

## **Trans- Autobiography**

**Organizer: Anna Kozak, University of Toronto**

"Reimagining forms of relation entails imagining new genres of experience," write queer theorists Lauren Berlant and Lee Edelman in *Sex, or the Unbearable*. This statement gives rise to a series of questions: How are "genres of experience" related to literary genres? If autobiography is the genre most closely tied to "experience," how does this genre shift in relation to newly lived and conceptualized life stories? How can the autobiography therefore be used to reimagine forms of relation?

Autobiography has experienced countless transitions across time and space as well as literary form and genre. This panel will foster a discussion on the connections between gender and genre in the contemporary autobiography. As we see more queer and trans autobiographies gaining traction in publishing industries, we can trace how writers experiment with the genre to represent and play with identity in their work. This panel turns to the contemporary autobiography to examine the ways in which writers use their personal experiences to not only reimagine forms of relation but also to expand the limits of the autobiographical genre itself.

As the title "Trans- Autobiography" suggests, this panel's focus is meant to be expansive. The term trans- can act as a prefix, evoking concepts like transitions, transformation, translation, transdisciplinary, transliteracy, transcontinental, transgressive, etc. Thus, the autobiographies that we will discuss can range from Canadian and American works to global anglophone, diasporic, postcolonial, and comparative literatures. Although autobiographies written before the contemporary (post-45) era can be discussed, the goal of this panel will be to trace how gender and genre intersect in contemporary autobiographies more specifically. However, gender is not the only aspect of identity that is to be considered -- an intersectional approach that encompasses gender along with sexuality, race, class, ability, religion, etc. is important for this panel. We will focus on work that is playful and experimental with both genre and identity, work that seeks to bend and break boundaries.

Please submit your proposal using [ACCUTE's Online Submission Form](#). For further details email Anna Kozak at [anna.kozak@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:anna.kozak@mail.utoronto.ca)