



Call for Papers

Connection: The Fifth Annual Critical Femininities Conference

The Centre for Feminist Research at York University invites abstracts from scholars, researchers, activists, and artists for the fifth annual Critical Femininities Conference on the theme of ‘Connection.’ The conference will take place virtually on August 15-17, 2025.

Connection: joining, uniting, fastening, bringing together. Audre Lorde highlighted how when we “make connection with our similarities and our differences” (53), we remind ourselves of our own and others’ affective capacity. Femininity can be a rich and creative site of connectivity that expands beyond colonial imaginaries of womanhood and gender. Critical femininities is a site where we can connect, disconnect, and reconnect with the world, each other, and our own gendered selves. Connections can be tangible and intangible, with these boundaries being increasingly blurred as technologically mediated communication methods saturate our lives.

Critical Femininities is a growing field that seeks to develop nuanced critiques of femininity in all its variations beyond its characterization as a patriarchal imposition and where femininity is not synonymous with ‘woman’ (Dahl 2012, Taylor & Hoskin 2023, 79). Rethinking femininity as a concept opens space for a dialogue on the complex, multidimensional feminine expressions beyond heteronormative relations. Additionally, the field of critical femininities offers alternative frameworks centering connection through community building and a love politics that emphasizes a praxis of care extending beyond the personal and into the building of political communities (Nash, 2019).

This conference marks half a decade of cultivating digital community dialogue around critical femininities, opening up intentional digital space for expanding normative definitions of connection. There are also possibilities in the ways we disconnect. As Alyson K. Spurgas (2021) writes, “there is promise in embracing a fracturing, in falling apart—as antidote to the normative and neoliberal logic of keeping it together.” There is value in interrogating the connective void left when white supremacy, colonization, ableism, transphobia, misogyny, and other violent structures disconnect us from our femininities. The potential inherent in diving into disconnection also leaves room for exploring unexpected or idiosyncratic instances of *re*-connection to femininity.

We invite you to connect with us through submissions that reflect diverse critical connections for the fifth annual Critical Femininities Conference. Possible themes may include (but are not limited to):

- (Dis/re)connecting with femininity in surprising ways or through alternative routes
- Femme readings/perspectives on feminine (dis)connections across varied mediums
- BIPOC, trans, queer, disability, and femme interventions in and reinterpretations of what it means to connect

- Black (trans) feminist (dis)connections around and with femininity
- Artistic and tactile connective creativity: collage, patchwork, quilting, mixed-medium art
- Digital and technologically-mediated feminine (dis)connections and futurities
- Historical connections and parallels between the past and present
- Disruptions and barriers to feminine kinds of connections and connecting to femininity
- Subjugated knowledges and the connections between popular cultural production and low theory, including zines, reality television, street art, internet cultures, memes, and more
- Connections between fem(me)inine and feminist knowledge transmission, relationships, communities, and identities
- Queer, BIPOC, femme, and feminist critiques of modes of dis/reconnecting with femininity
- Transnational connections across or against nation-state borders
- Indigenous, Indigiqueer, and Two-Spirit cosmologies of and perspectives on femininity, friendship, kinship, and other kinds of connection
- Decolonial, postcolonial, and Indigenous critiques and cultures of femininities
- Disabled and chronically ill bodyminds: connective tissues, the mind-body connection, etc.
- The gendered connectivity and interconnections between digital platforms and technologies
- (Dis)connection through grassroots femme/feminist movements (Destine, 2019)
- Femme erotic labour, sex working bodies as a site of dis/connection (Stardust, 2015)
- Expanding and reconfiguring femininities in fat, disabled, BIPOC, trans, and queer intimate connections

Submission Guidelines

Submissions can take the form of single-author or co-authored academic papers, experimental or artistic presentations, including autotheory, personal narrative, artist talks, visual art and film, poetry, music, storytelling, life-writing, and performance. We welcome submissions from undergraduate students, graduate students, emerging and established scholars, artists, and those working beyond the university.

Our virtual conference is based in Tkaronto/Toronto, but we are interested to hear from scholars across the globe. We make an effort to offer a range of time zones for online presentations. We are particularly keen to hear from scholars in Africa, South America, and the Asia-Pacific region as we work to explore connection both thematically and in concrete terms. **Please submit your timezone with your submission so we can try to accommodate virtual presenters.**

Please send submissions to critfemininities@gmail.com by **March 22, 2025**.

For single presentations:

Please submit a 250-word abstract that indicates your main argument or focus and the format for

your presentation and a 100-word bio (50-word bio for multiple authors). Single presentations should be 15-20 minutes in length and will be organized into thematic panels.

For panel presentations and roundtables:

Please submit a 250-word abstract that indicates the main theme and format of the panel presentation/roundtable and a 50-word bio for each presenter (minimum of 3 panellists). Group presentations should be no longer than 60 minutes to allow time for Q&A.

Please note: Due to the evolving politics around artificial intelligence (AI), our conference currently strongly discourages the use of AI, including generative AI, such as ChatGPT, in both abstract submissions and final conference submissions from presenters. Should AI be used in any capacity we ask for full acknowledgement and disclosure in abstract and final submissions.

For more information and updates, you can follow us [@crit_fem](#) on Instagram.

[Citations are available here](#)