



CALL FOR PAPERS

Femininities and the making of Masculinities

Journal of Femininities

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Abstracts due April 20

Femininity has long structured the study of men and masculinities; yet, it often remains unnamed, undertheorized, or displaced (Allan, 2025). Masculinity is routinely constructed through femininity: defined against it and disciplined by its abjection. As scholars have noted, femininity operates as a regulatory tool in the production of masculinity, shaping hierarchies, exclusion, and even violence (Kimmel, 1997; 2013; Hoskin, 2020; Hoskin et al., 2024). It is ever-present yet elusive - a ghost that haunts masculinities, and a crack in the armour that reveals masculinity's fragility (Dahl, 2017).

Men's relationships to femininity are complex and contradictory, much like the construction of femininity itself (Hoskin and Courtice, 2026; Hoskin et al., 2023). On the one hand, femininity is mobilized to justify misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, sexual violence, and gender policing, particularly within sites such as the manosphere, rape culture, nationalist or authoritarian politics (McWebb et al., 2026; Padda et al., 2026). On the other hand, men are themselves targets of femmephobia, with femininity operating as a key axis of stigma, regulation, and exclusion. The enduring insults of pussy or fag (Pascoe, 2007) are not simply homophobic but a femmophobic tactic of policing femininity in men. Research has found that men attribute their experiences of gender-based violence to femininity (Sinacore et al., 2021) and femmophobic attitudes better predict homophobic aggression than homophobia itself (Hoskin et al., 2024). In short, both masculinity and men's lives shape and are shaped by attitudes toward femininity (i.e., femmephobia; Hoskin, 2017; 2019).

Despite this, femininity is often treated as a secondary or derivative concept within Critical Studies of Men and Masculinities (Allan, 2025). Measures and constructions of masculinity routinely rely on femininity as a negative referent (Sinacore et al., 2021; Kilmartin, 2010; O'Neil et al., 1986), yet femininity is rarely examined as a social force in its own right. Hybrid and subordinate masculinities are widely theorized (Bridges and Pascoe, 2014), but the question remains: can men just be *feminine* (Hoskin, 2020)? What happens when femininity is taken



seriously as an analytic category rather than a residual one? How might femininity reshape notions of masculinity?

This special issue seeks to bring *Femininities* decisively into conversation with Critical Studies of Men and Masculinities. We aim to build scholarship that examines men, masculinities, and femininity across social, cultural, political, historical, and institutional contexts, foregrounding femininity as a structuring force rather than a marginal concern.

We invite contributions that interrogate how femininity operates in, through, against, and upon boys, young men, men, older men and ideas of masculinities. What has been overlooked in Critical Studies of Men and Masculinities by failing to incorporate femininity fully as an object of analysis? How does attention to femininity disrupt dominant theories of masculinity, power, and gender hierarchy? What new insights emerge when femininity is treated not merely as what masculinity is not, but as something actively produced, regulated, desired, punished, repudiated, and contested among men?

Below is a non-exhaustive list of other areas in which we encourage authors to explicate the potential for disruptive innovation by considering femininity and its treatment:

- Men's femininity and femininity in men
- Femmephobia and the regulation of men's gender expression
- Men's responses to femininity
- Men's desire for femininity
- Men's rejection of femininity
- Femininity and men's socialization
- Men's femmephobia
- Femininity and violence (e.g., misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, rape myths)
- Men in feminized labour and social norms (e.g., care work, nursing, "dad" culture)
- Femininity and queer and/or trans men's communities
- Men, femininity, and politics
- Men, femininity, and aesthetics or embodied practices
- Men, femininity, and body image
- Femininity in leadership, mentorship, and professional cultures
- Men's femininity in masculinized institutions or domains (e.g., military, sports, policing, STEM)
- Men's masculinity in feminized institutions or domains (e.g. nursing, libraries, primary education, the Arts)
- Historical constructions of men's femininity (e.g., blue v. pink, men's use of makeup, wigs, high heels, etc.)



- Criminalization and regulation of men's femininity
- Psychology/Psychoanalysis and femininity, femininity as symptom, etc.
- Femininity in boyhood studies, growing out of femininity and into masculinity
- Femininity in the manosphere (e.g., Men's Rights Activists, incels, Pick-up Artists, etc.)
- Femininity, men, war, draft dodgers
- Bromance and men's friendships
- Femmephobia and men's health and wellness
- Men, femininity, and emotionality/affect
- Men's sexual scripts, sexuality, and femininity/femmephobia

Submission Information

To submit a proposal for consideration, please send a 250-word abstract and a current CV to the Editors at fem@uwaterloo by April 20, 2026.

Authors will be notified of the status of their proposals by April 27, 2026. Full manuscripts will be due August 27, 2026. Please consult the Journal of Femininities website for manuscript guidelines.

Questions may be directed to the Editors at the above email address.