qualitative data to provide a holistic understanding of the social impact of unisex fashion. Approximately 50 participants who are drawn from different environments and actively involved in the purchase of unisex fashion will be accepted through social media platforms, fashion forums and local fashion events. Data collection will include online surveys to analyze consumer attitudes and buying behavior, in -depth interviews to explore personal experience with unisex fashion and focus groups to make it easier to discuss the social perception of gender fluency in fashion.

Quantitative data from surveys will be analyzed using statistical software (eg SPSS) to identify formulas and correlations, while qualitative data from interviews and focus groups will be thematically coded to detect key topics related to identity, social norms and cultural importance of unisex clothing.

The aim of this study is to explore both quantitative trends and qualitative stories to provide an nuanced understanding of how unisex fashion transforms social attitudes to gender identity, which eventually contributes to the more inclusive future in the fashion industry. These findings will offer valuable knowledge for designers, traders and politicians who seek to promote diversity and inclusiveness in fashion.

## **MA Thesis**

### **Sensing Gender: Olfactory Narratives, Materiality, and Affect in Chi Zijian's Fiction**

Presenter: TONG Yuanxin

Abstract:

The “sensory turn” in literary studies, which emerged in the late 20th century, highlights the role of sensory experiences in literature, enabling interactions with readers beyond narrative content. Among the senses, scent, which transcends linguistic and cultural boundaries to evoke individual memories and emotions, has often been overlooked in literary analysis. This paper examines Chi Zijian's *Right Bank of the Argun River* (2005) and *White Snow, Black Crows* (2009) through textual analysis and theoretical frameworks such as affect theory and memory studies. It explores how olfaction and scent function in these works to convey historical memory, borderland experiences, and gender narratives. The study finds that scent in Chi Zijian's novels is not merely an environmental detail but a trigger for affective flows among humans, plants, animals, and nature, shaping a distinctive “Chi Zijian-style” sentimentalism and borderland narrative. This research contributes to the application of sensory studies in contemporary Chinese literature and deepens the understanding of Chi Zijian's literary aesthetics.

### **Being Underwater Without Goggles: Late Diagnosis of Autism in Women and Identity Formation**

Presenter: Ana Carbonell

Abstract:

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental condition characterized by challenges in social communication, sensory processing, and cognitive flexibility. While early diagnosis is crucial in mitigating social and emotional difficulties, women are significantly underdiagnosed due to gender biases in diagnostic criteria. This research investigates the impact of late ASD diagnosis on the identity formation of young women in Mexico. Drawing from qualitative methodologies, including semi-structured interviews and auto-ethnographic analysis, this study explores how late-diagnosed women perceive their femininity, social relationships, and self-identity.

### **Between Criminal Law and Immigration Law: Legal Disjunctures and the Systemic Criminalization of Mainland Chinese Sex Workers in Pre- and Post-1997 Hong Kong**

Presenter: NI Cheng Shirley

Abstract:

Hong Kong, which has maintained a decriminalized approach to sex work since its colonial era, has experienced increased migration of sex workers from mainland China since 1997, where prostitution remains criminalized and stigmatized. While cross-border legal coordination improved after sovereignty delivering, mainland Chinese sex workers entering Hong Kong are routinely classified as “illegal entrants” for deportation under immigration statutes, rather than being recognized as potential trafficking victims eligible for criminal justice protections. The research reveals how reduced barriers in judicial collaboration between Mainland China and Hong Kong post-1997 have not bridged persistent gaps between immigration and criminal laws. Through a mixed-methods approach combining historical analysis of colonial and post-colonial legal frameworks with anthropological fieldwork—including interviews with NGO staff and criminal justice practitioners—this study explores the intersectional pressures faced by these 'migrant' sex workers. Delving into court cases and police operations before and after the sovereignty transfer, the study highlights how Hong Kong's unique legal landscape inadvertently facilitates migration while criminalizing undocumented status. Contributing to broader discourses on gender, migration, and legal pluralism

in transitional societies, the paper underscores the need for empathetic, intersectional policies to address socio-legal contradictions in cross-border labor mobility.

### **Margins in the Mainstream: Female Director Esther Eng's Interaction with the Ecology of Hong Kong Cinema in the 1930s**

Presenter: WANG Ying

Abstract:

Esther Eng (伍錦霞), recognized as “the first female director in South China” and “the only female director of Chinese descent in Hollywood,” was a prominent figure in Hong Kong’s film industry during the 1930s. Unlike many early female filmmakers from mainland China and Hong Kong, who were often marginalized or erased in historical narratives, Eng garnered significant attention from the media and the film industry. This study draws on extensive coverage of Eng’s personal identity, cinematic works, and private life in early Hong Kong newspapers and magazines, examining how her multifaceted identity, ideological orientations, and cultural characteristics aligned with or challenged the cinematic and sociocultural ecology of 1930s Hong Kong, thereby contributing to her elevated visibility. Using Eng as a case study, this paper further investigates the unique position of early female filmmakers within Hong Kong’s film culture from a historical perspective, contributing to a deeper understanding of Hong Kong’s early cinema and the history of women in film.