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Beyond Lipstick: Expressions of Queer Femme Identity in Dress & New Media

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BEYOND LIPSTICK: EXPRESSIONS OF QUEER FEMME IDENTITY IN DRESS & NEW MEDIA

by

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ABSTRACT:

This paper and its corresponding creative project beyondlipstick.ca, an online gallery of self-identified queer femmes, seek to examine queer femme-ininity through the lens of academic fashion theory. A call for submissions invited femmes to submit self-portraits and answer a questionnaire on the subject of femme identity and dress. Through the visual and content analysis of submitted self-portraits and questionnaire responses, I investigate visual signifiers of femme identity and position queer femme-ininity as self-aware, intentional and distinct from heteronormative femininity. Themes that emerged from the submissions include; excessive femininity, embracing femininity, empowered femininity, and femme as an identity rather than a style. The beyondlipstick.ca project engages queer femme-ininity on three levels: first, as a visual articulation of queer identity; second, as a conscious appropriation of contemporary Western heteronormative femininity; and third, as an expression of femme visibility and community on an online platform.

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****Prelude****

This graduate project, Beyond Lipstick, began in many ways. In one way, it began during the MA program orientation when I introduced myself to my classmates. In another, it began the day I applied. In yet another, the day my girlfriend (now fiancée) and I got all dressed up, wearing coordinating heels and satin dresses, when I was introducing her to my grandmother. But in the most important way, this project began the first time someone told me I couldn't be gay because of the way I looked. The teenage girl I was those 14 years ago had no way of knowing the queer theories that were being written or that there was a history of strong, feminine queer women who had preceded her in other places. There were no role models in the media, nothing to show a former "Barbie" girl that she could be gay and still be girly.

Chapter 1:
Introduction and Background

Introduction

This paper and its corresponding creative project, beyondlipstick.ca, seeks to explore queer femme-ininity in the academic field of fashion theory, or conversely, to apply academic fashion theory to the online and real world media of queer femme-ininity. The beyondlipstick.ca project engages queer femme-ininity on three levels: first, as a visual articulation of queer identity; second, as a conscious appropriation of contemporary Western heteronormative femininity; and third, as an expression of femme visibility and community on an online platform.

In postmodern Western society, dress is one of many media through which an individual can express and communicate notions of identity, gender and sexual orientation. Visibility, or the articulation and representation of sexual identity through visual means, is an important component in the formation and maintenance of queer identity in Western LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer) culture. This paper starts by discussing how queer femininity has been largely ignored by academics and distrusted in queer communities. Academic discourse has emphasized masculinity as the marker for queer identity on the female body. Recently, due in large part to the Internet and social networking, individuals who identify as "femme" (defined in this context as a lesbian/queer gender identity that is characterized by adherence to what would appear to be traditional and conventional feminine codes of beauty) have

begun an exploration of queer femme-ininity (defined in this context as the performance of femininity by queer individuals) in the form of blogs, books and photo essays. This research project expands upon recent work that addresses femme identity and further explores queer femme-ininity with particular focus on dress as a communicative media of identity.

The primary goals of this research were:

1. To examine the intersections of femme identity and visibility and to seek out what, if anything, are the visual signifiers of femme identity.
2. To expose and engage the tensions between femme identity and issues of hetero- and homo-normativity, dress and identity and self-representation.
3. To position femme identity as a subversive and transgressive expression of femininity.

These goals were explored in two parts: research data collection through participant submission of photographs and responses to a questionnaire, and the interpretation of research findings within the design of beyondlipstick.ca.

A call for submissions, circulated online and through social networking, solicited research data consisting of self-portraits of self-identified femmes and questionnaire response. Through visual and content analyses of these photographs and text, this research project examines the relationship between dress and femme identity, explores how dress informs visibility, representation and recognition within the lesbian/queer community, and how identity communicated through dress is perceived in the LGBTQ

community. Through the use of online media, this project also presents these concepts to the general public.

The design and production of the beyondlipstick.ca website was informed and influenced by the participant submissions, using innovative web design techniques to emphasize the fluid and highly personal nature of queer femme-ininity as it is articulated and performed by femmes in everyday life. The participant submissions revealed a femme-ininity that was self-aware, intentional and distinct from heteronormative femininity. Themes that emerged from the submissions include; excessive femininity, embracing femininity, empowered femininity, and femme as an identity rather than a style. This project furthers the understanding of queer femme-ininity and its implications for the visual articulation of gender by challenging norms of representation and recognition within the lesbian/queer community.

Background

In recent years, there has been increased interest, both academic and popular, in femme identity. This interest has instigated questions concerning the subject of femininity, beauty and body image (Crocker & Harris 1997, Atkins 1998). Harris and Crocker define femme "as a model of critical reshaped femininity and assertive sexuality" (Harris and Crocker 1). The femme has often been presented as the historical and contemporary counterpart to the butch or masculine expression of lesbian/queer gender identity. In the defining paper "The Fem Question" (1982), Nestle suggests that:

> . . . butches were known by their appearances, [femmes] by their choices. [. . .] Thus [femmes] became the victims of a double dismissal: in the past they did not appear culturally different enough from heterosexual women to be breaking

gender taboos and today they do not appear feminist enough, even in their historical context, to merit attention or respect for being ground-breaking women (Nestle 543).

This research project explores the autonomy of femme identity, independent from butch identity and apart from the butch-femme dyad. Previously, research has mostly focused on this dyad within the lesbian community but has concentrated on the subject of female masculinity (Faderman 1991, Halberstam 1998, Butler 2006). Academic interest in female masculinity has validated this gender expression as a true experience of lesbian identity and, as consequence, the butch is over-represented in academic literature. In addition, the butch is highly visible – her sexual difference is articulated in her dress, behaviour and mannerisms. In the historically dyadic butch/femme relationship, the butch has marked the femme. Without the butch, whose representation of female masculinity marks her sexual difference, the femme is invisible. This invisibility has constructed femme identity as passive and dependent in a manner that mimics heteronormative conventions of femininity. In order to establish and assert femme fully as an autonomous identity, queer femme-ininity must be engaged independently in a manner that validates this expression of femininity as an authentic expression of lesbian/queer identity and lived experience. Femme identity is equally deserving of attention and study from the academic community, particularly in terms of how it subverts heteronormative conventions by transgressing notions of the masculine-feminine binary and engaging issues of dress and identity, homonormativity, and self-representation. I therefore recognize femme identity and its *representation and articulation through dress* as subversive and transgressive.

Dress – which is defined by Entwistle as "the meanings given to particular practices of clothing and adornment" (3) – is one method of encoding and representing the "self" and identity. The postmodern concept of identity allows us to manufacture our selves through commodity consumption in order to influence how we are perceived by others (Finkelstein 3). Finkelstein argues that "certain styles and self-fashioning can be used to produce groups who recognize each other, who are, in effect, a community of practitioners" (12). By utilizing dominant codes of representation, people give information about our status, personality, occupation, and sexual preference. In a heteronormative culture, for example, high heels are coded as female; in a homonormative culture, high heels (worn by a woman) are coded as heterosexual, adhering to the codes of representation that embeds cultural conventions (Finkelstein 8). Both the ability to manipulate dress to reflect these codes *and* the ability to interpret these codes are important factors in social interaction. Femme dress and identity intentionally challenges and contradicts these codes by representing the queer body with signifiers of (presumed) heterosexual femininity.

Feminine Dress, Femme Identity

Gender, in part, is communicated through binary heteronormative conventions of Western fashion which make the particular relationship between dress and femme identity problematic. Feminine dress and appearance, such as skirts, high heels, and bright lipstick, constructs the wearer's gender and sexual identity as that of a woman: to be an "authentic" woman in Western culture is to be a heterosexual woman (Davis 46). Contemporary Western conventions of appropriate femininity rely on the appearance of heterosexuality as codified by visual signifiers such as: thin, hairless body with defined

waist and balanced chest and hips, long hair, dresses and skirts that reveal the female form without being provocative. Femme identity is therefore femininity redefined and appropriated by queer women who have placed new meanings on feminine signifiers (Ruby 7).Femme representation exposes the weaknesses of dress as a communicative media for self-expression. While the femme may articulate her queer identity through her choice of feminine clothing, that clothing is coded as adhering to conventional standards of heterosexual femininity. As a result, there is tension between the messages intended and those actually received, and confusion in regards to her actual sexual identity. Femme dress thus subverts heteronormative codes and transgresses homonormative culture by refusing its system of codified dress. This research project explores the relationship between femme identity and dress, and the femme's refusal and rejection of society's codes of representing identity.

Key Definitions:

Butch: A category of lesbian/queer gender characterized by the use and manipulation of conventionally masculine codes and signifiers (Munt 95).

Femme: A category of lesbian/queer gender characterized by the use and manipulation of conventionally feminine codes and signifiers (VanNewkirk 75).

Passing: "Seeking or allowing oneself to be identified with a race, class, or other social group to which one does not genuinely belong" (Gianoulis par. 1). A lesbian/queer femme may be able to "pass," intentionally or not, in heteronormative culture for a heterosexual woman.

LGBTQ: Acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer.

Homonormativity: A cultural bias within the LGBTQ community that demands assimilation to assumed homosexual norms (Aragon 8).

Heteronormativity: A cultural bias that naturalises a masculine-feminine dichotomy with heterosexuality, biologically-determined sex, gender identity and associated roles (Ward & Schneider 434).

Heteronormative Femininity: In contemporary Western culture, normative femininity is associated with passivity in contrast with active masculinity (Mulvey 60). Although conventions of femininity are arbitrary and context dependent, in North American culture, femininity is visually signified by adherence to norms of beauty and hygiene such as: thin but not muscular body, defined waist and balanced chest and hips; hairless face, arms, underarms, legs (and sometimes pubic area) with long hair on the head); alluring or attractive (but not inappropriate) fashion that is meant for the male gaze.

Queer: In this context, queer can be used as both an umbrella term to include all LGBTQ individuals, and also as a term for those who do not identify with normative gender or sexual identities, gay or straight (Chase & Ressler 24).

Chapter 2:
Literature Review

The literature that informs this research project focuses on femme identity and intersects the following areas: heteronormativity and gender; homonormativity and sexual difference; self-representation; dress and identity. As previously stated, there is a dearth of research on femme identitiy in academic discourse (Maltry & Tucker 90), particularly as it relates to dress and identity. Gaps in scholarship include the performance of femininity as a queer act and the visual articulation of queer femme-ininity in everyday life. These gaps are addressed to create a more complex understanding of how self-representation, visibility and dress impact sexual identity, both online and in the material world.

Performativity

This project examines acts that constitute femme identity *beyond* mere imitation of traditional femininity and *towards* a subversive performance of feminine gender identity. The research is critically informed by Judith Butler's theory of performativity, as first proposed in the article "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution" (1988) and further developed in her book *Gender Trouble* (1989). Butler posits that, "[g]ender is what is put on, invariably, under constraint, daily and incessantly, with anxiety and pleasure" (1988: 491). She suggests that we *are* not a certain gender, but that we instead *do* gender through the "stylized repetition of acts" (1988: 482). In several studies (Halberstam 1998, Case 1988, Carr 2005), including Butler's seminal work, female masculinity is presumed to be as the active expression of lesbian sexual difference.

Through "doing" masculinity, butches visibly express their queering of heteronormative assumptions of gender. By adhering to seemingly conventional standards of femininity, the queer femme exposes the tension of those assumptions. The performance of femme identity is therefore a radical act that undermines and transgresses normative heterosexuality.

Masculinity as a Signifier of Queer Identity

In *Lesbian & Bisexual Identities* (1997), Kristin Esterberg explores the performance of lesbian identity, but focuses on interviews that point to butchness as a primary indicator of lesbian identity and performance (80). Esterberg includes a section called "What a lesbian looks like" (88) that points out some visual and interactional cues identified by her interview subjects. These "cues" include short hair, no make-up, an athletic body, and an assertive and confident posture. She concludes that "to be lesbian is to be coded as not feminine – but masculine" (90). The "authentic" expression of sexual difference is found to reject conventions of femininity in order to represent lesbian desire. If short hair and an athletic body are coded as lesbian, the femme's claim to lesbian (or queer) identity with long hair and a curvy body would therefore be inauthentic or suspect (although not all femmes possess long hair or a curvy body). Mainstream LGBTQ cultures and communities often perceive the femme's failure to conform to these norms of homosexuality as a passive act, rather than a radical performance of queer identity. The body and dress of the butch are analysed as communicative symbols of lesbianism and/or queerness, while heteronormative and homo-normative cultures deem the femme's body and dress heteronormative and

pushed aside, unanalysed and invalid. Heteronormative and homo-normative conventions cause the femme lesbian to be invisible to the point of being almost non-existent. She is unseen and unheard, in pictures and interviews, in hetero- and homo-normative cultures.

Various authors have remarked upon the codification and privileging of masculine performances as indicative of queer or lesbian identity. In their article "Female Fem(me)ininities: New Articulations on Queer Gender Identities and Subversion," Melanie Maltry and Kristin Tucker analyse and critique the historical authentication of the lesbian experience as masculine and offer new perspectives on femme identity as subversive, within both lesbian and heterosexual cultures (2002). This work also addresses the subjects of invisibility and passing. Passing poses a particular challenge to femmes as "their fem(me)inine gender expression still [leaves] their queerness open for scrutiny" (92). The performance of femininity by queer women challenges both hetero- and homo-normative conventions and engages both cultures' presumptions of gender, sexual difference and authenticity.

Homonormativity

Representations of queer femme identity are marginalized within both the LGBTQ community and heteronormative society. Angela Pattatucci Aragon has argued that there exists a culture of homonormativity that contributes to the marginalization and oppression of femme identity (8). Aragon explores the question of authenticity and legitimacy in the LGBTQ community and defines homonormativity as:

1. An unwavering belief in the anatomical facticity of the female body.

2. A rejection of the patriarchally defined feminine gender role (with the exception of motherhood) and standards of appearance, as long as that rejection does not manifest itself in the embracing of masculine identities.

3. An exclusive desire and attraction to individuals meeting the first two criteria. (8)

Homonormativity has contributed to the marginalization of femme identity and continues to question the femme's validity as an authentic queer experience due to her embrace of the codes and signifiers of traditional femininity and her consequent invisibility in both dominant and LGBTQ communities. This invisibility is the essential tension at the intersections of hetero- and homo-normative cultures, dress and identity, and self-representation inherent in femme identity.

Femme Invisibility

LGBTQ cultural norms judge women's dress only to communicate sexual difference effectively if it rejects conventional femininity for a more masculine aesthetic. In her article "How to Recognize a Lesbian: The Cultural Politics of Looking like What You Are" (1993), Lisa Walker examines invisibility within the LGBTQ community. Called a "lipstick lesbian" by her butch lover (866), Walker examines lesbian constructions of identity, the celebration of visible signifiers of those identities apparent in the appearance of butch style and the consequences faced by members of the lesbian community who fail to identify themselves as such and who can therefore "pass" within the dominant heteronormative culture. Walker critiques writers such as Butler and Case for their primary focus on visual signifiers of sexual difference that has consequently

privileged butch identity as legitimate lesbian performance and further marginalized femme identity as suspect and inauthentic, "as the femme appears to be an integrated, stable subject according to the rules of normative heterosexuality" (884). More than ten years have passed since the publication of Walker's article, yet there remains a conspicuous absence of research on the subject of the visual articulation of queer femme-ininity.

Fashion in LGBTQ Communities

Fashion and dress have a long acknowledged role in the construction, negotiation and mediation of identity and have played an important role in LGBTQ communities. In her study of identity performance in LGBTQ people, Ruth Holliday explores the relationship between the clothes her participants wear and their daily performance of their queer identities. Holliday recognizes the role dress plays in the construction of queer identity and the tensions it can create and/or expose when that identity is performed in heteronormative spaces (such as the workplace) and homonormative spaces (such as queer night clubs) (Holliday 1999). In the heteronormative workplace, queer identity is expressed through dress, whether through subverting the uniform of the hospital by wearing dresscode-prohibited garments, or through the rejection of traditional feminine conventions, such as makeup and long hair. Female masculinity is coded as the authentic expression of lesbian identity in a homonormative manner. The subjects' reactions to LGBTQ spaces is of particular interest: one lesbian feels what Holliday describes as the disciplinary gaze of the group and often feels evaluated. "Looking like what you are" again becomes important in these homonormative spaces. Holliday hints at the limited identities available to LGBTQ

people. Self-identified femmes are notably absent from this study, exemplifying these limitations in the prevailing academic discourse. If adherence to homonormative conventions, i.e. a rejection of femininity, marks LGBTQ identity, the femme is invisible in this study and more importantly in the LGBTQ community.

Visibility in LGBTQ Communities

Visibility must be understood as an *essential* facet of LGBTQ cultural identity. Sharif Mowlabocus examines the role visibility plays in LGBTQ culture in his article "Look At Me: Images, Validation and Cultural Currency on Gaydar" (2010). He writes, " 'Coming out' is about making one's self visible; throwing one's queerness into relief against a heteronormative background that would render it *invisible*" (202). Those who remain invisible are suspect: feared by heteronormative culture for their ability to "pass" among it and judged by other marginalized groups as having appropriated the privilege belonging to the dominant group (Mowlabocus 202). As sexual identity is not something marked *by* the body, but displayed *on* the body, the LGBTQ body has become an important site of identity construction and acts of identification and visibility. Dress has developed as a site of sexual signification through the use of codified signs such as the handkerchief code and the rainbow as a motif (Mowlabocus 203). Both the adoption of certain styles of dress as well as music, movies literature and the appearance in LGBTQ spaces such as Pride parades, bars, clubs and retail shops, marks the LGBTQ body as visibly and authentically belonging to the experience of Western LGBTQ identity (Mowlabocus 203, Holt & Griffin 421). This visibility of the LGBTQ body, in dress, behaviour and in material spaces, is essential to the Western narrative of LGBTQ liberation, both in historical and contemporary contexts (Mowlabocus 203, Holt & Griffin

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420). In contemporary times, LGBTQ spaces are not limited to the physical world, as the internet has provided the LGBTQ community with new spaces and environments to consume, discuss, socialize and gather. Visibility in digital spaces is a way to establish authenticity; making one's self visible through online representations (memberships to LGBTQ community websites or forums, photographs and/or social media profiles) validates the internet user's willingness to self-identify and be *seen* as gay (Mowlabocus 205).

Queer Femme-ininity

Recently, visibility and queer femme-ininity has been explored in the work of Del LaGrace Volcano and Ulrika Dahl, who published *Femmes of Power: Exploding Queer Femininities* (Serpent's Tail 2008), a collection of portraits and essays about femme icons from historical and contemporary figurations around the world. *Femmes of Power* is unique and ground-breaking in its use of visual methods to address the subject of queer femme-ininity. The femmes featured in this work represent themselves in many different ways: posed hands-on-hips, ample cleavage spilling out of a visible black lace bra; on stage wearing a vulva costume, complete with clitoral hood and red sequined labia; in an embroidered sari; in fishnets; in leather; in lingerie. LaGrace Volcano has consciously worked to create collaborative portraits, not only as a photographer, but also as a co-conspirator with the aim of "making images *with* (speaking) subjects rather than taking images *from* passive or silenced objects" (15). The resulting portraits render the intangibility of intersectional identities as concrete and embodied subjectivities. Dahl writes of femme identity as "proud, fierce and intentional" (20) and LaGrace Volcano's photographs support that assertion: although feminine, these femme-ininities have little

in common with the heteronormative models of beauty we see in magazines. Any attempt to categorize the dress of the femmes pictured throughout would note the prevalence of visible tattoos and other body modifications, retro or 'pin-up' style fashions, an abundance of lingerie and other body-conscious apparel that reveals the shape of the female body. Dahl writes that femme identity is not stable or constant but should instead be considered "as a queer and feminist figuration. [...] A genre rather than a gender" (25). Dahl points to the importance of "the need for both queer reading skills and cultural literacies in the particular histories which [femmes] live in, cite, disrupt and explode from" (23). Although this book is a valuable source of femme-inist theory, one must note the influence of both the photographer and medium itself. The use of one photographer and one writer presents a somewhat unified interpretation of queer femme-ininity. The femmes in this book were photographed for a book by one famous queer photographer. The femmes who participated may have been influenced by the presence of LaGrace Volcano in many ways: their fashion style may have changed for the spectacle of being photographed, or aspects of their performance of femme may have been more exaggerated than in a more natural or everyday setting. The femmes pictured were also famous and prominent within queer femme communities across the globe, which may have skewed the book's representation of queer femme-ininity. As the only published work that examines queer femme-ininity through visual methods, *Femmes of Power* critically informs this research and beyondlipstick.ca.

Summary

In surveying the academic literature on the intersections of gender, dress and lesbian/queer identity, several gaps become apparent. Femme identity and dress are

often ignored in favour of research into the articulation and exploration of butch identity, dress and/or female masculinity. The absence of femmes in major papers from and about the LGBTQ community indicates a level of marginalization from homonormative conventions. Although authors such as Maltry & Tucker, Esterberg, and Walker explore what it means to be femme in LGBTQ communities and spaces, the signifiers of femme identity are rarely articulated beyond a general description of femininity. LaGrace Volcano and Dahl have explored the visual articulation of queer femme-ininity, but they fail to articulate how this identity is represented by femmes in their daily lives in the absence of a professional photographer. Beyondlipstick.ca aims to contribute to research and theory that interrogate femme identity by exploring the existence of visual signifiers of femme identity and the differences between the performances of traditional femininity and queer femme-ininity. The submitted participant self-portraits and questionnaire responses examine and explore the ways femme identity and dress contradicts and subverts rules of normative heterosexuality. By soliciting self-portraits through a call for submissions, my project broadens work by LaGrace Volcano and Dahl, but avoids the sometimes problematic use of the photographer and the selection of "worthy" femmes to photograph. Encouraging participants to create their own images and answer questions on their own without the influence of the researcher empowers the research subject. Beyondlipstick.ca fosters the development of 'queer reading skills' in femmes through the ease of use and public availability for the articulation of femme identity in unknown and everyday life. Through the use of photographs and short quotations, the website seeks *both* to educate queer femmes (among others) about visual expressions of queer identity *and* provide an online environment for the

exploration of the dialectical influences of dress and identity in conscious, concrete and visible ways.

By examining femme identity and how dress is used to mediate against the rules of homonormative society, the beyondlipstick.ca website exposes a radical identity that communicates a femininity redefined and queered, one that challenges lesbian/queer norms and imbues traditional feminine signifiers with new meanings. This project examines signifiers such as long hair, skirts, dresses and makeup as potentially appropriated queer symbols that have been empowered with subversive new meanings. This research interrogates the apparent femme invisibility in the LGBTQ community by questioning if queer femmes are actively communicating their queerness through dress. By rejecting butch identity as the norm for the lesbian/queer experience, beyondlipstick.ca positions femme identity as a queer identity that subverts heteronormativity and challenges homonormative conventions. This project occupies gaps in academic discourse and explores a more complex understanding of femme identity in considering how self-representation, visibility and dress impact sexual identity.

Chapter 3:
Methodology

A Postmodernist framework allows for the analysis of the complex intersectionalities of gender, sexuality and identity which are inherent to this research. Although lesbian issues and feminist views inform this research, they do not lead the project's theoretical framework into *lesbian* feminism. Rather, LGBTQ studies and queer theory are the primary influence for this research. While the project examines the familiar feminist conceptual territory of gender, it is equally concerned with sexuality and the construction and performance of identity within the lesbian/queer community. Acknowledging the project's LGBTQ, queer and feminist framework, this research engages a social constructivist and postmodern framework.

Methods

Overview

The research project examines femme identity, dress and self-representation using qualitative methods of visual and content analysis. This study required approval by Ryerson University's research ethics board because of the ethical implications in displaying subjects' photographs and questionnaire responses online as well as the use of social networking to disseminate the call for submission. An ethics protocol was prepared and was approved by the ethics board in November 2011. (See Appendix A) A call for submissions was distributed through the internet and social media for self-identified queer femmes to submit up to three photographic self-portraits and answer three questions via the website *beyondlipstick.ca*. The participants' images and

responses were subsequently featured in an online gallery on the website. (The submission portal continues to accept new responses which will be added to the website.) The images and responses were analysed and interpreted to gain an understanding of how the participants performed and articulated femme identity. These insights into queer femme-ininity informed and directed the design of beyondlipstick.ca. The online gallery represents a communal exploration of femme identity that respects the individual's experience as a source of knowledge. Visual analysis of photographs allowed for an exploration of the ambiguities of dress as a communicator of gender and sexual difference, while a content analysis of open-ended questionnaire responses permitted an investigation on the nuances of femme identity and the juxtaposition of self-representation and visibility in both hetero- and homo-normative cultures.

Photographic Submissions

The importance of visibility in LGBTQ communities, both online and in the physical world, combined with greater accessibility of social networking and blogs, has led to the increased circulation of queer subjects' photographs. This project encouraged participants to contribute to the community of photograph posting and sharing. Participants were invited to submit self-portraits for the creation of the online gallery. Visual analysis of these participant photographs was used to examine:

1. Subject pose: Is this pose passive or active? Is the subject looking directly at the camera or is their gaze averted? Is the subject fully in frame, ie: is the face visible, or are have they cropped out part of their body? Is the pose

provocative/sexual in any way or more modest or demure? What, if any, are

the similarities throughout the participant submissions?

2. Subject appearance: Has the subject emphasized the femininity of her dress

or body? Does the subject have any visible body modifications? Are there

similarities in the appearance of the various subjects, with regards to body

type, makeup/hair style, dress?

3. Thematic Narrative: Do the photographs convey a narrative? Does the

photograph convey an informal or formal setting?

Online Questionnaire

The call for submissions contained three questions for the participants to answer.

The questions were open-ended to allow participants freedom of expression and to

gather rich data for this research study. The questions were:

1. What is your definition of femme?

2. Do you represent your sexuality through your clothing? If yes, how? If no, why

not?

3. How do you identify another femme?

The participants' written responses have allowed for an examination of how femme

identity and queer femme-ininity is articulated beyond traditional signifiers of femininity

and whether there is a conscious appropriation of those signifiers by the femme

community. Responses were analysed for evidence of: similarities in the definition of

femme identity, an awareness of heteronormative and homonormative conventions, and recognized symbols of femme identity.

Call for Submissions

The data for this project was collected through the call for submissions, which solicited photographs of self-identified femme lesbians. This call was distributed through a network of websites and blogs that have a mostly queer/lesbian audience, public locations, and a personal network of friends and peers through email and social networking sites. The use of social networking sites allowed the call for submissions to reach a broader audience through users sharing and re-posting through other networks and websites. This was a great advantage, as this project sought to represent the most diverse sample possible within the queer/lesbian femme community.

The call for submissions invited self-identified femmes to participate in the project by submitting self-portrait photographs online to the beyondlipstick.ca website. The call provided a brief description of the project's objectives, the website URL and listed the three questionnaire questions. A brief statement detailing the specifications of the photographs to be submitted (size, resolution and number) was also included in the call. This call directed interested parties to the project website where they would find additional information as well as the submission portal. (See Appendix B: Call for Submissions)

The call for submissions was distributed through the following:[1]

Web sites and blogs:

1. Femme Galaxy: http://www.femmegalaxy.com/

2. Autostraddle: http://www.autostraddle.com/

3. Effin Dykes: http://effingdykes.blogspot.com/

4. Fit for a Femme: http://fitforafemme.com/blog/

5. Femme on a Mission: http://femmeonamission.com/

6. The Lesbian Question: http://www.thelesbianquestion.com/

7. Fuck Yeah Femmes: http://fuckyeahfemmes.tumblr.com/

8. The Femme Show: http://www.thefemmeshow.com/blog/

9. Queer Fat Femme: http://queerfatfemme.com/

10. Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/ (personal social networking)

11. RyePRIDE: https://www.facebook.com/rye.pride (as well as the listserv)

12. Dear Butch, Comma Femme: http://dearbutchlovefemme.wordpress.com/

13. What Wegan Did Next: http://whatwegandidnext.blogspot.ca/

14. In the Thick of It: http://inthethickofit.tumblr.com/

15. Worn Journal: http://wornjournal.com/

16. Twitter: https://twitter.com/#!/BeyondFemme

Public locations:

The call for submissions was distributed through flyers and handouts at LGBTQ

club nights in Vancouver. Flyers were also placed in coffee shops, vintage clothing

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[1] (Please note: When contacting websites and blogs, personalized emails were sent to the authors with a request to participate in the project and/or further circulate the call for submissions.)

stores and bars in areas with a large queer community. (See Appendix D for flyer design.)

Social Networking:

The call for submissions was also circulated through a personal network of friends and acquaintances through Facebook and email. The call was posted to relevant Facebook groups and on my personal Facebook profile. Facebook is a relatively low pressure environment where users are often invited to participate in events or visit other websites. Friends and acquaintances were encouraged to re-post the call for submissions to anyone that might contribute to the project. The call was only posted once and did not target specific individuals, which reduced a person's obligation to participate and any coercion or influence on the part of the researcher. In addition, the call was circulated by listserv email to students, staff and faculty in the graduate and undergraduate fashion programs at Ryerson University. The re-posting of the call by other individuals further reduced any undue pressure or influence on possible participants from my personal network of friends and acquaintances.

Informed Consent Process

As outlined in the ethics protocol, consent was obtained from participants before they submitted their photographs and questionnaire responses through the online submission portal. The submission of photograph files and questionnaire responses could only be processed once the participant had indicated their consent by reading through the consent form and clicking "I Agree" in the required field (see fig. 1).The

submission of photographs and questionnaire responses therefore indicated the participant's consent to the online exhibition of their image and responses. The participant consented for their image(s) and written responses to be viewed publicly online at beyondlipstick.ca, and displayed at the MA Fashion Exhibition in June 2012 to be held at the Design Exchange in Toronto. The consent form also specified that the photographs and written responses would only be used by the researcher with respect to this project, including any future work that develops out of the project such as papers presented at conferences, published journals and books, public exhibitions, and promotional material for the website. Consent was also obtained for the partial alteration of the submitted photograph(s), limited to cropping and overlaying text from written responses, that was sometimes warranted for the purposes of website design and aesthetics. The consent form also informed the participants of any risks (such as the exposure of sexual identity in the public space of the Internet), benefits (such as increased visibility of self-identified queer femmes in the LGBTQ community-at-large and the development of an online femme community), and confidentiality issues. Participants have the right to end participation at any time without penalty by notifying the researcher via email using the reference code they are given upon their submission.

Participants were also given further information about the project and the researcher through the website, as well as contact information for the researcher and the Ryerson Research Ethics Board, should participants have had any questions regarding the use of their photographs and questionnaire responses. There were some website users who contacted the researcher for clarification of the goals of the project as well as the limits of the call for submissions.
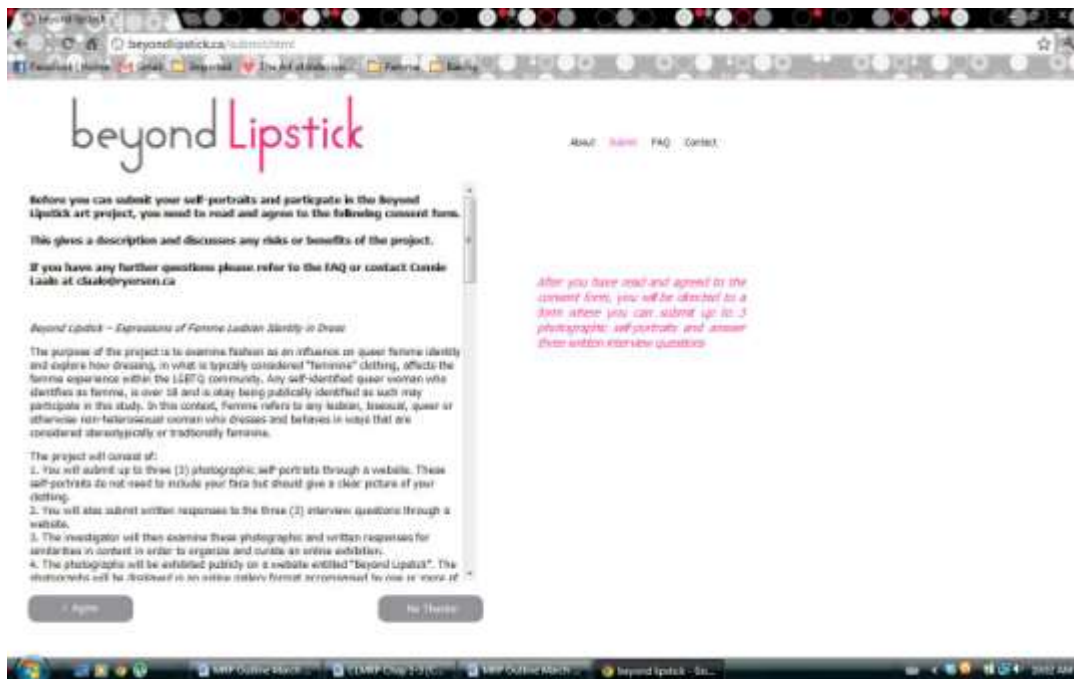
Figure 1: Beyond Lipstick Consent Form Process

Limitations

The limitations of this study include: the number of responses received, the quality of submitted photographs, the quality of responses, and the truthfulness of the participant. Due to the number of the responses received, the findings of the study are not meant to provide a generalization of the individual experience of queer femme identity, but instead point to implications which have directed the design of the website as well as motivate further research. The limitations in participant photograph quality have affected and influenced the research project by necessitating innovative website design. Overall the limitations of this research have proven to challenge and direct the creative project towards unexpected connections and perspectives.

Chapter 4:
Results, Analysis & Discussion

PART I: Participant Response and Analysis

Beyond the original circulation of the call and personal invitations, the call was re-posted, shared and spread throughout many communities across geographical areas. Submissions were received from Canada, the United States and European countries including Germany, Sweden and the UK (See Appendix C: Submissions). Consistent social networking on the Facebook page, Tumblr blog and Twitter account were necessary to maintain an audience for the project and drive that audience to participate by submitting to the project.

Sample Size

At the outset of the research process, it was estimated that in order to conduct an effective study, a minimum of 20 submissions would be required. The call for submissions yielded 22 responses with a total of 51 photographic self-portraits. The actual number of submissions, though small, acted as a guide for qualitative analysis through the visual methods described above. The total number of photographs submitted allowed for a more substantial analysis of dress as a mediator of femme identity. The participants, however, represented a diverse sample: a wide age range is represented through the submissions; 5 of the participants are people of colour, one participant is trans-identified and one participant is pictured in a wheelchair. The larger number of self-portraits and the diversity of the sample collected have allowed this

project to analyse, reflect and interpret the wide-ranging lived experiences of femme identity.

Visual Analysis[2]

The photographs submitted by participants represent a wide range of feminine appearance and dress. The participants self-selected to respond to the call for submissions by uploading up to 3 photographic self-portraits for a total of 51 photographs. Visual analysis of these participant photographs focused on three themes: subject pose, subject appearance and thematic narrative. The participant photographs were also contrasted against the photographs featured in *Femmes of Power* as this source is a rare academic source of femme visual culture.

    1. Subject pose:

Most participants submitted photographs looking directly at the camera, contradicting traditional norms of feminine passivity. While most are also smiling, some are staring intently at the viewer, holding their gaze. Only three participants declined to show their faces at all, in one case, showing just the thigh and torso instead. The majority of the self-portraits were in posed, static positions with minimal props. With the exception of the photograph of the thigh and torso of one participant, none of the submitted photographs are overtly provocative or sexual, as seen in many photographs

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[2] A note about visual analysis: The submission portal on the website allowed each participant to upload up to three photographs. Although there were 21 individual participants, all 51 photographic self-portraits have been analysed. This is to respect and reflect the fluidity of dress as a mediator of identity as self-expression as well as the individual choice of the participant to represent themselves in multiple images. Not all participants submitted photographs that featured fashion prominently.

in *Femmes of Power*. There are no obvious idiosyncratic similarities in the poses throughout the participant submissions.

2. Subject appearance:

Figure 2: Participant 777836. Although the subject is wearing a dress, has long hair and is wearing heavy makeup, this could not be construed as the embodiment of heterosexual femininity.

Unlike Del LaGrace Volcano's portraits in *Femmes of Power*, the femmes who submitted photos are mostly fully clothed. The clothing and overall appearance of these queer femmes vary from those featured in *Femmes of Power*. Of the 21 participants, only 3 have visible tattoos or other body modifications. In fact, while common themes are readily found in the ensembles of LaGrace Volcano's subjects, in this study there were few similarities to connect the appearance from one participant to another. There was a tendency towards body conscious apparel that exposed the legs or arms, such as dresses, skirts, shorts or lingerie in 21 of 51 photos. Long hair was the one

characteristic most commonly found in the self-portraits, with 29 occurrences out of 51 pictures. Pronounced makeup was also visible in 20 photographs. But these two features are hardly suffice to distinguish queer femme-ininity as radically distinct from heteronormative femininity as it is represented in *Femmes of Power*.

3. Thematic Narrative:

The photographs range from informal snapshots, where other individuals have obviously been cropped out, to deliberately staged self-portraits with the use of a tripod or another person to take the photo would have been necessary. Photographs that appeared to be staged or considered beforehand were of better quality in terms of picture resolution. Photographs that appeared to be informal snapshots were sometimes obviously taken from social networking sources such as Facebook profile pictures or Tumblr blogs. These photographs appear to be candid expressions of the self.

Connecting Images to Written Responses

When the subjects' dress, pose and narrative are combined, the results might be understood to reveal something more significant about queer femme-ininity (see fig. 2). A conscious re-appropriation of femininity is apparent in both participant 77836's photographs and questionnaire responses. This particular participant is aware of her own gender and sexual identity as being contextually situated in LGBTQ cultural history. Her gender expression of femme is an allusion to drag and can be seen as an extension of the queer art of camp. By wearing the exaggerated makeup associated with drag queens, she is tracing her performance of feminine gender to the origins of an

inherently queer act. Drag queens have played with gender as a means of critical assessment of heteronormative conventions. She is performing an appropriation of an appropriation. This performance of femininity can be seen as an intentional and conscious act.

Figure 4: Participant 781904

Figure 3: Participant 720485

Queer femme-ininity is not always embodied in radical acts of gender-bending. Some participants preferred to express their femininity without questioning the conventions of Western heteronormativity (long, straight hair, thin body, tanned skin). Participants 781904 and 720485 displayed some similarities in their dress and overall appearance (figures 3 and 4) but their attitudes towards femininity were clearly defined in their responses to the questionnaire.

Content Analysis

The questionnaire elicited responses that were articulate and well-considered. Many participants had similar descriptions of femme identity, which pointed to strength, a rejection of patriarchy, fashion, self-awareness and expression, and sexual identity as

formative to their identities. 10 out of 21 participants expressed that femme identity was more than just following codes of femininity or fashion. These participants actively dressed in ways they felt expressed their queerness, even though many expressed masculinity as the accepted and expected marker of queer identity. Over half of the respondents reported that they could identify other femmes, either by fashion sense or, more commonly, their body language or behaviour. Four major themes were apparent in the participants' thoughts on queer femme-ininity: feminine excess; embracing femininity; empowered, conscious femininity; and femme as an identity rather than a style. A minority of respondents felt, however, that femme was solely based aesthetics, "lifestyle" and fashion.

Feminine Excess

'Feminine excess' was a theme conveyed by many participants. This concept was clearly articulated by two participants who described their style as flamboyant, characterised by glitter, costume jewellery and drag makeup. One participant wrote, "In some ways, I think of myself as a female born drag queen – it's the excess that I love." Another participant wrote, "I call my style 'bourgippie with a hint of drag' (bourgippie: bourgy/hippie); my flamboyantly feminine excess queers me automatically in any context." The theme of excessive femininity is also evident in responses that highlighted the subjects' feelings of sexuality or sexiness. Many wrote of wanting to dress in ways that made them feel sexy and desirable to those whom they desire in return. One participant writes, "Dresses are womanly and fitted. Fun is corsetry and latex, hosiery is a weakness bordering on a sickness. This is my sexuality of femme, I am more polished than any straight woman I know." The participant contrasts her feminine representation

with that of heterosexual women to find herself even more woman than 'woman'. This participant (Participant 780354, see fig. 5) embodies her sexuality through the employment of classic or retro styled fashion and appearance. This style alludes to the overtly feminine fashions of the late 1940s and 1950s, that depended on elaborate and restrictive undergarments (corsets, hosiery) and a performance of polished femininity.

Figure 6: Participant 780354

Figure 5: Participant 772362 wears a bandage inspired dress

Although the expression of femme identity in a classic or retro fashion may not appear to be similar to that of the drag-femme, they both 'outdo' the norms of conventional contemporary Western femininity.

Embracing Femininity

Clothing that accentuates the feminine form is a dominant theme in the participants' responses. Dress was chosen to accentuate the body and make participants feel attractive, comfortable and confident. One participant writes, "I wear clothes that make me feel sexy and good, and that accentuate my curves." (See figure

6.) Another participant wrote, "I love to dress in sexy feminine clothing, although certainly not dresses or high heels necessarily." Many respondents noted their embrace of femininity and of (what they were conscious of being) "traditionally feminine" dress and characteristics but were careful to indicate that this had been a deliberate choice. Respondents who mentioned an embrace of femininity emphasized confidence but did not indicate a rejection of conventional feminine norms or an intentional queering of those norms.

Empowered, Conscious Femininity

Many participants articulated descriptions of femme identity as an empowered, intentional and conscious embodiment of gender and sexuality. When answering if she chose to represent her sexuality through her clothing, one participant replied, "I do, by accentuating my best features – collarbones, shoulders, forearms. Having thought in-depth about fashion/style and heteronormativity, I avoid style items that are designed solely to attract men or contribute to the physical subjugation of female bodies." This choice to dress in a manner that disengages or discourages the male gaze is distinctly different from quotations from other participants who embraced a more conventional form of femininity as outlined above. Another participant wrote, "I choose to embody the strength of the female energy." Yet another participant wrote, "Femme is not passive. Femme is standalone" possibly pointing to the complicated relationship of femmes in the lesbian community and their reliance on butches for visibility and authentication. Many of the submissions stated declarations of choice and choosing feminine representation, asserting their agency in their femme-ininity. This self-determination empowers queer femme-ininity and is a fundamental difference from traditional

concepts of heteronormative femininity. Femininity here has been re-appropriated and transformed from passive to active, from weak to strong. The transformation is visible in the assertive gaze of many of the self-portraits.

"Femme Fits Me" – Femme as an identity not style

Queer femme-identity was judged to be an identity rather than a style by 16 of the 21 participants. One participant wrote, "Femme is an identity that reflects an appreciation of the highly subjective concept of femininity." Another participant wrote that it is "how I move through this world and how I interpret my connection to femininity and the act of being female." Other participants referred to femme as "a state of being." The concept of femme as an identity is most apparent in the responses of the participants when asked if they could identify other femmes.

Roughly 50% of the participants reported being able to identify other femmes by observing other women. Responses indicated femmes are more easily identified by their behaviours rather than visual signifiers in fashion. Confidence, "taking up space", and body language were all noted as signifiers of femme identity. Some respondents reported understood visual signifiers of queer femme-ininity in dress to be: tattoos, body modification and "rock chick chic"; major makeup; pushing boundaries of the stereotypically feminine; and "[dressing] more creatively and androgynously than straight women." These visual signifiers – although they have figured prominently in the work of LaGrace Volcano and Dahl, among other queer media such as online sites and blogs – were not overwhelmingly prevalent in the results of this study. A small minority of participants wrote that femme identity was only an expression of fashion and feminine

taste that was in no way influenced by sexual identity. Although half of the participants

felt that queer femme-ininity was more than wearing feminine clothing or adhering to

feminine conventions of beauty, and were able to provide examples of visual signifiers

of queer femme-ininity in fashion, it is apparent that there are possibly as many ways to

be femme as there are femmes.

PART 2 – BEYONDLIPSTICK.CA AND ONLINE GALLERY

Influences and Wider Context

Queer media often reflect a culture of homonormativity when representing femmes: lack of representation, distrust of femininity as an authentic queer experience, misogynistic attitudes of femininity in general. On the other hand, mainstream media representations of queer feminine-identified people are relatively prominent (*the L word, Glee, Grey's Anatomy*) – but this must not be seen as an acceptance of femme-ininity as an authentic queer experience since the characters rarely demonstrate femininity queered but rather conform to heteronormative conventions of femininity. Femmes in television and on film are most often represented as "lipstick lesbians" with little differentiation between their heterosexual counterparts (Walters 165).[3] Recently, several web sites and books have gained popularity in queer media that provide insight on queer femmes.

1. Websites:

Websites like *Autostraddle* (a queer women's website that produces content on many aspects of queer life), *Effing Dykes* (personal humor blog) and *Fit for a Femme* (personal style blog) feature content that explores femme fashion and style and addresses important issues such as invisibility and misogyny within the queer community. There are other blogs in the Tumblr community such as *Fuck Yeah Femmes* and *Fuck Yeah Hard Femmes* that are designed to share photos of fashion ideas, runway pictures and other visual media within the online femme community.

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[3] In fact, many femme lesbian and bisexual characters are so similar to their heterosexual peers that they ultimately end up in heterosexual relationships.

2. Books:

Contemporary books that revisit the Butch/Femme dyad like *Persistence: All Ways Butch and Femme* (Arsenal Pulp Press 2011) and ones that explore the intersectionalities of identity politics such as *Nobody Passes: Rejecting the Rules of Gender and Conformity* (Seal 2006) have been published with success. Many of these works feature the theories, writings and/or artwork of a small and close-knit network of queer femmes.

A network of queer femmes is made possible largely via the internet. My decision to create an online exhibition of the submissions is influenced by this network, which includes the Femme Collective (http://femmecollective.tumblr.com/), the Femme Cast (http://www.femme-cast.com/), Femme Mafia (http://www.femmeatx.com/FemmeATX/) and many other femme tumblrs, Facebook groups and personal blogs. This project finds its niche by creating a space for both the visual articulation of femme-ininity through fashion and style and its verbalization by and for unknown, everyday femmes.

Website Design

The design of beyondlipstick.ca was influenced by the theoretical framework of the project, and the participant responses and self-portraits. Design components such as colour scheme, typography selection and the use of creative photographic backgrounds were driven by concepts of queer femme-ininity as empowered, bold, complex and layered. Concepts of identity and group identification have been engaged through the design of the gallery and the navigation mechanism in particular.
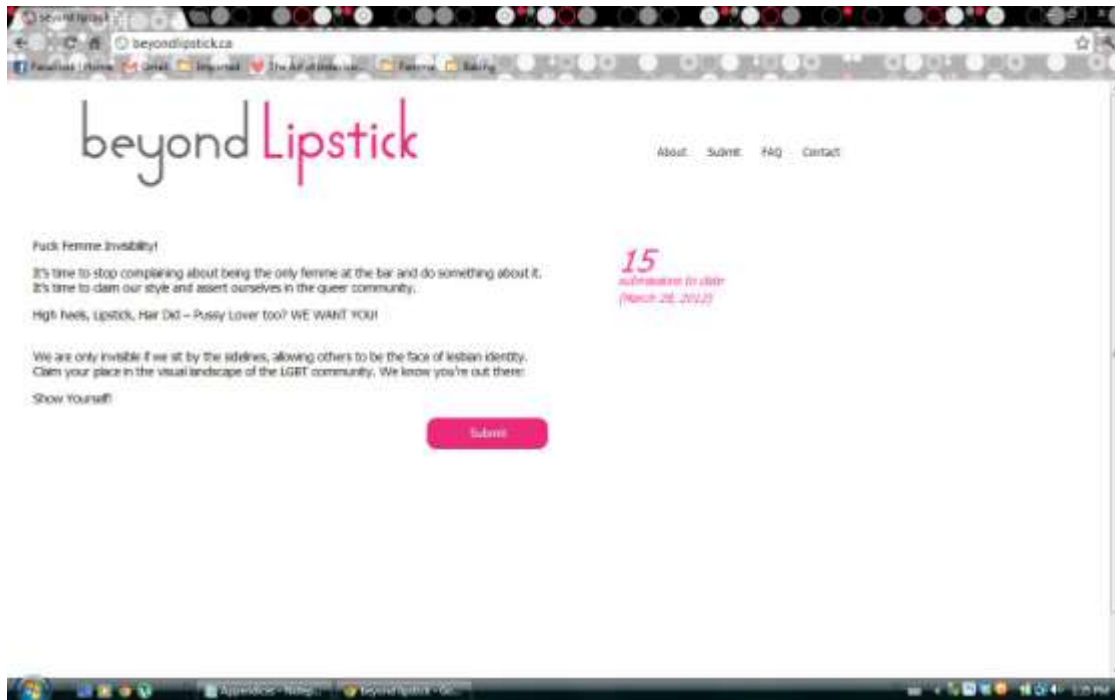
Figure 7: beyondlipstick.ca Original Website Homepage

Challenges

The challenges of the project stemmed from the act of communicating a complex, fluid and personal identity through the medium of a website; these included design, technical and production challenges. In contrast to the high quality and artistically produced photographs that characterize *Femmes of Power*, this project involved participant-produced-content that was beyond my control. Participants often uploaded photographic files of poor resolution that required specific design consideration to unify them with the other submissions of higher quality. These photographs influenced the use of repetition throughout the gallery and the use of *faux* 'polaroid' layouts to complement their candid and informal aesthetic. In addition, several photos were watermarked with a photographer's copyright, rendering these

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unusable for the gallery. (Although it is explicitly written in the consent form that the participant must have the right to pictures they upload to the site.)

Components of the Website

Beyondlipstick.ca was developed in two parts: the submission website for participants to submit photographs and answer questions, and the final website that features the Index/gallery space. The original submission website was designed for the sole purpose of collecting participant submissions. The site included information about the project, contact information for both the researcher and Ryerson ethics board, and the submission portal which could be accessed after the user read the consent form (see fig. 7). The final website maintains the aesthetics (colour scheme and typeface), basic layout and navigation categories as the submission website, but introduces elements of creative photography (in backgrounds) and integrates the Index/gallery space which displays participant responses through innovative layout and navigation elements.

Design Elements of the Beyondlipstick.ca Brand

To increase the credibility of beyondlipstick.ca in the online femme community, a cohesive "brand" was created for the project, using a minimal design aesthetic and color scheme combined with photography. The design elements of the brand were employed across all platforms including the website, Facebook page, Tumblr blog, Twitter account, and all printed media such as posters and flyers. Informed by the theoretical framework of this research project, the following decisions informed the design of beyondlipstick.ca:

1. **Colour scheme**

The colour scheme of pink and grey was used throughout and relies on an understanding of colour from a contemporary Western perspective. The use of bright pink is informed by the gendering of colour in this context: pink is for baby girls (Entwistle 140). Pink is for femininity that is "girly" and one that conforms to the conventions of heteronormative society. The shocking pink hue is contrasted with grey and shades of overexposed colour. The colour grey is used as a metaphor and is informed by heteronormative conventions of masculinity. Grey is an understated colour that does not draw attention; it is not frivolous. Grey acts as a metaphor for the refusal of femme-ininity to conform to one stable definition. The colour scheme used throughout the website also expresses concepts of visibility as it has been articulated in femme-ininity. Bright pink explicitly declares femininity when contrasted with the grey and white while still hinting at the parody of passivity and feminine convention. As Mowlabocus states, " 'Coming out' is about making one's self visible; throwing one's queerness into relief against a heteronormative background that would render it invisible" (202). The colour scheme of beyondlipstick.ca is meant to declare femme visibility boldly. The use of contrast and juxtaposition extends to the gallery, or Index page through the use of pink typeface to highlight particularly insightful quotes from participants.

2. **Typeface**

The deliberate choice of simple, sans serif typefaces – Arctic and Century Gothic – was informed by concepts of queer femme-ininity as they emerged from the findings. The selection of bold, sans serif typefaces is a reflection of femininity without "frills" –

this is the embrace of feminine strength. Arctic, the typeface used for the logo, was
chosen with particular attention to its rounded forms in contrast to its sharp linear lines.
The use of contrast and juxtaposition mimics queer femme-ininity, which contrasts
'rounded' femininity with the strength of self-determination associated with masculinity.

3. **Photography Project**

The design of the final website is complemented by a photography project to
produce the background images (See Appendix E). While the minimal design of the
submission website design was valuable for the purposes of collecting the original
submissions, the final website is designed to fully represent the layers of meaning in

Figure 8: Beyond Lipstick Homepage Re-Design with photographic Background

dress and the complex intersectionalities of femme identity. The background photographs are slightly intimate, as though the viewer has happened upon a bedroom scene, the clothing and accessories in disarray. In one image, layers of patterns and different textures (satin, lace, denim) are shown to hint at the fluidity not only of each respective individual's articulation of femme-ininity, but also how that articulation might change from day-to-day (see fig. 8). The photographs serve as an environment onto which any femme might project themselves.

Gallery Space – 'Index' [4]

The Index (or gallery space) of beyondlipstick.ca is the most important aspect of this project. The Index section of the website is designed to reflect the difficulties in conceptualizing and defining queer femme-ininity as a whole or through generalizations. The index is designed to visualize queer femme-ininity as active, dynamic, strong, empowered and in a constant state of renewal and negotiation. This is achieved through the bold and aggressive use of type and backgrounds. Themes of individual and community visibility are engaged through the display of individual interpretations of queer femme-ininity as overlapping images that emerge from one another – the relationship of each individual femme to each other is left intentionally ambiguous. The design of the Index space can be examined in four parts: navigation mechanism; contrast and juxtaposition; type and images; and multiplicity as a metaphor.

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[4] A note on the gallery space: It was decided that the gallery of photographic self-portraits needed to reflect both the ongoing nature of this open project as well as a non-intimidating space for users of the website. Exhibition or gallery both have connotations of high art and were thought to be in contrast to the post-structuralist and queer methodologies of this project.

1. Navigation Mechanism

The complex variations of queer femme-ininity were a major theme that emerged through the review of relevant literature and participant submissions. Neither queer femme identity nor its expression and communication through dress and appearance is stable or coherent. It is important that the structure of the Index reflects the concepts associated with the attempt to visualize queer femme identity. From a design and technical perspective, a creative solution for the Index was necessary since each participant had submitted photos of different resolutions and styles. The differences in photographs lent to the consideration of a unique system of display, echoing the differences in interpretation of queer femme-ininity and identity. The theme of interconnected and merging interpretations of femme identity is integral to the design of the scrolling mechanism of the index, which creates the appearance of overlapping images. The gallery space was designed to balance both the conceptual implications of the subject matter and the production challenges stemming from the lack of quality control on the behalf of the researcher.

Working within the constraints of the photographs and the complexities of representing concepts of identity, femme-ininity and dress pushed this project to novel designs. To balance technical parameters and concepts of representation, a non-traditional gallery space was created. An "Index" page was designed with the idea of separating each femme into different sections, while the unique scrolling action allowed for overlap of the images. The overlap allows the user to visualize a connection from disparate images and identities. The separation of each section allows for greater

freedom when complementing an individual's personal expression and when working with files of different sizes and qualities.

The difficulties in any attempt to "sum up" or reduce queer femme-ininity into a consistent and uniform expression of gender and sexuality are reflected in the user's inability to see the submissions together, all at one time. Queer femme-ininity must be engaged individually with each femme at her will, as she stares the user in the eye, daring them to break her gaze (see fig. 9). The Index goes beyond static representations of femme identity seen in *Femmes of Power* and femme-produced online media; it prompts the viewer to question relationships between the queer femme-ininities expressed by the participants. The movement created between each successive participant page is a reflection of the dialogic and self-referencing nature of
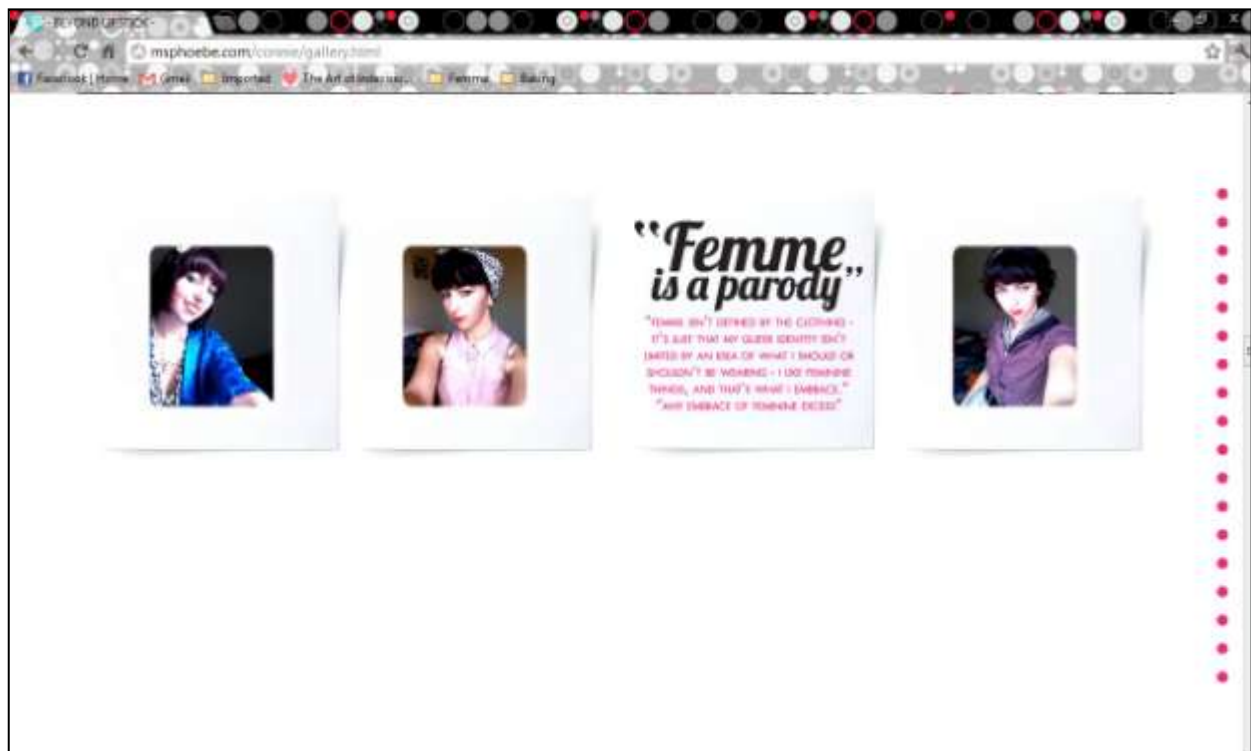

Figure 9: Beyond Lipstick Index Page Screen Capture featuring scrolling mechanism on the right and gallery space with participant submitted photographs and selected quote (centre).

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media in the small and close-knit online femme community. Here, the viewer is left to seek out similarities or differences between the femmes.

2. Contrast and Juxtaposition

Two design principles that are repeated throughout the website design are contrast and juxtaposition. These principles are employed in the use of colour (pink and grey) and typeface (curvilinear and strong angles).Contrast and juxtaposition are also integrated into the design of the Index space. White and black backgrounds and two oppositional typefaces are employed to provoke associations of strong and empowered femme-ininity. The use of alternating white and black backgrounds within the space of the index is in stark contrast to the overexposed full bleed photographs used elsewhere in the website and the use of grey in the logo. The oppositional white and black backgrounds are striking and aggressive, reflecting the embrace of feminine excess and the rejection of feminine passivity and demureness. The juxtaposing typefaces are both bold: one a curvy script, the other, an all-caps sans serif. The choice of typefaces asserts the seemingly contradictory femininity of queer femme identity: the strength of empowered feminine agency combined with appearance and dress that is conventionally coded as heteronormative. Contrast and juxtaposition are integral to the display of the participant quotes, highlighting words and/or phrases that are particularly insightful.

3. Typeface and Images

The deliberate display of participant images and quotes from their responses to the questionnaire was motivated by this project's aspiration to make visible the invisible,

to hear the unheard. The limited queer femme voices in academia are compounded by the abundance of butch or masculine-spectrum theorists who write about queer identity. Online, while context-free picture sharing and personal fashion blogs are popular, femmes are rarely given the chance to articulate themselves and their identities in the written word. This project sought to personify each participant and let them give context to their visual expression of queer femme-ininity.

4. Multiplicity as a metaphor

Throughout the design of the website, metaphor was used as a visual method of interpretation: metaphor in colour selection, background images, and choice of typeface. Metaphor was also used in the Index display of participant submissions. Although it was only mandatory for participants to submit one photograph, participants were given the option of uploading up to three files and many chose to submit multiple photos where they were wearing different outfits, had different hairstyles or even were different ages. These photographs were intentionally chosen because they represented something special to these femmes. As previously stated, the images uploaded by participants were often of low quality which also necessitated the display of multiple images as a way of creating impact comparable to the display of higher resolution pictures (which could be displayed in larger sizes). The majority of the photographs submitted are on display in the index, to represent the multiple interpretations of femme-ininity by each individual femme as they navigate their identity on a daily basis. The use of repetition of certain images, through the use of mirroring or by flipping images on the vertical or horizontal axes, acts as a visual metaphor for the multiple and complex meanings each individual femme as expressed in her self-representation through

photography. Additionally, each individual photograph will be interpreted with any

number of diverse meanings by viewers.

Chapter 5:
Conclusion

Implications

Although the small sample size of this study makes it difficult to draw firm conclusions on the nature of queer femme-ininity and its expression and communication through dress, the findings of the study indicate several common themes.

1. Queer Femme-ininity as a gender identity beyond the butch/femme dyad

This project exists alongside the work of other contemporary femme scholars and community leaders, in the context of a global and growing femme movement to assert femme-ininity. Femme-inist theorists such Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha ("Femme Shark Manifesto" 2010) and Erin Joan Douglas (*Femme Femme-ininities: A Performative Queering* 2004) have explored identity, sexual dynamics and femme-ininity independent of a butch/femme dyad. This independent exploration of queer femme-ininity was reinforced by participants who responded without any mention of butch or masculine-spectrum identified/femme relationships. Many respondents did not mention butch/femme dynamics as integral or central to their identities as femmes. This positions queer femme-ininity as a standalone gender identity that is not dependent on binary gender and/or sexual dynamics.

2. The role of dress in the articulation and communication of queer femme-ininity

Femmes of Power and other femme media such as queerfatfemme.com, effingdykes.blogspot.com and fuckyeahfemmes.tumblr.com have often depicted femmes as visibly marked queer bodies. These femmes are marked by what some participants recognized as visual signifiers of queer femme-ininity: tattoos and body modifications, heavy makeup, alternative/pin-up/rocker fashions. Although the sample of femmes who participated in this study did not report representing their sexuality in these marked or understood ways, many stated that they expressed and communicated their queer identity through their appearance. The difference in how participants *perceived* femme identity to be marked by other femmes and how they *personally reported* communicating their queer identity through their appearance implies that the queer media's representation of femme identity as being visibly marked is not as prevalent or as dominant as queer femmes expect and/or that visual signifiers of queer femme-ininity differ from those represented in queer media. Additional research is needed to further study the effect of the representation of femme identity in non-mainstream femme media.

3. Visibility and Representation as instigating response and facilitating community

Possibly the most important implication of this research is the role of media representation and visibility in the articulation and negotiation of queer femme-ininity. When Del LaGrace Volcano and Ulrika Dahl published *Femmes of Power*, they provided a platform for queer femme-ininity as it is expressed through provocative clothing, tattoos, burlesque performances and femme genderbending through visible beards. This work, however significant as a rare source of professionally produced and disseminated femme visual culture, provided visual representation of a seemingly uniform queer femme-ininity.

Beyondlipstick.ca is ongoing and remains open for submissions, allowing for other visions of queer femme-ininity and in doing so, promotes the expressions and articulations of even *more* queer femmes as the project expands and reaches further audiences. As the Index or gallery portion of the web site is now public, the enhanced visibility and representation of femmes, is anticipated to produce more submissions.

Future Directions

As previously stated, beyondlipstick.ca is an ongoing project that is continually accepting new submissions. These submissions will be added to the Index section of the website in order to create a large collection of queer femme-ininity expressions that reflect the diversity of the community. Future directions of this project include, but are not limited to:

1. Exhibition in physical space
2. Femme Club Night Partnership in Vancouver, BC
3. The expansion of the beyondlipstick.ca website to include social networking

4. Conference presentation exploring queer femme-ininity at the Femme2012 conference in Baltimore, MD, August 2012

5. The production of a documentary-style film examining queer femme-ininity and fashion

Femme Complexities – Intersections of class, gender and sexual identities

Beyond the limits of this project, there are many untouched facets of queer femme-ininity. Three intersections of femme identities that were encountered throughout this research project were gender, sexual identity and class. While the project terms reflected the belief that femme is a gender identity unconstrained by biological sex, there were some participants that responded with a firm view of femme identity as inherently female rather than feminine, and did not agree with the use of femme by those who were assigned the sex of male at birth or genderqueer individuals (which is defined as those who do not identify as having either masculine or feminine gender or who identify as possessing qualities of both genders). There were others who used the term femme to refer to the sexual identity of lesbian. Such perspectives point to the need for further consideration of the differences between queer femmes and lesbian or bisexual femmes (queer here referring to individuals who reject binary definitions of gender and/or sexual identity). Class forms an important area for further research since the act of dressing the body in clothing (or even altering it through body modification) is one that exists in a capitalist system, within structures of consumption. Further research could examine how class and the ability to purchase clothing signifiers of femme identity

reflect its expression. The limited academic sources of femme-inist theory make this field of study rich with possibility for future research.

Conclusion

This project explores queer femme identity and its expression and communication in dress through researching visual signifiers of queer femme-ininity and exploring whether heteronormative conventions were subverted in the adoption of feminine appearance by queer individuals. The resulting website, beyondlipstick.ca, represents the fluidity of queer femme-ininity as a dynamic and bold gender expression that challenges assumptions of visibility and representation. The portrait of queer femme-ininity that emerged from this research is at once defined and ambivalent – there are indeed visual signifiers of queer femme-ininity that queer femmes can list and identify, yet those represented in this project do not adhere to those signifiers. Heteronormative conventions of femininity have certainly been transformed through their appropriation by queer individuals, but the results are not as visibly radical as the performances of queer femme identity by femme icons captured in works such as *Femmes of Power*. Although this project sought to isolate queer femme-ininity and identity, the research uncovered a myriad of complexities and unanswered questions for further exploration.

Beyondlipstick.ca has just begun the project of encouraging queer femme visibility and representation for all femmes, no matter what size, shape, gender, ability, age, race, class or prominence. In the words of the project's call for submissions, "Femmes, we know you're out there: SHOW YOURSELF!"

Appendix A
Ethics Protocol

Protocol View

Protocol Submitted By: claalo

Submission Status: Approved

REB: 2011-306

Comments to Chair
Dear Research Ethics Board, Having received your excellent comments and concerns, I have revised my protocol and these specific sections: Method of Recruiting Method of Obtaining Consent Justification for Involving Humans Potential Risk Exposures Recruitment Source Recruitment Methods Potential Problems Participant Characteristics Describe provisions made to maintain confidentiality of data Management of Risk Identification of Risk I have also edited and attached Consent Form Call for Submission Text and well as my Research Project Proposal. Issues Raised: 1. Privacy/confidentiality To address the privacy concerns of participants, the consent form has been edited to with increased attention with relation to the public space of the internet. The consent form now explicitly defines the Internet as a public space and notifies participants of the permanence of their images within it. The consent form also explicitly notifies the participants of the possibility of being identified through dress or physical appearance. 2. Recruitment: To address possible coercion or pressure through the use of social networking to disseminate the call for submission, the recruitment sections have been amended to redefine the use of social networks as a request to disseminate the call. All personal acquaintances will be assured that any participation is strictly voluntary. Participant characteristics as well as the text for the consent form and call for submission also reflect the wording suggested in your comments. 3. Consent: Please see the revisions to the consent form, which now details the process of discontinuing participation as well as what it means to participate in this study.\ 4. Risks/Benefits: The possibility and management of fraudulent submission is now addressed in the risk sections. The risk and risk management of image copying is more fully addressed as well in these sections. Unfortunately there is no way to completely prevent experienced Internet users from copying an image, however the images posted will not be downloadable. Please see the revised consent form for the increased attention to the possible risks for participants. Thank you for your comments. I look forward to hearing from you. Connie Laalo

Title of Research Proposal
Beyond Lipstick: Expressions of Femme Lesbian Identity Through Dress

Principal Investigator

Type: GS
First Name: Concettina Maria
Last Name: Laalo
Institution: Ryerson University
Academic Title:
Department/Office: FCAD
Email: connie.laalo@gmail.com
Telephone Number: 647-828-6398

Co-Investigator(s)

No co-investigators were specified in this protocol.

Student Researcher(s)

No student researchers were specified in this protocol.

Access to Protocol

jmedaglia

Has this protocol been approved or is currently being reviewed by other Research Ethics Boards? No

Projected Dates of Data Collection and Analyses

Begin Recruitment Date: November 1, 2011
End Analysis Date: March 20, 2012

Funding Source

Not funded/No application for funding

Sponsor(s)

No sponsors were specified in this protocol.

If the study is funded, will the Principal Investigator require the approval of the sponsor(s) before the publication of the findings? No

Does the Principal Investigator(s) or Co-Investigator(s) have a financial interest or personal relationship with member(s) of the funding sponsor(s)? No

Use of Existing Data

Will this study involve the use of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens? No

Participants to be Recruited

- Adults (18+ years)

Data Will Include

- Gender

Are codes used to link data to participants? No

Is compensation offered? No

Number of Participants

- Online photographic submission (20)

Method of Recruiting

Dissemination of call for submission through websites, email to community members and use of social networking (Facebook, emails to network of friends and acquaintances.) In the interest of reducing possible coercion or pressure on the part of the researcher to friends and acquaintances, the use of social networking will be limited to the request to further disseminate the call for submission and explicitly state that participation is strictly voluntary. The use of social networking to further disseminate the call for submission is for the purpose of increasing both the number and variety of participants. The request to social networks to further disseminate the call for submission will be worded as: "As part of my MA Fashion thesis research,

I am disseminating a call for submission for self-portraits of any self-identifying femme lesbians over the age of 18. Please re-post or forward this along to anyone or any groups who might be interested in participating. Thanks!"

Will potential participants be involved in:

- **An intervention or manipulation?** No
- **Deception?** No

Potential Risk Exposures

Social

If you think your protocol is minimal in risk to your participants, state why you think it is minimal risk?

Although participants will be asked to submit photographic self-portraits to contribute to the online gallery, which will be exhibited in the public space of the internet, they are notified that they are not obliged to show their faces or any identifying features in their pictures through the call for submission. There is still the possibility that they might be identified by their dress or physical appearance - this is explicitly stated in the consent form. Any participant who chooses to participate in this research will also be actively choosing to publicly self-identify as a femme lesbian in the space of the internet but their participation will only include their likeness without any identifying information such as age, name or location. Participants will also be notified through the consent form that their photographs will be made public in the virtual space of the Internet where they can never fully be removed.

Are there any issues of cultural diversity with respect to privacy that you are aware of in the questions you're asking and the type of participants you are recruiting?

Instruments

- Other: Online submission of self-portraits and written responses to 3 open-ended questions

Data will be recorded by:

- Photograph

Method of data collection:

- Other: Website Submission

Findings used for:

- Other: Online Exhibition

Method of obtaining consent:

- Other: Consent will be obtained from the participants in the form of online consent fields on the submission page that must be agreed to before a submission can be processed. The submission of photograph files and written interview responses will only be processed once the participant has indicated their consent by **scrolling through the consent form and clicking "I Agree" in the required field. The submission of photographs and interview responses indicates the participant's consent to** the online exhibition of their image and words, their awareness of the risks inherent in publicly identifying their sexual orientation online as well as their certification that the images submitted are of themselves and are copyright-free.

Method of obtaining consent/assent from children or participants unable to sign legally valid consent:

- No written assent, under the age of 7 (include information on how the researcher will determine consent and monitor the participant's willingness to continue in the study).

More Information:

Graduate Initiated Research

This protocol must be met with Faculty approval and be in compliance with procedures/regulations designed to protect human participants.

Authorized Faculty Representative Information:

First Name: Joseph
Last Name: Medaglia
Department/Office: Fashion
Institution: Ryerson University
Email: jmedaglia@ryerson.ca
Phone: ext. 7068

STUDY ABSTRACT

Please provide a one paragraph summary of the protocol that includes a brief description of the methods, potential benefits, potential risks, and risk management procedures.

This project will examine femme lesbian dress through the use of an online call for participation, inviting self-identified femme lesbians to photograph themselves as well as answer three qualitative interview questions and submit their photographic and written responses to an online exhibition curated by the researcher. The photographs and written responses will be analyzed through qualitative visual and textual methods that seek to discern any similarities in the styles of dress and attitudes towards fashion as a communicative tool. The online exhibition of these self-portraits and written responses presents potential benefits for the participants in the form of increased visibility and recognition from the LGBT community. Potential risks may include the unauthorized use of these images by third-party internet users.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE & BACKGROUND

Background information and literature
Briefly discuss relevant background information and literature reviewed to provide the rationale for the proposed research (include references). State the relevance of this research and its potential for contribution to the field of study.

This research project explores the autonomy of femme identity, independent from butch identity and apart from the butch-femme dyad. In the past, major research has focused on this dyad within the lesbian community but has concentrated on the subject of female masculinity (Halberstam 1998, Butler 1991). Academic interest in female masculinity has validated this gender expression as a true experience of lesbian identity and, as consequence, the butch is over-represented in academic literature. In addition, the butch is also highly visible – her sexual difference is written in her dress, behaviour and mannerisms. Viewed in the dyad, the butch has marked the femme. Without the butch, whose representation of female masculinity marks her sexual difference, the femme is invisible. This invisibility has constructed femme identity as passive and dependent in a manner that mimics heteronormative conventions of femininity. In order to fully establish and assert femme as an autonomous identity, it must be engaged independently in a manner that

validates this expression of femininity as an authentic expression of lesbian identity and lived experience. Femme identity is equally deserving of attention and study from the academic community. Femme subverts heteronormative convention by transgressing notions of the masculine-feminine binary and engaging issues of dress and identity, homonormativity, and self representation. I therefore recognize femme identity and its representation as subversive and transgressive. Butler, Judith. Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity. New York: Routledge, 2006. Print. Halberstam, Judith (Jack). Female Masculinity. Durham: Duke UP, 1998. Print.

Design and scientific rationale
Provide information regarding the design and the scientific rationale underlying the proposed research and the statistical basis for the structure of the investigation. Specify aims of the research that include the hypotheses to be tested, questions to answer, data to be gathered and tested.

This project seeks to explore femme lesbian identity as it expressed and articulated visually through dress and fashion. Are there in fact visual signifiers of femme identity? Long hair, curvy body, high heels, skirts and dresses – do these symbols of heteronormative femininity take on new meaning when appropriated by lesbian women and if so, how? Do femme lesbians assume their invisibility in the LGBT community or are they actively communicating their queerness through their articulation of their gender identity? This project seeks to fill gaps in knowledge and engage femme identity in order to create a more complex understanding of how visibility and dress impact sexual identity. Data will be gathered in the form of the submission of photographic self-portraits and written responses to three interview questions by self-identified femme lesbians. The visual analysis will examine the participant photos for commonalities in: 1. Subject pose: Is this pose passive or aggressive? Is the subject looking directly at the camera? Is the subject fully in frame? Is the pose provocative in any way? Are there similarities throughout the participant submissions? 2. Subject appearance: Has the subject emphasized the femininity of her dress or body? Are there similarities in the appearance of the various subjects, with regards to body type, makeup/hair style, dress? 3. Thematic Narrative: Do the photographs convey any narrative? Has the participant referenced specific works of art, whether contemporary or historical? Does the photograph convey an informal or formal setting? The participants' written responses will allow me to explore how femme identity is articulated beyond traditional signifiers of femininity and whether there is an appropriation of those signifiers by the femme community. Responses will be analyzed for evidence of: similarities in the definition of femme identity, positive experiences of femme identity within the LGBT community, recognized symbols of femme identity and an awareness of heteronormative and homonormative conventions.

Justification for involving humans
Provide justification for involving humans in the research. If relevant, include a summary of pre clinical/animal data that have been obtained through other research.

In order to explore femme identity as it is expressed through dress in contemporary LGBT culture, visual and textual data must be gathered from self-identified femme lesbians. Due to the invisibility and marginalization of femme lesbians from the LGBT and heteronormative cultures, femmes are under-represented in academia and creative work. To fully appreciate and comprehend the complex intersectionalities involved in the many concepts of femme identity, this identity must be engaged and explored from many perspectives. The researcher acknowledges the subjectivity of each individual's experience as an authentic and authoritative source of information on femme lesbian identity.

PARTICIPANTS

Participant Characteristics
Describe the characteristics of participants to be recruited (e.g., number of participants, gender, age range, etc.).

Participants will be: - Over the age of 18 - Self-identified femme lesbians - People who identify as women (both trans and cisgendered) For the project to be successful, at least 20 people must participate. There is no limit to the amount of participants. In this context, Femme lesbian refers to any lesbian or non-heterosexual woman who dresses and behaves in ways that are stereotypically feminine.

Selection Criteria
List the criteria for inclusion and exclusion of participants in this study. Identify how the inclusion and exclusion criteria will be assessed and by whom.

By the nature of the call to submissions, participants will self-select to participate in this research. Submissions from participants who include photographs of an obscene, violent or offensive nature will be excluded. Submissions from participants who do not fit the participation characteristics criteria will be excluded.

Special Populations
Provide a rationale for the use of special groups where ability to acquire informed consent may be limited. Special groups include, but are not limited to: children, prisoners, pregnant women, fetuses, and cognitively impaired individuals.

Recruitment Source
Identify the location from which participants will be recruited (e.g., schools, university campus, fitness facilities, hospitals). Include a letter from the institution/organization involved indicating support of the institution's involvement in this protocol.

The call for submissions will be distributed through the following; Web sites and blogs: 1. Femme Galaxy: http://www.femmegalaxy.com/ 2. Autostraddle: http://www.autostraddle.com/ 3. Effin Dykes: http://effingdykes.blogspot.com/ 4. Alphafemme: http://alphafemme.net/ 5. Fit for a Femme: http://fitforafemme.com/blog/ 6. Ms. Awesome: http://www.msawesome.com/blog/ 7. AfterEllen: http://www.afterellen.com/ 8. Femme on a Mission: http://femmeonamission.com/ 9. The Lesbian Question: http://www.thelesbianquestion.com/ 10. Fuck Yeah Femmes: http://fuckyeahfemmes.tumblr.com/ 11. The Femme Show: http://www.thefemmeshow.com/blog/ 12. Queer Fat Femme: http://queerfatfemme.com/ 13. Genderfork: http://genderfork.com/ 14. Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/ (personal social networking) Public locations: This invitation will also be disseminated through flyers and handouts in LGBT places in Toronto such as the 519 community centre and lesbian/queer club nights at the Henhouse, Naco Gallery, Cherry Bomb at Andy Poolhall, the Gladstone Hotel and the Beaver. Personal network of friends and acquaintances: The call for submissions will also be disseminated through my personal network of friends and acquaintances through Facebook and email. The call will be posted on the pages of relevant Facebook groups and on my personal profile. Facebook is a relatively low pressure environment where users are often invited to participate in events or visit other websites. In order to reduce any pressure or the possibility of coercion on the part of the researcher, the posting of the call for submissions will be worded as a request to further disseminate the call and explicitly state that all participation is voluntary. I will invite friends and acquaintances to re-post the call for submissions if they feel they know anyone that might contribute to the project. I will post the call only once and refrain from naming any individuals personally to reduce any pressure that could be felt to participate. The call will also be disseminated through email to the MA fashion program students and staff through the program's assistant. The re-posting of the call by other individuals will also work to further remove any undue pressure or influence on possible participants from my personal network of friends and acquaintances. In this study, the purpose of using social networking to further disseminate the call is to increase both the number and variety of participants.

Recruitment Methods
Describe how participants will be identified and recruited. If participants are identified from private medical or student records, provide documentation that authorizes your access to those records. The official holder of the record must make initial contact of participants identified through records to initiate involvement in the research protocol.

The call for submissions will invite self-identified femmes to participate in the project by submitting self-portrait photographs online to the Beyond Lipstick website. The call will indicate markers of femme lesbian identity (high heels, hair style, see attached call for submissions text), a brief description of the project's objectives, the website address and list the three interview questions. Also included in the call will be a brief statement detailing the specifications of the photographs to be submitted including size and resolution and number of photographs. This call will direct interested parties to the project website where they will find additional information as well as the submission portal.

Submit advertising copy, flyers, telephone scripts or other recruitment materials proposed for use in participant recruitment:

- [Call for Submissions Text](#)
- [Call for Submissions OCT 26 EDIT](#)

Informed Consent Process
Describe recruitment procedures used to ensure voluntary participation. Describe who will make initial contact with the potential participant and how the research will be introduced to the participant. Include the process used to introduce the consent agreement and procedures used by the investigator to assess the potential participant's understanding of the research (i.e., purpose of the study, risks, benefits, confidentiality, investigator's telephone number to call for questions, time commitment of the participant, etc.).

Participants will choose to participate in this study by seeing the call for submission and going to the website to submit their self-portraits. The submission portal on the website will include the consent information detailing the purpose of the study, risks, benefits, confidentiality and investigator's email address. The participant must indicate their consent by clicking "I Agree". Submissions will not be processed unless this consent is indicated. The successful submission of photographic files and interview responses indicates consent was received.

Study Location
Identify the location and describe the setting where participants will participate in this research. Address any special considerations associated with data collection at the location. For example, if participants are school children, identify whether class time is used or if children are participating outside of structured class time (address nonparticipating students, supervision of non-participants, procedures used to pull out children/participants during class time, etc.) If research participants are in the care of a health facility, a school, or other institution or community organization, it is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to ensure that the ethical guidelines of those facilities or institutions are followed and administrative and/or ethics approvals of those facilities or institutions are obtained and filed with the ERB prior to the initiation of any research protocol.

The study will take place online.

Potential Problems
Address any anticipated ethical problems involving participant identification, recruitment or data collection.

The most troubling potential problem is the possibility of third-parties submitting photographs of others without their knowledge or consent. Due to the use of the Internet in recruiting and the anonymous nature of the participants, there is no definitive method of ensuring the participants' identities. To manage this potential problem, the participant must indicate that the images submitted are of themselves and are copyright-free. If any submissions appear suspicious in nature (provocative or obscene language in the written responses or photographs that indicate the possibility of the subject being unaware of being photographed), the researcher will investigate through the use of TinEye photo recognition search engines. The researcher also reserves the right to exclude suspicious participant submissions from the study. To further address the possibility of fraudulent submissions, the online gallery will also include a curatorial statement detailing the research process and collection of photographs and direct any person whose images have been submitted without their consent to contact the researcher in order to have them removed. There are ethical implications of publishing subjects' photographs and written interview responses online due to the participants self-identifying as femme lesbians in a public space. Participants are notified that they are not obliged to include photographs that clearly identify their face however there is still the possibility of being identified by dress or physical appearance. There is also the possibility of the photographs being copied by unrelated third-parties and re-posted on other websites. The photographs will be securely embedded in the website gallery to discourage such copying. Due to the online nature of this project, it will also be difficult to ascertain the true age of participants to confirm they are adults as specified on the call for submissions.

RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODS

Research Design
Describe the research design and procedures used to test the hypotheses. Describe the tasks the participant will be asked to complete. Indicate the amount of time that the participant will be involved for each aspect of the study. Include a summary of investigational, experimental, or special procedures involving participants (medical devices, electrical equipment, etc.).

This research project involves the creation of a website and online gallery of photographic self-portraits by self-identified femmes. The project will explore femme identity, dress and self-representation through the visual analysis of these self-portraits, submitted online by participants through a website I will create entitled "Beyond Lipstick". The participants will also submit responses to written questions that will be analyzed and displayed as well. To participate in this study, the participant will need to pose for and take a photographic self-portrait and upload the file onto the website. The participant will also need to write responses for the three interview questions. The time needed to complete their submission, including the photography could be as little as 15 minutes to more than 1 hour, depending on the engagement and amount of involvement of the individual.

Tests, Questionnaires, and Interview Guides

Include all interview schedules and survey instruments:

- [Interview Questions](#)

If a standardized instrument(s) will be used, provide a written description of the measure(s).

Deception or Incomplete Disclosure
If applicable, fully describe the use of deception in this research and the debriefing practices proposed. Provide justification for the inclusion of deception and possible alternatives to the use of deception in this research.

RISKS

Identification of Risk
Describe the potential or known risks associated with participation in this research. Consider and assess the physical, psychological, social, economic and/or legal harm that may result from participation. Discuss whether risks are considered minimal or significant.

Risks for participants are minimal. Potential risks for participants are identified as: public exposure of sexual identity on the Internet and potential third-party copying, saving and re-posting of self-portraits. These risks are considered minimal due to the informed consent process which details the permanence of the virtual environment and the risks of being identified through dress or physical appearance. Once explicitly informed of the potential risks, participants who actively choose to submit photographic responses to the project have indicated their understanding of the risk and their own assessment of its significance in their respective personal lives.

Management of Risk
Describe precautions, safeguards and alternatives incorporated into the research activity to reduce or limit the severity, duration and likelihood of harm.

To manage the risk of public exposure of sexual identity, participants are informed that they may discontinue their participation at any time and ask that photographs be removed from the website (by emailing with original image(s) submitted and/or the link to their image(s) on the gallery). Participants are informed that although they may submit photographs that do not feature their faces, the possibility of being identified though dress or physical appearance remains. To manage the risk of third-party copying of images

and re-posting, the images will be securely embedded into the website through its design. Although there is no definitive method of preventing experienced Internet users from copying images off websites, the images will not be downloadable nor will users be able to "control + click" or "right-click" to save them.

Describe provisions made to maintain confidentiality of data
Identify who will have access to the collected data, where the data will be stored, and for how long.

Initially, the investigator and the supervisor will have access to the photographic files and interview responses. Once participants have submitted their responses to the website portal, any and/or all of the submitted responses will be displayed in the website's online gallery. The original electronic files submitted will be stored online through the website's server as well as on an encrypted USB key held by the investigator, and supervisor at Ryerson University. These files will be stored for five years. If a participant chooses to discontinue their participation in the study, their images and responses will be deleted permanently from the USB key and the online storage of the website.

Data Monitoring
When applicable, discuss the process used to monitor data collected to ensure the safety of participants (e.g., clinical trial studies).

Assessment of Risk
Assess whether the risks and inconveniences associated with the research are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits to the participants and in relation to the knowledge that may reasonably be expected to result from this research.

The risks associated with this study (public exposure online and third-party copying and re-posting) are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits which include the increased visibility of the marginalized femme lesbian community as well as the creation and fostering of an online community dedicated to that group. Femme lesbian dress visual signifiers may be identified which could impact the recognition of the group from the LGBT community as well as the dominant culture.

COSTS

Describe the costs that the participant may incur as a result of participation (charges for tests, travel, etc.).

There are no costs associated with participation.

COMPENSATION & INCENTIVES

If compensation or an incentive is offered for participation, provide details of this payment. For example, describe whether the participant is compensated by the number and type of procedures performed, the amount of time involved, or for each sample collected. Indicate whether payment is made with a cheque, cash, or gift certificate and whether a prorated amount is available should the participant discontinue participation. Provide the estimated value of the incentive. Discuss how the value of the incentive offered was determined. If the researcher intends to use inducements (e.g., partial course credit), then a clear statement to this effect must be provided and a rationale for such an inducement may be required by the REB.

There will be no compensation for participation.

INVESTIGATOR EXPERIENCE

Provide a brief summary of the investigator's relevant research experience/training (do not include a vitae). If the investigator is a graduate student and the research is being conducted for a thesis or dissertation project, also include a summary of the faculty member who is supervising the research.

Connie Laalo has experience conducting quantitative and qualitative research resulting in design and creative outcomes. She graduated in April 2009 from Kwantlen Polytechnic University with a Bachelor of Design in fashion design and technology. In her undergraduate studies, she conducted research in the form of standardized surveys and interviews for a project measuring student satisfaction and a collection of specialty-sized junior intimate apparel. In her graduate studies, her academic work has focused on issues of gender, queer identity and representation in dress from historical and contemporary perspectives. She is currently developing curriculum for a series of workshops she will be facilitating for Transgendered and Queer youth on the subject of clothing alteration, the reflection of gender and identity through dress, and fashion as a means of personal expression. Joseph Medaglia is an Assistant Professor in the School of Fashion at Ryerson University. His research and creative work explores issues of gay identity, visibility, representation, and the body. His work has been presented at various academic conferences throughout Canada and the United States, and has published in the Cultural Studies journal at York University, Intensions. Joseph is currently engaged in a Ryerson Creative Fund project entitled "Embracing the Monster" where he explores issues of identity and gay subjectivity using the figure of the monster as metaphor for the gay body. He has also collaborated on a FCAD Intra-faculty grant and been awarded a Research Assistant grant. Joseph's SRC activity confronts traditional academic research and theory with artistic methods including video, costume, and physical computing. He teaches courses in Interactive Media, Web Design, Communication Design, Typography and Fashion Promotion

CONSENT/ASSENT FORMS

Complete and enclose the applicable consent/assent forms:

- Consent text for Online submission portal
- Consent Text OCT 26 EDIT
- Research Proposal

Appendix B:
Beyond Lipstick Call for Submissions

Fuck Femme Invisibility

It's time to stop complaining about being the only femme at the bar and do something about it. It's time to claim our style and assert ourselves in the queer community. High heels, Lipstick, Hair Did – Pussy Lover too? WE WANT YOU!

We are only invisible if we sit by the sidelines, allowing others to be the face of lesbian identity.

Claim your place in the visual landscape of the LGBT community. We know you're out there: Show Yourself!

Beyond Lipstick is an online exploration of femme identity through the use of self-portraiture. We are collecting photographic self-portraits to create an online gallery exhibition to expose femme image and style to the LGBT community and world-at-large. We invite any self-identified woman, who identifies as a femme lesbian, is over 18 and is okay being publically identified as such to contribute to this project. In this context, Femme refers to any lesbian or non-heterosexual woman who dresses and behaves in ways that are stereotypically feminine.

To participate:

- Go to the website www.beyondlipstick.ca
- Submit up to 3 photographic self-portraits. The pictures do not need to show your face or any identifying features but should show your fierce femme style. Pictures should be under 4MB.
- Answer the interview questions:
  1. What is your definition of Femme?
  2. Do you represent your sexuality through your clothing? If yes, how? If no, why not?
  3. How do you identify another femme?

This project is undertaken by Connie Laalo (B. Des.), an MA Fashion candidate at Ryerson University (Toronto, Canada). Any questions related to this project can be sent to:

connie@beyondlipstick.ca

If you have questions regarding your rights as a human subject and participant in this study, you may contact the Ryerson University Research Ethics Board for information.

rebchair@ryerson.ca

Appendix C:
Participant Submissions

Beyond Lipstick Survey Questions:

1. What is your definition of femme?
2. Do you represent your sexuality through your clothing? If yes, how? If no, why not?
3. How do you identify another femme?

Reference Code: 720485

1. A lesbian who follows a more femini lifestyle
2. The reason behind my response is because everyone has days where they like wearing a pair of baggy
jeans and a t-shit. I dress up in a way that makes me feel comfortable as I am and follows my own
personal style of a mixed look depending on the day and occassion.
3. It really isn't an easy thing to do. Can't judge a book by it's cover.

Reference Code: 725608

1. Someone who does not identify as a butch, androgynous, or otherwise masculine labels with a female body.
2. YYes. I dress to accentuat my feminine body.
3. I've never been able too. The easily identifiable women tend to be those who are less femme.
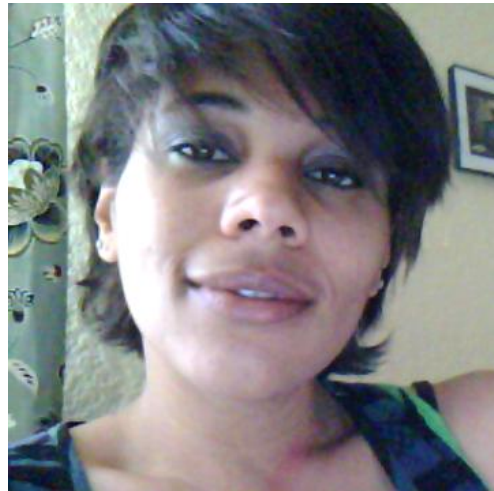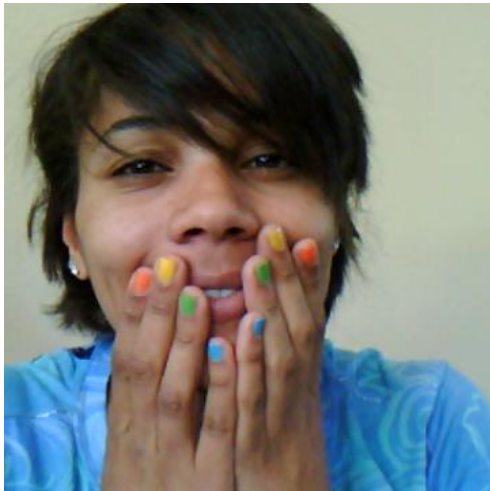
Reference Code: 771570

1. A consciously considered, queer feminine physical representation
2. I do, by accentuating my best features - collarbones, shoulders, forearms. Having thought in-depth about fashion/style and heteronormativity, I avoid style items that are designed solely to attract men or contribute to the physical subjugation of female bodies.
3. Her femininity is comfortable, self-possessed, and confident. Sometimes, I can identify another femme because she has picked and chosen the aspects of feminine representation that she wants to embody. Sometimes it's in body language, posture, or the strangers she chooses to make eye contact with.
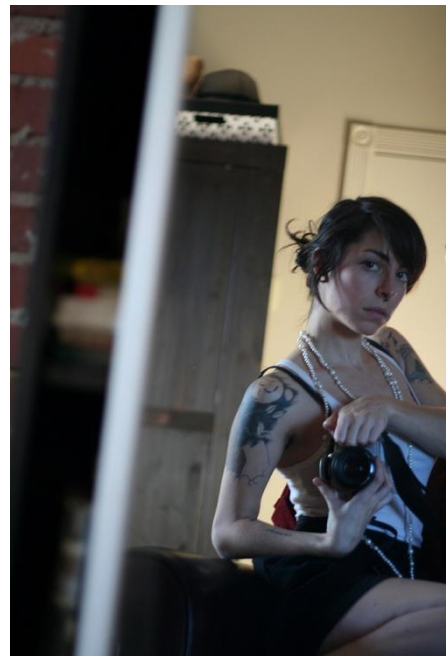
Ref. Code: 771624

1. Femme to me is more than just wearing feminine clothes. It"s embracing to a point those traits that society have marked as "feminine" (but also, wearing that cute floral skirt and pumps never hurt anyone ;D)

2. How can I answer this? Haha. I mean, I dress very girly and people assume I"m into penis, but I"m not. At all. So when you look at it from other people"s point of view, queer or not, I don"t represent my personality through my clothing.

3. Usually body language; how they react to what I say or do. Or even just a conversation. I haven"t been around other femmes that are not involved with the Gender/Queer studies world, so I guess I"m lucky, haha. I am around women that avidly vociferate their own queerness, regardless of their garments.

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Reference Code: 772362

1. femme is an identity that reflects an appreciation of the highly subjective concept of femininity.
2. i wear clothes that make me feel sexy and good, and that accentuate my curves.
3. i ask!

Reference Code: 775002

1. actually i'm learning. I'm interested in the whole "femme-thing" and i'm searching for answers.
2. I'm wearing, what I want to wear. And if I feel sexy, I'm wearing sexy (but classy) clothes and dresses. But - who cares so much about fashion? It's all about your heart!
3. If she tells me she is, she is, isn't she?

Ref. Code: 775566

1. identifying as a woman who is romantically attracted to other women, whether queer, lesbian or bi, and who chooses to portray myself in a feminine manner of dress, make up and general physical characteristics typical of femininity
2. absolutely--i love to dress in sexy, feminine clothing, although certainly not dresses or high heels necessarily. But i like to match, i like flowing, pretty "outfits" with my accessories all matching; i consider my clothing choices and outward appearance a form of art and creative expression.
3. It's a bit difficult on the street unless she's holding hands with another woman. Femmes "pass" so to speak, so it takes really tuning into someone"s energy, and maybe flirting with her, holding her eyes and seeing if she connects. Beyond that, I identify another femme as someone who feels similar to me. Femmes are different than straight women in their level of inner confidence and in their dress--even though they don't dress "butch," i think femmes generally dress more creatively and androgynously than straight women. They tend to be less conservative....but what do i know. That's just me! :)

1. It is the look that defines a femme, not the inner being.
2. Clothing is everything. The outer appearance is key because I can have a circular saw and more power drills at home than any butch.
3. Perhaps longer hair, a skirt, or more fashionable than some non-femmes.

1. whatever I feel it to be in the moment that I am living it.
2. YES!!! While to the unqueer eye I may look like a straight women, upon closer inspection there is ALWAYS something queer about me: my false eyelashes, my unapologetic face contouring, or my obsession with drag jewelry. I call my style: "bourgippie with a hint of drag" (bourgippie: bourgy/hippie); my flamboyantly feminine excess queers me automatically in any context. While my clothing/style may not scream lesbian, it most definitely says something.
3. Like myself, there is always something slightly queered about us: too much eye make-up, a stellar/quirky pair of heels, our 01Ccan 019t be bothered with what others (particularly hetero men) think about the way I look 01D gait, and/or an excessive femininity that doesn 019t blend well with consumeristic heteronormative beauty. When I see another femme, I just know because its like I 019m looking at myself.

Ref. Code: 780068

Ref. Code: 780192

There were 2 uploads from the same individual

Uploaded: Today 3/28/2012 5:30pm

1. Hair & makeup, clothing, and yes shoes! It"s an appreciation of these things and more. It"s a form of presentation. It"s a way to express one"s inner self. There is nothing superficial or shallow about it. It"s NOT something some man or patriarchal society makes me do. It"s my self expression, and just one of many in our multi faceted world.
2. Yes, absolutely ! My manner of dress represents how un ashamed I am of my gender and my sexuality. Now this is something some man (or woman) and a patriarchal society would rather I suppress!
3. At first by her style of dress, her hair, make up, a good mani-pedi !
   It's sort of our uniform ! But it's not the only way. Although it all may seem superficial to some, these things are a part of a femme expression. And in a way they are just as important to me as sneakers and baseball hats are to some men. But they are not the entire picture. There is a certain je ne se qua that one vibes.

1. Sometimes it can as simple as how one dresses, or carries herself. But for me, that is an expression of something deeper. How I move through this world and how I interpet my connection to femininty and the act of being female.
2. Yes, absolutely. I"m a member of the anti slut shaming movement. I am not ashamed of my sexual feelings. I always wear high heels and frequently people ask me " how do you walk in those?" to which I reply, "Free your mind and your ass will follow!"
3. The way she dresses, her overall presentation. It"s not superficial, it"s an expression of what"s on the inside. Is art superficial?
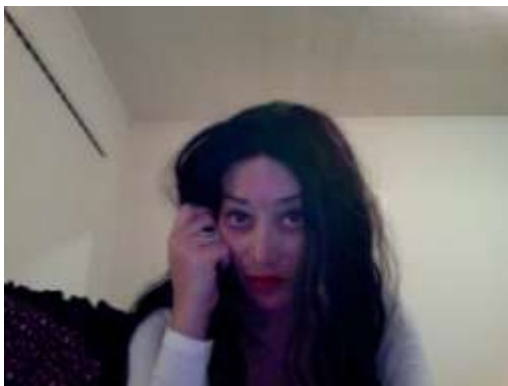
1. femme is: queer femininity, intentional gender that incorporates everything an individual loves about femininity, excising anything that hurts.
2. I think I represent queerness less through clothing and more through my presence as a whole. By clothes, I get read as straight, and aesthetic definitions of femme piss me off to no end. It is not glitter or makeup or a pencil skirt that makes me femme. When I wear men's jeans and a tank top, I'm femme. But I think most often, my gender expression is femme in that it's feminine clothes with big presence, taking up space, walking confidently, looking you in the eye, checking you out, coming on to you. It's a tension between what is traditionally "masculine" and what's "feminine," and really everything you think is either is both--like caretaking, nurturing, strength.
3. By the way she looks at people. It's the same way gaydar works; you don't just magically know, you know because of who she looks at and how, and how she looks at you.
   I think there are "understood" kind of femme signifiers in Montreal (where I live), like major makeup, big arm tattoos or other body mods, etc., but I choose not to rely on those kinds of things to identify femmes because I would not want other people to try to identify me based on those things.

1. Femme is different for different people. For me: Femme is an empowered, deliberate, strong embrace of femininity. Femme is not passive. Femme is standalone. Femme is a parody. Femme is changeable. Femme can never be pinned down in its entirely. Femme adapts. Femme fits me.

2. To me, embracing femme means embracing my queer femininity, without losing the "queer". It"s obviously not all about clothes, and most days I wear feminine clothes that are probably read as "heteronormative". However, when I feel like getting super femmy, I put on my big skirts, and costume jewellery, and as much glitter as I can. In some ways, I think of myself as a female born drag queen- it"s the excess that I love. When I get into drag I never "king", always "queen". I like to think that sometimes when I get dressed I"m putting on a costume. But femme isn"t defined by the clothing- it"s just that my queer identity isn"t limited by an idea of what I should or shouldn"t be wearing- I like feminine things, and that"s what I embrace.

3. Hmmn, that"s a tricky one. Femme is sometimes associated with the tactic of "something not quite right"- i.e. a girl that has rockin" tatts even though she passes as otherwise "heteronormative". I guess the clues would be in any embrace of feminine excess- where the boundaries of the stereotypically feminine are pushed that much further. I must admit, it"s hard to tell though (in an ordinary every day context). And since my only qualifier (given that people will have vastly different definitions to my own conception of femme) for someone to be femme is that they self-identify as femme, well, femme could be anyone! I"m part of a few femme groups online, so that helps me find like others.

1. It goes way beyond being feminie in appearance and further than being homosexual. For me it is purely being myself.   Full of juxtapositions of oxymoronâ??s; I am strong in my sense of self, not caring what the world at large thinks, yet painfully aware that many perceive me to be aloof and pretentious when I walk in the room in towering heels, perfectly buffed appearance and fitted dress. I embrace more than silk matching lingerie, I choose to embody the strength of the female energy. Whilst I understand that I possess a seductive charm, that also comes with a desire to be placed beside my beloved as an equal and an opposite. There is an omni present power of intellect, spiritual, sensual, emotional and this can all be over ridden with moments of insanity with a spot of retail therapy or a look from a handsome swaggering butch. It is about acceptance of my core values being old fashioned but applied in a modern context. It is about polar opposite in who cause my heat to race in attraction. It is exhausting, full of responsibilities, but I wouldn't trade it for any other way.

2. Overwhelmingly yes. I have since very young. It starts with matching silk lingerie and works forward from there. For me I am classical, chic and stylish; certainly not in appearance an "alternative" looking femme. I am rarely dressed in revealing clothing, yet it is always strong an alluring. Corporate suiting is high waisted skirts, matching jackets and silk blouse, or pants suits with 50s styling made from linens or wool. Dresses are womanly and fitted. Fun is corsetry and latex, hosiery is a weakness bordering a sickness. This is my sexuality of femme, I am more polished than any straight woman I know. And whilst I am an intelligent woman who has paved her own path I turn into a silly girl for great shoes and silk seams that will make my butch swoon to her knees for the joy getting close to such accessories.

3. A lot of femmes slip under the radar unless escorted by those of the gender community. Others are in plain sight. Many femmes today express themselves their "individuality" in similar very "rock chick chic" ways and choose a look that is retro and "alternative" with lots of tattoos, piercings etc. Other femmes are noticeable from the look in their eye when checking out butch, transmen and gender queers. Myself, visually slip under the radar, which is why I make it very known sexual orientation to those around me, always in a respectful way. I believe it is important for our own and the broader community that woman who don't look "different" can be just as gay as anyone else.
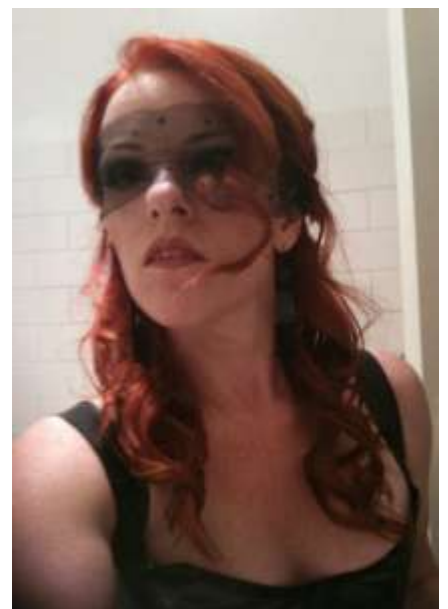
Reference Code: 781489

1. rebel of femininity, due to the imposed idea of who can be called feminine (Rebel by definition)
2. Yes, I chose clothes based on what makes me feel collected and sexy...sexy for me and aimed at women i want to attract.
3. It can change based on environment. Mostly I am clued by general fierceness and ownership of her style and image. Often I can identify her on her calmness surrounding her femininity. And a knowing look helps.

1. A queer womon who uses the traditional markers of femininity expressed through clothing, accessories and/or cosmetics to perform gender while also not accepting a limiting binarily gendered reality for herself and other womyn.

2. I wear clothing that makes me feel sexy and exciting. That, to me, is the essence of sexuality...the feeling of being a sexual being. As far as expressing my sexual orientation through clothing, I think as a femme that is sometimes difficult to know how others perceive me. I do wish to be seen as Lesbian more often than I am, but I do find that most of the time new acquaintances choose to perceive me as hetero. Sometimes I wear a bracelet with the word DYKE spelled out in rhinestone letters. That usually gets attention.

3. This is often difficult for me, espcially if this other femme is in professional attire. Casual attire, and in some cases age, allows for more queer markers such as piercings, hairstyle, accessories that may give further indications of queer femininity. Sometimes the ID comes through conversation or noting her friends" genders.

1. Femme is an inside thing mostly. We know if we are "girly grrls."
2. I always wear feminine attire...even when casual. Nobody would take me for a butch anywhere.
3. Usually it"s a gut/gaydar feeling. It's a feminine energy we exude. Yes, of course clothes and hair are a part, but not all. Lots of butches these days decide that long hair works for them, whereas plenty of femmes have short, pixie type dos. It's the perfume. It's the makeup. OMG, it's the shoes!

1. for me femme is being cis-gender female, queer and feminine in my gender expression
2. absolutely. it"s more than just sexuality---it"s gender expresssion and identity. I choose clothing that is traditionally associate with women, and for me my own femininity in my embodied performance (dress, hair, make-up etc) is a sexual turn on for me.
3. Not so sure. I"ve found that people want to self identify so I ask rather than make the assumption.

Ref. Code: 781732

1. A woman who identifies as part of the LGBT community, and presents herself in a manner that coincides with society"s view of women along the gender binary.
2. Not explicitly. I don"t wear pieces that identify me as a queer women, like rainbow bracelets, or anything like that. However, I think that a good percentage of queer women identify as "femme," and I think that we represent our sexuality through our clothing as much as any androgynous or more masculine looking woman.
3. If she"s not sitting next to me at The Lex, she"s looking at me somewhere in a public place, trying to figure out if I"m one, too.

1. Femme for me means being feminie- wearing make up, lipstick, fashionable, likes heels, going out for cocktails etc
2. No, there is no way to tell I'm gay via my clothing and to try to do so would be going against who I am. I do however wish there was some clever way I could show that I am gay via the way I dress!
3. I find it very hard to identity another femme. For me, if you're femme then no-one else can tell you're gay, and how can you tell if they're gay? When I was younger I was into the whole rainbow stuff to highlight that I'm gay but I wouldn't do that anymore. Only time I may look gay is if I'm with my partner, who is also femme so we are often not viewed as a couple.

Ref. Code: 782375

1. A queer-identified individual that shows what would qualify as a feminine appearance - generally opposed to the term "butch", that qualifies women that have a global masculine appearance. Also, it is interesting that in French the word femme is used in the same context, which could bring confusion since "femme" originally means "woman".

2. It depends on where I am going, but on a every day basis I don"t - my sexuality isn"t the only thing defining me. Although in a business dress-code environment, I would be more conscious of my feminine-ness and balance typical feminine items with harder and edgier accessories/shoes.

3. I can"t! But that"s okay. I guess I would identify a femme by talking to her and finding more about her. I am a really bad judge at first glance.

Reference Code: 782514

1. A feminine lesbian
2. No, i just dress the way i want to and that has nothing to do with my sexuality
3. By clothes, hair and so on.. but there must also be something that is implying that the girl is bisexual or lesbian, and that can be hard

1. A lesbian woman who does not dress like a stereotypical lesbian. She likes make-up, heels, dresses, etc.
2. Yes and no. I love dressing super feminine but every now and then I wear sneakers, baggy jeans, and a t-shirt. Most importantly I dress however I feel comfortable and whatever makes me happy
3. That is usually a difficult task. I usually say that someone is gay until proven straight. I will flirt with any girl until she tells me she isn"t interested. How else am I going to find out?

Appendix D:
Beyond Lipstick Branding

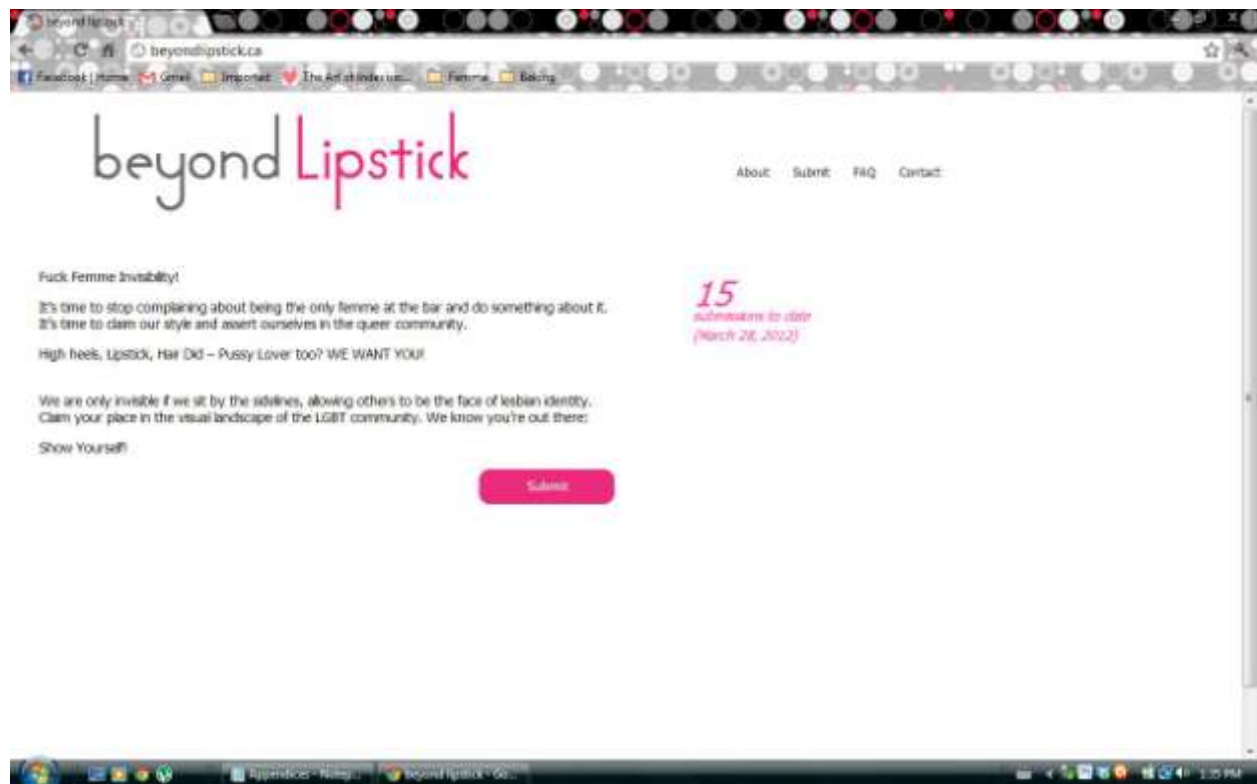**Figure 1: Original Submission Website Home**

Figure 2: Beyond Lipstick Website re-Design

Figure 3: Beyond Lipstick Flyer 1

Figure 4: Beyond Lipstick Flyer 2

Appendix E:
Photography Project

GLAMOUR

Victoria Beckham

that
extra
half an
inch

Entwistle

The Fashioned Body

polity

DOING GENDER IN MEDIA, ART AND CULTURE

EDITED BY ROSEMARIE BUIKEMA AND IRIS VAN DER TUIN

Routledge

SECOND EDITION

THE FEMINISM AND VISUAL CULTURE READER

Edited by Amelia Jones

Routledge

FASHION THEORY | A READER

EDITED BY MALCOLM BARNARD

Routledge

Harris & Crocker

femme

Lillian Federman

Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers

JEANETTE WINTERSON

ORANGES ARE NOT THE ONLY FRUIT

THE fashion HISTORY READER

EDITED BY GIORGIO RIELLO AND PETER McNEIL

Routledge

FASHION NOW

EDITED BY
TERRY JONES & AVRIL MAIR

TASCHEN

FASHION, CULTURE, AND IDENTITY

FRED DAVIS

WATSON

20th CENTURY FASHION

Figure 1: Raw Image

Figure 2: Image after processing

Figure 3: Raw Image

Figure 4: Image After Processing

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