



Feminist perspectives on media

Call for Papers for the annual conference of the University of Hildesheim Centre for Gender Studies (ZfG), which will be taking place from 13 to 14 January 2020 in Hildesheim.

Since gender media studies first emerged, it has established itself as an interdisciplinary field with diverse approaches and objects of study. In that time, the challenges facing the field have also multiplied. For instance: is it technological developments that are driving the emergence of new cultures of usage and users, by creating convergences between different types of media? Or is it the new media practices that are driving the development of new technologies? There is no clear-cut answer. Another area of interest for gender media studies concerns the significance of gender/sexuality/desire and other dimensions of social difference/inequality, spanning various aspects of technology, culture and mediality: for example, the reproduction, reframing, reconstruction and reinterpretation of content by users, or the pairing of (e.g. digital) technology and social logics of difference.

The political aspect of media can be located in its inherent tendency to dissolve boundaries, such as those between private and public, fictional and factual. This is especially evident if media is understood as (re)circulating meanings into social discourse, which are then reabsorbed and reproduced in new contexts; furthermore, social media offers unlimited possibilities for publishing user-generated content. Consequently, it is essential for (feminist) gender studies to maintain a methodological flexibility in its immanent critique of society.

The central questions for gender media studies emerge out of the interplay of technologies, cultures, medialities and social orders: what are the key modes of representation in prevailing discourses of production? Which gendered ascriptions and distinctions, and the transgressions of which hegemonial gender norms, are becoming relevant? What practices of use are developing, and are they testing the limits of, or decontextualizing, technological and social possibilities in an innovative manner? What new interpretive practices and narratives are emerging in the various media spaces and in relation to the social structures accreted in media products?

Against this backdrop, gender media studies addresses numerous forms of mediality: TV shows, video games, fanzines, radio, digital media, videos, fashion, literature, music, theatre, cinema, dance and images – as well as things, bodies and spaces. The planned conference aims to facilitate a discussion of these different media and their distinctive properties that enriches the theoretical discourse of gender media studies.

Papers submitted for the conference should focus on questions of feminist gender media studies and theory. One of the aims of the conference is to give voice to the full diversity of feminist perspectives.

Possible topics could include:

- Feminist media theory
- Methodological challenges for feminist media studies
- Gender, mediality and materiality
- Difference and differentiation, dissolution of boundaries, transgressions and interactions
- Norms and normalisation
- Technological challenges
- Violence, hate, vulnerability
- Empowerment, agency, recontextualisation
- Gender and media cultures
- Media publics and gender
- Emotionality, gender and media

The planned length of presentation slots is 30 minutes. Please send your abstract (max. 500 words) to zfg@uni-hildesheim.de by 1 May 2019. Conference languages will be German and English.

It would be wonderful if everyone presenting at the conference also published their paper in the conference proceedings, *Feministische Perspektiven auf Medien* (Feminist Perspectives on Media, 2020), which will be part of Campus Verlag's Hildesheim Gender Studies series. The papers (max. 40,000 characters) should be sent to zfg@uni-hildesheim.de by 31 December 2019. Please get in touch if you have any questions.

We greatly look forward to receiving your submissions!

On behalf of the Centre for Gender Studies Hildesheim,

Prof. Britta Hoffarth

Eva Reuter MA