Workshop Series: Feminist Approaches to Social Media Research
Call for participants

Social media is a hot topic in academia, industry, and popular culture. A raft of scholarship and journalism has emerged in the past decade on the rise of social networking as a major site of communication and culture, and many of the communications and media studies academic job postings in recent years mention a desire for applicants who possess expertise in social media. Business of all stripes are looking to capitalize on consumers' interest in social media platforms and technologies. Policy makers too are concerned about the implications of social networking's dominance in the media landscape. Given all this, a scholarly conversation about what it might mean to take an explicitly feminist approach to social media research is ripe for the having.

To that end the Commentary & Criticism section of Feminist Media Studies will organize a series of workshops on Feminist Approaches to Social Media Research at multiple upcoming media studies conferences (contingent on participant interest and conference acceptance). We plan to submit proposals to both ICA and Console-ing Passions. Other conferences may be added if there is enough interest.

Questions up for discussion could include (but are not limited to):

- How would existing social media research agendas shift if feminism were put at their center?
- How might a feminist approach require a particular definition or redefinition of "social media"?
- How can feminist approaches be integrated into industrial, journalistic, and policy research?
- How can feminist media scholars interface with social media research taking place in the humanities, social science, and STEM fields?
- How should intersectionality--especially with respect to race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, and ability--inform feminist research on social media?
- How can we work against gender binarism and essentialism in social media research?
- How can feminist theories of affective and reproductive labor help in our understanding of social media?

We are currently seeking scholars of feminist media to participate in these discussions. We envision a core group at each workshop who will offer brief commentary or provocations and then facilitate discussion among workshop attendees. We aim for a diverse group of facilitators and attendees, including junior scholars, non-tenure-track faculty, and graduate students, as well as established voices in the field of feminist media studies.

To express interest in participating as a workshop facilitator, please email Laura Portwood-Stacer at lportwoodstacer@gmail.com. Indicate your current position and affiliation, your specific research interest area(s), and which conferences (ICA and/or Console-ing Passions) you are planning to attend. Please feel free to suggest other appropriate conferences and indicate whether you would be willing to serve as facilitator (or possibly chair) at any of those. Responses received by September 15th will be considered for submission to Console-ing Passions; responses received by October 15th will be considered for submission to ICA.