Gender Studies Programme, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

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Abstracts

Representation of Women in Film Industry: Rising or Falling

Presenter: BI Jijun Gin

Supervisor: Dr. WONG Yuk Ying Sonia

Abstract

In many ways, film is a powerful medium that both reflects and changes society and culture. In order to understand the society, cinema industry and screen industry are to reflect the experiences and perspectives of many groups in society, diversity and gender parity are therefore essential to the filmmaking process. Over the past few decades, gender inequality and stereotyping in movies have drawn critical attention. Gender disparities in the industry have been exposed more recently. Women experience significant gender pay gaps, are significantly underrepresented in the workforce, and have limited access to resources. The film industry would need to promote the idea of gender equality.

With billions of viewers worldwide, the film industry is one of the media's most powerful sectors. More than ever, the media has a tremendous impact on how we think, what we wear, and how we perceive ourselves in daily life. The media's portrayal of women in particular has a significant impact on society. Several groups remain without equal possibilities in the film industry, despite the fact that the lack of diversity in the industry has received a lot of attention. In particular, the advancement of women's roles has been slow, leaving proportionally developed female characters far behind. This study examines the status of women's representation in the film industry, whether it is rising or falling.

Gender, Sexuality and Sports: A Comparative Analysis of the Hong Kong Spectatorship of Men and Women's Professional Basketball in 2023

Presenter: LEUNG Brandon

Supervisor: Dr. WONG Yuk Ying Sonia

Abstract

Professional basketball development has been growing significantly and becomes one of the world's sports. In 2021, the National Basketball Association (NBA) reached their 75th anniversary; the WNBA celebrated their 25th anniversary. With the remarkable milestone, the leagues proclaimed to actively participate in expanding basketball to the next level. However, owing to the different levels of development, I believed that the growth rate between the NBA and WNBA would differ. Considering the above statement, how do Hong Kong spectators know about NBA and WNBA? The study adopts a qualitative approach to experimentally investigate how unfair treatment has resulted in professional basketball leagues among both genders. In-

depth individual interviews are conducted with five male and five female experienced basketball players and/or fans, and participant interaction, an online quiz, is carried out to review their basketball knowledge. I proclaimed that women's basketball players are undervalued, while the effect of commercialisation is the most crucial factor to determine the success of the basketball industry, yet basketball organisations should take full responsibility for upholding women's rights and sustaining women's basketball development. The findings indicate the differences between the NBA and WNBA from a Hong Kong spectator's perspective, as well as some suggestions that both leagues can work along with, aiming to attain their target goals.

Keywords: NBA and WNBA, basketball development, unfair treatment, sex and gender, equality, Hong Kong spectatorship

A Comparative Study of Gendered Learning Outcomes in the Netherlands and Hong Kong Education Systems

Presenter: CHUNG Pui Yung

Supervisor: Dr. WONG Yuk Ying Sonia

Abstract

This study examines the impact of education systems in the Netherlands and Hong Kong on girls' learning outcomes in Europe and Asia. The Netherlands is known for its student-centered and equity-focused approach, while Hong Kong is known for its exam-based and rote learning approach. The aim of this study is to explore how these differences affect girls' learning experiences and outcomes in these two countries. Research has shown that girls perform better academically in student-centered classrooms and may face pressure to conform to traditional gender roles in exam-based systems. The lack of practical training in teacher education may also limit the ability of teachers to create inclusive learning environments. In this study, a mixed-methods approach will be employed, using both qualitative and quantitative data to analyze the impact of cultural and pedagogical differences on girls' learning outcomes. The research will involve interviews with educators, students, and parents, as well as a review of existing literature and analysis of national data. The findings of this study have implications for promoting gender equality in education and may inform policy decisions aimed at creating more inclusive and empowering learning environments for girls. This study contributes to the current literature on education systems and gender equality and offers insight into how education can be reimagined to better serve the needs of all students, regardless of cultural or societal factors.

The Impact of Labeling on the Lives of LGBTQ+ Individuals

Presenter: TING Pak To

Supervisor: Dr. WONG Yuk Ying Sonia

Abstract

The LGBTQ+ community has been subject to stigma and discrimination for centuries, and this has been perpetuated by society through the use of labels. Labeling has been used to categorize individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity, but it has also led to

marginalization and discrimination. This study aims to examine the impact of labeling on the lives of LGBTQ+ individuals and how it affects their sense of self and overall well-being. Through a review of existing literature and qualitative interviews with members of the LGBTQ+ community, this study will explore the ways in which labeling has influenced their experiences and how they navigate societal norms and expectations. The findings of this study will provide a deeper understanding of the complexities of labeling and its impact on the lives of LGBTQ+ individuals, and will contribute to the ongoing conversation about the importance of respecting and promoting the rights of this marginalized community.

Misogynistic Discourse Analysis in LIHKG: The Reaction of LIHKG Users Towards Non-Consensual Intimate Images

Presenter: LI Yeuk Lam

Supervisor: Dr. WONG Yuk Ying Sonia

Abstract

LIHKG, one of the most popular discussion platform in Hong Kong, it is also well-known of its hostile comments towards left-wing ideology such as feminism. Though the Crimes (Amendment) Ordinance has come into effect on 8 October 2021 to combat a range of image-based sexual violence (IBSV) behaviors, it is revealed that not only are IBSV victim-survivors facing obstacles in seeking justice in law enforcement agencies, but also are they confronting to other abusive behaviors such as trolling, doxxing, shaming, victim blaming. This article analyses the discursive practices of LIHKG users on the dissemination of non-consensual intimate images (NCII), aiming to examine the pattern the users utilised to maintain misogynistic culture in the discussion, meanwhile limit the voices of female users, feminists, and victim-survivors within the platform. The comment sections of two local NCII incidents were analysed through a critical discursive analysis approach to identify the significance of malicious harassment victim-survivors are experiencing in the cyber world as well as the technology affordance to consolidate male hegemony in LIHKG. The analysis hopes to better reflect the distress to IBSV victim-survivors, hence lead to a more effective legislative and intervention strategies when providing supports.

A Fleeting Queer Parallel Universe: Chen Ran and Her Female Writing in the 90s Chinese Literature

Presenter: HUANG Minyan

Supervisor: Dr. PANG Ka Wei Janet

Abstract

With the globalization of queerness since the mid-90s, queer women's writing in China, Sinophone areas, and East Asia has been expanding and generating local queer identity and culture. When female same-sex relationships and homosexuality in the Chinese context have been mainly positioned within the focus on the 21st century's girl-fan subculture, lesbian internet novels, the period of the early 90s might seem inopportune to be discussed today. Chen Ran is an edgy 90s women writer who writes about female sexuality and desire in the Chinese language. Beyond the fact that her work was mainly considered obscene and private on the one

side, or feminist and pioneering on the other side in the 90s, this study suggests another possibility by adopting queer reading strategy nowadays. Namely, she creates a quasi-queer women subjectivity through her (quasi-) queer writing style at a time when the 90s China was influenced by feminist trends since the 80s but had not yet embraced the globalization of queer theory and politics. This study argues that rereading quasi-queer writing in Chen Ran's homoerotic texts in the 90s, helps to re-signify local Chinese queer women's identity and culture, so as to expand the history and reading space when considering the emergence of the queer women's subjectivity and writing that resonate with the feminism and queer politics in China's context.

The Betrayed Wives: Changing Images of Women Characters Involved in Extramarital Affairs on Chinese TV

Presenter: SHEN Shiting

Supervisor: Dr. WONG Yuk Ying Sonia

Abstract

In the past two to three decades, Chinese family ethics dramas have become a popular form of entertainment, with many featuring portrayals of betrayed wives. This study seeks to analyze the representation of betrayed wives in three Chinese TV dramas: 'Qian Shou' (牽手) from 1999, 'Home Temptation'（回家的誘惑） from 2011, and 'Nothing but Thirty'（三十而已） from 2020. By examining the evolution of these portrayals across different episodes and time periods, this analysis aims to gain insight into the complex issues surrounding marriage and infidelity, and how societal expectations shape women's roles as wives. Furthermore, this study aims to explore how these portrayals reflect the changing attitudes towards gender equality in mainland China's social and cultural context.

Become a Mother or Become a Professional: A Qualitative Study of Unique Dynamics between Motherhood Fulfillment and Career Aspirations among Female Physicians in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province

Presenter: Donna QIAN Xiaoxuan

Supervisor: Prof. CHEUNG Shoan Yin

Abstract

As the city with the largest economic contribution and highest fertility rate in Guangdong Province, Shenzhen is significant of its unique demographic dynamics. This paper narrows the research of career women's fertility choice to female physicians. Engage in a profession that requires higher requirements for career loyalty and passion, female physicians need to devote more energy and time to work, which will take up more of their personal lives than other occupations, making it more difficult for them to be fully involved in both work and family areas.

Using feminist ethnography, like semi-structured interview, participant observation, this study investigates female physicians' self-awareness and self-assessment of fertility choices and career experiences. At the core of research is the question of whether these professional women are

more inclined to perceive their life values and contributions in the nuclear family through the offspring and parent-child atmosphere they created, as opposed to their work achievements. Besides, how their workplaces respond to them when they choose to have 2 to 3 children in a row and whether their choice will be seen as an important indicator of work attitudes are also noted. Through dialogue, this study also seeks to understand whether a seemingly equal opportunity workplace like a hospital can provide fair access and adequate benefit support to female employees for childbirth and promotion in the face of the country's relaxing fertility policy. The influence of general environment, like current ideal female image, the traditional family ideology, and Shenzhen's urban development, is also included.

Under the censorship: Slash Fictions in New Era

Presenter: YANG Siman

Supervisor: Prof. Donna Shun Chi CHU

Abstract

Slash fiction, almost written by women, could be an open space for them to express cultural concerns on sexuality and gender (Jenkins, 2012). In this way, slash fiction can be regarded as a way of conveying "women's voice" towards intimate relationships, gender and sexuality. However, in simplified Chinese context, slash fiction has been taken into censorship system several years ago. The pornography content, even for adults, is criminalized by contemporary Chinese government (Bai, 2022). Women who write pornography content and post them on online platform may face the threaten of being accused, especially for those works which have been read by many people and have been privately published (such as Dojinshi). Some of slash writers have to use many technical tools to circumvent the censorship system, while others choose not to write erotic contents and convey the queer love in a much more implicit way. Those changes have left a great impact on new readers and new writers, shaping the new slash fiction in simplified Chinese context. Therefore, this research takes both readers and writers as research objectives to explore in what way the censorship system changes their actions in producing and consuming slash fictions and how these changes influence their expression in slash fiction. It can contribute to a deep a thorough learning of women fans in temporary China and their attitudes towards gender, sexuality and intimate relationships.

Culturally Constructed Femininity in Modern China: An Analysis of the Female Protagonist in Chinese Xianxia Drama Ashes of Love

Presenter: LIANG Yufu

Supervisor: Dr. WONG Yuk Ying Sonia

Abstract

Xianxia drama has gradually become popular in China since The Journey of Flower (2015), bringing high audience ratings and intense discussion on forums, producing traffic stars through exciting plots and well-made scenes. Female characters in this genre generally have a physical capacity that equals or surpasses male characters, which gives them more autonomy than in other costume dramas. This thesis is interested in testing, under such circumstances, how the

female protagonist verifies or challenges femininity in gender roles. With the existing literature, this study found that Chinese scholars studied the function of plots in xianxia drama. In contrast, western scholars had perspectives on the gender ideology that cultural products convey. However, scholars discussing the gender role in Chinese TV products often categorize xianxia as cultivation drama or emphasize religious elements behind the screen. It is rare to encounter discussions on how xianxia has constructed and revised femininity through its central female characters and how modern Chinese audiences appreciate or criticize this femininity. In this case, this study identifies Ashes of Love, presented in 2018, which aroused concerns about the performance of the gender role of its female protagonist, Jinmi. Through textual analysis and literature review, this study will explore how gender expectations engine Jinmi's growth pattern and how modern Chinese audiences embrace or reject the discourse.

Ideals vs. Realities? A Study on Why Young Chinese Women Want to Learn Programming

Presenter: ZHANG Yue

Supervisor: Prof. HAN Ling

Abstract

This study investigates the reasons, paths, and challenges of Chinese women faced in zhuanma, which means people from other fields learn programming. Based on the analysis through Python and Nvivo using a sample of 132 popular social media posts with over 200 likes from Douban and Zhihu, as well as ten in-depth interviews, the study found that zhuanma in the Chinese context not only includes the people from other fields learning to code and becoming a programmer, but also career paths of becoming a data analyst, product manager, and other programming-related jobs. While motivations for zhuanma varied among women, seeking better pay and more career prospects to achieve greater independence and autonomy are the major reasons. Most parents encourage their daughters to pursue careers in coding, largely because they value their daughters' preferences, but traditional gender role expectations still mediate parents' attitude.
Women's paths to zhuanma include changing majors, self-learning, and studying abroad, and a woman's professional background influences how smoothly the transition takes place. While more than half of the highly acclaimed zhuanma posts in Douban were written by liberal arts students, the interviews reveal that there are way fewer women coming from purely liberal arts background switching to programming-related careers. Women's career mobility in the Chinese mainland is hampered by the workplace's overtime culture and traditional gender role expectations. Diversity hiring policies may benefit some women's employment in foreign companies, but implicit racial discrimination can also limit Chinese women's career mobility.

Mainland Migrant Wives' Use of Social Media RED in Hong Kong

Presenter: ZHANG Xunyue

Supervisor: Prof. HAN Ling

Abstract

What role does social media play in immigrant wives' life? In recent years, more and more mainland immigrant wives have been sharing their lives on RED (Xiaohongshu), especially those women who came to Hong Kong to reunite with their husbands by applying for T-visa（探亲证). Previous studies have shown that mainland immigrant wives have smaller social networks and lack social support. They are often considered second-class citizens before they become permanent residents in Hong Kong. According to my preliminary study on RED, these women experiencing a ''seven-year struggle'' are now actively posting public content on RED. At the same time, they try to find opportunities to transform into yesheng bloggers (野生博主). I conducted in-depth interviews with ten highly educated immigrant wives and make unobtrusive observations on their RED accounts. Among them, the minimum number of followers was 29, and the maximum was 8,500. Nine of the ten informants hold T-Visa, so they cannot work legally in Hong Kong, and one has just received her one-way permit. Mainly based on interviews, online ethnography, and content analysis, this study intends to understand the cyber life of highly educated mainland immigrant wives in Hong Kong, focusing on the empowering effects of social media and blogger identity on immigrant wives.