

Reform, feminism and radical critical thinking: Affective identity of female veteran scholars re-encountering the military institution

Friday, 20 June 2025 15:00 (1h 30m)

This roundtable seeks to explore the affective identity of a growing community of female veterans turning to the academy to understand their gendered experience of military service, asking what motivates them to want to potentially reshape the narrative on military service and what this means for their attempts to bring about reform to the institution. Speakers will consider the encounters we have in feminist spaces and with the military, exploring what we can learn about opening up spaces for radical critical thinking. The roundtable will be informed by the following questions:

What does it mean to attempt to bring about reform to the military institution? What are the possibilities and limits of this reform? What is it about our particular identity as ex-servicewomen that contributes to opening avenues for reform?

How does the history of feminism and pacifism influence our encounters with feminist scholars and feminist service personnel? What hope is there for feminist anti-militarism to bring about radical decolonial reform to the military institution?

How does our complicity with hegemonic institutional behaviours when serving influence our responsibility to effect change?

How do we navigate the tension between advocating for research that foregrounds contemporary service-women's voices when we feel that our critical distance from the military is what has been pivotal to how we now see our military service and the institution? Can we engender an emancipatory research agenda and what does it look like?

Track Classification: Critical Military Studies Working Group