Introduction

Re-imagining media and gender

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Media commentators often claim that feminism largely has achieved its initial aims of equality between men and women. This assertion sometimes tends to support the view that in Westernized, "postfeminist" societies media and communication scholars no longer need to interrogate gendered media forms, practices, and consumption processes. It is true that, in many parts of the world over the past few decades, public perceptions of gender roles, opportunities, and life expectations have substantially changed. Nevertheless, many important problems remain unresolved. Meanwhile, of course, new concerns, debates, and tensions cry out for scholarly investigation. The opening premise of *The Routledge Companion to Media and Gender* is that gender continues to matter and that issues related to the gender–media nexus are more complicated than ever, necessitating more nuanced and multifaceted understandings.

A rapidly growing body of evidence undermines the claim that equality between men and women has been achieved. For instance, in most countries a pay gap between men and women persists (ITUC 2008; AAUW 2013; European Commission 2013). Despite women's economic gains in particular fields in certain countries, the feminization of poverty worldwide is increasing (Moghadam 2005). More to the point, women, especially women of color and poor women, tend to remain especially disadvantaged in new global communication economies. Media production and distribution systems remain primarily in the hands of white, elite men; and global information and capital flows still largely privilege their views, preoccupations, and economic goals. Not enough women are in charge of major corporations, including in the media, for researchers to be able to say whether women act in significantly different (and better) ways as leaders and managers than men. The research on this question is mixed. But, in the meantime, the numbers of women who have broken through what is widely referred to as the "glass ceiling," especially at the very top levels, is miniscule compared to the number of men who have been able to advance into positions of power and decision-making.

What we can say is that media constructions of masculine identity are still widely articulated with violence, power, and control, as witnessed in the broad-ranging

discussions in North America, for instance around "rape culture" and feminist responses to the problem, such as a Slut Walk initiative launched in Toronto in 2011. Critics, journalists, and popular commentators are exploring claims that masculinity is currently—that is, once again—in a state of "crisis" and needs to be reinvented, although various versions of so-called hegemonic masculinity do not greatly differ. Meanwhile, feminists have successfully dislodged a single hegemonic femininity, if not a single beauty ideal. Several chapters in this volume note the increasing global circulation of narrow ideas of beauty.

Nonetheless, concern is growing around the sexualization of girls and women and, to a lesser extent, of boys and men. Commentators often blame this problem on the media. Additionally, the normalization of pornographic representations in "everyday" mainstream culture is getting increasing attention. Even a cursory look at the mainstream media reveals that the ubiquitous, repetitive sexualization of women reinforces the common perception that they are sexual objects always "up for it," while at the same time positioning women who are sexually assaulted as somehow being out of line or to blame for such violence precisely because they have asserted their sexual agency. Further, there is now an enormous body of evidence that journalists tend to portray men and women running for political office differently: Men tend to be judged on the basis of issues and political records and women on appearance and marital status, thus undermining women's participation in democratic public spheres. Gender difference has in some ways become much more fixed and rigid, as media clearly demarcate between the feminine and masculine.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in the ways in which children are encouraged to adopt very narrow forms of gender identity in terms of media, toys, games, and so forth. Video gaming is deeply gendered in relation to the development of gendered genres—largely divided between violent video games for boys and relationship-oriented games for girls. Despite the claim—indeed the promise—that the internet, blogging, and social and mobile media would finally open up more discursive space for fluid identifications and expressions of gender identity, such technophilic, technologically deterministic prophecies fail to take into account the impact of offline social worlds on online interactions and vice versa. Even an open "information" space as heralded as Wikipedia, with its Wild West culture, seems to have isolated, and even alienated, women. Some 78 percent of Wikipedia contributors are men, largely accounting for the fact that over 80 percent of the individual biographies on Wikipedia are about men (Glott *et al*. 2010). Women are using the internet and social media for entrepreneurial, activist, journalistic, and intellectual pursuits, especially as new technologies become cheaper, more portable, and easier to learn. Nonetheless, the democratizing and feminist potential of new media may be exaggerated, while the promise of a non-gendered cyberspace so embraced by technophiles in the 1990s remains largely unrealized.

Journalists also report on gender problems in the wider society, sometimes galvanizing solutions. This occurs even in sports, a domain generally assumed to be invulnerable to criticism. Relevant to discussions of gender-based insults in sport, recently the men's basketball coach at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, was fired after journalists exposed how he insulted the masculinity of his players (as well as hitting them). On the other hand, at least as of this writing, journalists' persistent attention

to abuse of women athletes by the new Athletic Director (as a coach she called them "whores") brought in to clean up Rutgers's problem has not yet resulted in an abrogation of her high-paying contract, despite seemingly massive expression of outrage.

Despite growing interest in interrogating the intersections of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and transnational feminism, much more work is needed to address the issues identified by this research, including in digital spaces, and the varying forms of activism associated with intersectional approaches. Representations of gender and sexuality in entertainment forms still tend to reinforce sexual difference and imbalances of power in ways that disadvantage gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people. Media policy and political economy remain areas which are under-researched in gendered terms, and this research deficit is both more pronounced when considered in relation to other dimensions of difference and "othering," particularly around questions of race and ethnicity.

In addressing questions around media and gender equality, this volume features contributions asking a seemingly endless series of questions that persist in discussions of gender and media: Why and under what circumstances do ideas and ideologies offered up in media content about gender, gender differences, gender roles, and gender identity persist, or change? Where and for whom are these changing? How do different groups of people construct gender identities and how, when, and to what extent do media representations offer either useful resources or unattainable standards? How do professionals working within the media push back against stultifying notions of gender, as well as under what conditions might such challenges be possible? Additionally, how do audiences variously respond, resist, use, discard, transform, or poach media messages about gender? Indeed, several of the authors in this volume ask, both more and less explicitly, what do we want? Feminist and gender scholars have long argued that women and men are constricted by gender identities, both "traditional" and not so traditional. What happened to the feminist idea—the hope—that gender would become a meaningless concept? How do progressive or liberating ideas about sex, sexuality, and sexual relationships coexist and confront dominant ideologies in a social environment of gendered contradictions?

The Routledge Companion to Media and Gender explores the role of a broad range of media forms, practices, and consumption processes that reproduce as well as resist conventional notions of gender, and reinforce or challenge gendered inequalities. Since the emergence of what is often referred to as "second-wave feminism," particularly in industrialized economies, women around the world have made important social, economic, and political gains. Men have changed, too. Nevertheless, much more needs to be done to enhance the lives of women and men, and to make the world more just and fair for everyone.

Researchers contributing to this volume offer innovative, engaging insights into old questions around media and gender, exploring some of the key factors that have shaped the current state of gender, gender identity, and gender relations worldwide. The volume engages with a broad span of issues, conceptual frameworks, and methodological approaches to studying a diverse range of media audiences; media forms, including television, newspapers, radio, magazines, video games, mobile media, and the internet; and media institutions and professional practices, as well as questions of media ownership, control, and regulation. These issues concern—or certainly

should concern—scholars, activist groups, media producers, pressure groups, government, and policymakers.

This volume

Much of the research in this field has been conducted in North America and Western Europe, as well as in Australia and New Zealand. *The Routledge Companion to Media and Gender* addresses this constraint by bringing together in the volume a series of issues, ideas, and themes currently shaping the field of media and gender studies from a broad range of conceptual and methodological approaches drawn from research around the world. Fostering an international dialogue among media and gender researchers and activists will broaden and deepen our understandings in international, global, and transnational terms. Encouraging more transnational forms of feminist media research is central to challenging rosy views of an ideal postfeminist state of being and to critiquing mediated prescriptions for ideal or normative masculine and feminine bodies.

Part I, "Her/histories," provides an historical overview of media and gender research across conceptual and methodological frameworks. This section critiques the scholarly work that informs contemporary studies in the field and pays homage to the pioneering groundwork foundational to the field of feminist media studies. Part II turns to a consideration of "Media industries, labor, and policy" and explores the social, economic, and political contexts in which the gendered division of labor and sex segregation have implications for the deep gender inequalities that characterize patterns of media ownership, employment opportunities and disparities, the construction of the audience commodity, and policy decision-making, as well as ignite forms of activism against media concentration, violations of privacy, and censorship. Chapters in Part III, "Images and representations across texts and genres," examine media texts from a range of conceptual approaches and media forms. Textual analysis is probably the most theoretically elaborated, so the chapters here hint at some of the diversity in media and gender research. Part IV, "Media audiences, users, and prosumers," investigates media audiences, including the so-called "prosumers" who self-consciously and explicitly bridge and blur the lines between media consumption and production in their engagement with media. Finally, Part V, "Gendered media futures and the future of gender," looks ahead to trends and themes in media and gender research, some already emerging and others of crucial consequence for future engagement.

Structure and contents

Part I: Her/histories

This opening part of the *Companion* focuses on the histories of key topics in media and gender research. Margaret Gallagher (Chapter 1) observes that since the 1970s feminists have critiqued how media discourses help to silence women in a process that both reflects and shapes gender power relations in society. Media

representations have diversified over the years, Gallagher explains, from the early template of "hearth and home" as women's natural sphere to those which show women in more varied roles in both the private and public spheres. Additionally, feminist ideas have been absorbed into media practice, reproducing them within an ideology of individual choice, women's empowerment, and sexual freedom.

Gallagher herself has been active in organizing systematic, international media monitoring through the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), which has since 1995 provided empirical data demonstrating various patterns of gender representation in the news. One such pattern, Gallagher notes, is that of women as victims of violence. Lisa M. Cuklanz (Chapter 2) investigates this topic with regard to the historical pervasiveness of representations of gendered violence, particularly rape, in the US mass media. Specifically, she argues that the mainstreaming of pornography and pornography-style representations, the increasingly problematic relationships between media representations of sexuality and sexual violence, the gap between legal changes in the national and international sphere and media representations, and the enormous range and reach of US media products featuring gender-based violence all play a role in normalizing sexual violence. The focus on the gendered nature of violent media representations also forms a central theme in Tim Edwards' exploration of representations of masculinity, especially in film (Chapter 3). Edwards complicates the frequently heard claim that representations of masculinity reinforce traditional notions of patriarchy, men's power over women, or simply set up ideal types of masculinity. He notes a growing number of films that feature men in crisis or distressed men. Such portrayals of emotionally incapacitated loners appear to be linked to wider public discourses around the "crisis of masculinity." Men no longer know what it is to be a man, some suggest, leading to increasing public and personal reflections on the social construction of masculinity. Edwards's analysis of three films which feature the lone male as the central protagonist concludes that such texts offer emotionally powerful portraits of men that complicate the view that representations of masculinity in cinema are overwhelmingly about men's violence and power over others.

Vicki Mayer (Chapter 4) considers research on the feminization of labor, focusing on the invisibility and dismissal of forms of work that are not considered "labor," from cooking and cleaning to comfort and caretaking. She contends that the feminization of work has been part of an ongoing trajectory in US media and communication industries that correlates visibility with work performance. Beginning with the lessons learned from early telecommunications industries and the role of the telephone operator, communication work has become feminized. Even as these positions have become more competitive, outsourced, and less gender segregated, the roles themselves continue to be feminized. Joke Hermes (Chapter 5) similarly argues for the importance of understanding the gendered history of media audiences' labor. Contributing to what became referred to as the "ethnographic turn" in media and cultural studies in the 1980s, she suggests, feminist audience research started from recognition of the complexity of everyday life worlds and the need to theorize the descriptions and interpretations of real-life media users. Contemporary feminist audience studies, she claims, call for greater sensitivity not only around gender, but also with regard to the ways in which gender intersects with ethnicity, class, sexuality

or any other means of differentiating individuals by their perceived worth and level of equality.

Isabel Molina-Guzmán and Lisa Marie Cacho (Chapter 6) maintain that since the 1980s feminist media scholarship has increasingly embraced the concept of "intersectionality" to discuss how race, class, gender, and sexuality need to be analyzed in relationship to one another rather than as individual or additive identities. They argue for the significance of intersectional feminist media scholarship in an increasingly diverse, global, and digitally networked world. Molina-Guzmán and Cacho highlight three dimensions in research: foregrounding media interpretations by women of color; focusing on the multiple interactions of vectors of inequality; and exploring the relationship between media as an institution and the production of inequalities. Audrey Yue (Chapter 7) also focuses on the global in highlighting the ways that sexualities and queer identities are forged in the relation between media texts and audiences, as seen in the representations of Asian refugees, gay Asian porn, and equal love campaigns from Asian Diasporas. Specifically, Yue considers the mutually constitutive categories of sexuality and race as a set of practices, as desire, and as identity and post-identity politics. She critiques contemporary articulations on biopolitics and homonationalism, and questions the politics of sexualized racialism and radicalized sexuality that govern current practices of queer neoliberalism. On a related note, Radha S. Hegde (Chapter 8) argues that neoliberal globalization and new communication technologies are foregrounding gender and sexuality issues in new ways. To illustrate how the globalized, gendered subject surfaces through particular mobilizations of nation, mobility, and modernity, she investigates the sensational news media coverage of the 2011 scandal that unfolded after Dominique Strauss-Kahn, then head of the International Monetary Fund, was charged with raping a hotel maid in New York City. The story circulated around the world. More political and transnational readings of the politics of gender and mediated environments are necessary, Hegde concludes.

Part II: Media industries, labor, and policy

In their well-known edited book on feminist political economy of media, Meehan and Riordan (2002) wrote that feminist communications scholars largely had abandoned political-economic issues, perhaps because, as women, they were unwelcome in overtly political and economic domains. Indeed, at that time and in the present, feminist media scholars have been reluctant to explore media economics, industries, and policy, along with issues including capitalism, labor, and class (McLaughlin 1999). Areas such as media industries, labor, finance, market creation, and policy traditionally have been the realm of men—or perhaps masculinism. Part II reveals that we have made significant strides since 2002; yet, as the authors point out, women continue to be marginalized within both media industries and the fields of political economy and policy. For feminists, understanding how global capitalism and its local manifestations affect women's lives as citizens, producers, and consumers is crucial. Feminist political economy reveals how material and ideological factors are the basis for social inequalities and progressive social change (Steeves and Wasko 2002). Although Part II is roughly divided into intersections of gender with

media industries, media labor, audience commodification, and policy, within the field of feminist political economy of communication, each clearly informs the other.

Carolyn M. Byerly (Chapter 9) provides a compelling argument for conducting more research on women's entry into and influence on the macro level of media. Policymaking, finance, and ownership are the media and communications arenas where decision-making power is most efficacious. Given the growth in holdings of a small number of huge media conglomerates, the marginalization of women continues in the form of unequal pay and underrepresentation across occupational ranks, especially those associated with decision-making. However, putting women into more media decision-making positions does not necessarily prompt progressive changes in media content or employment related to gender. Ben Aslinger (Chapter 10) maintains that, although media conglomerates are risk averse, conglomerates can override local homophobia or sexism in ways and at a scale often unavailable to local minority producers. Yet their search for niche markets of significant size results in the production of texts that often elide differences and diversity within minority target markets, privileging the representations of gender, sexuality, race, and ethnicity that most closely resemble ideal consumer subjects, while potentially distorting these same representations. Analyzing riot grrrl, queercore, and Latino/a music, Aslinger concludes that the risk and innovation dialectic affects which cultural producers have access to capital and which narratives are told.

Focusing on the association of rock music with notions of masculinity, Marion Leonard (Chapter 11) explores how gendered expectations influence rock musicians and contemporary music practice. Leonard interviewed eight women in particularly sex-segregated areas of music employment—artist management, artist and repertoire (A&R), tour management, and promotion—about how they navigated the continuing male dominance in these spheres. Although the achievements of women in the music industries should be appreciated, Leonard shows how persistent gender inequalities have real effects on the experiences and earning potential of women working in the music industry.

Denise D. Bielby (Chapter 12) describes how representations and relations of gender and sexuality are critical to the definition and workings of media conglomerates. She uses analyses of film and television writers' employment and ethnographic accounts of their production culture in order to explain how gender inequalities in culture industries are created and sustained. She focuses on distinctive gatekeeping organizational mechanisms that make invisible the organizational structures and policies that block career advancement based on distorted notions of gender, age, and other demographic characteristics.

Ursula Huws (Chapter 13) shifts the focus to the "information society," addressing the complex and shifting interrelationship between, on the one hand, the gender division of labor in unpaid work and paid work and, on the other hand, transformations in the technical and spatial division of labor that have accompanied the spread of information and communications technologies (ICTs), the liberalization of world trade, and globalization. She concludes that changes in the boundaries of paid and unpaid work, as well as in the location of work in the new media industries, have not resulted in gender equality; nor have they eased time pressures for women.

Huws urges more attention to gendered divisions of labor in the new ICTs, but also to the interactions among class, nationality, and ethnicity.

The next three chapters turn to the media industry's vision and construction of the audience as consumers and commodities. Tamara Shepherd (Chapter 14) describes how the users of social media are constructed as gendered commodities. Social media technologies, she writes, can be viewed as platforms for creativity and communication (e.g. Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Pinterest, and Instagram). As profit-seeking corporations, however, these sites use sophisticated data-mining practices that harness significant stores of user information for targeted marketing campaigns. The user becomes both a laborer, by constituting part of their immense web traffic and populating them with content, and a product or commodity. Social media users are commodified according to gender and other intersecting axes of identity, she suggests, in ways that appropriate their labor and participation within institutionalized systems of inequality.

While Shepherd offers an important conceptual framework for understanding digital media's acumen for constructing users as gendered commodities, Shira Chess (Chapter 15) illustrates this phenomenon through an account of a Martha Stewart avatar introduced into the role-playing video game *Castleville* in order to target women interested in Martha Stewart products. Chess describes video game industries' propensity for misunderstanding and alienating women as video game consumers by assuming that women share similar tastes and desires. As Chess explains, with women representing only 11 percent of the video game workforce, it is no wonder that most games are geared to men. The industry is now trying to include women; however, the primary result has been to reify traditional stereotypes of femininity and narrow definitions of womanhood. Chess urges the gaming industry to engender more diversity and abandon the ill-conceived dichotomy between "casual" women players and "hardcore" men players.

Adding to the strong case that sex/gender segregation exists in, and is sustained by, media industries, Dafna Lemish (Chapter 16) maintains that a large portion of children's media and related merchandizing produced, distributed, and consumed around the world promotes traditional and stereotypical constructs of marginalized femininity and masculinity. Her analysis of gender representations in children's culture demonstrates that the same issues dominating critiques of adult media are relevant to those targeting children. The political economy of media explains key factors driving this segregation, and the restrictive narratives offered by the media industry to boys and girls for their own construction of gender identity influence socialization processes.

Given that gender equality in a networked world requires considerations of online risk and safety, Sonia Livingstone, Veronika Kalmus, and Kairi Talves (Chapter 17) address gender differences in girls' and boys' experiences of online risk (including exposure to pornography, bullying, sexual messaging, potentially harmful user-generated content, and meeting online contacts offline). Drawing on the EU Kids Online project, which surveyed 1,000 children aged 9–16 years old in 25 European countries, the authors studied girls' and boys' behaviors online and specifically how children cope when bothered by online risks. The authors found some important differences, including that while girls were slightly more likely to be bullied online, boys received

slightly more sexual messages. Girls were more upset by sexting than were boys. Boys also were more sensation-seeking online, for example seeking online contacts beyond their familiar social circle and sharing more personal information online than did girls. The latter invested more in protecting their sexual reputation online. They also found that parents "mediated" or regulated the internet use of sons and daughters differently: Girls got more of all types of parental mediation (with the exception of technical mediation) than did boys. The authors urge policymakers to avoid gender-stereotyped views of children's experiences of the internet and advocate policy initiatives which recognize heterogeneity among children, schooling that teaches about online and offline social relations, and government and industry efforts to develop online safety tools.

Annabelle Mooney (Chapter 18) focuses on men's magazines. The "old man" phase of men's magazines in the 1940s and 1950s turned men into consumers, even though consumption was considered a feminine domain. Those magazines, as did the later "new man" and "new lad" magazines, objectified and sexualized women. While the "new man" magazines had a relatively limited advertising base, the construction of the "new lad" reader of the 1990s expanded the market for male consumers by linking discourses of masculinity to the crisis of masculinity as part of the backlash against feminism. Despite some grassroots campaigns, Mooney finds little interest in regulation, because the magazines are packaged as "authentic" and "manly." This allows them to use "irony" and commercial arguments for promotional purposes.

Katharine Sarikakis (Chapter 19) sees an urgent need for rethinking the technological, sociocultural and political economic conditions and frameworks within which modern-day pornography operates. Although pornography has been at the center of polarization and intense politicization for over three decades, she defines the pornography industry as a political actor; as such, it can protect and promote its economic interests. The pornography industry can govern the conditions of its own regulation because of both regulatory vacuums and conflicts, and its intervention in politics, through lobbying and creating informal alliances with civil society groups.

Traditionally, policy and regulation nearly are oxymoronic to activism. However, as Leslie Regan Shade (Chapter 20) writes, digital policy issues related to internet rights and freedoms are increasingly on the agenda of many global activists. Taking feminist political economy as the lens to examine systemic and structural power dynamics related to digital policy, which emanate from industry, international policy regimes, and civil society, Shade explores the development of policies and programs in both transnational and national contexts. Following the 2012 United Nations Human Rights Council resolution, Shade advocates the importance of viewing internet access as a human right. Such a right embraces access to ICTs, privacy rights, communication security, and freedom from surveillance.

Elke Zobl and Rosa Reitsamer (Chapter 21) show how alternative and activist women-led and feminist media offer participatory forums and political, social, and cultural exchange between those who otherwise would be marginalized within mainstream debates. They explore how the young generation of feminist media producers in Europe use media such as blogs and e-zines to challenge the status quo and create social change. As with second-wave efforts, these new ones aim to challenge power structures, transform social roles, and encourage small-scale,

collaborative, DIY economies based in subcultural literacy. Although these new feminist media producers position themselves in relation to second-wave feminism, with little reference to the "third wave," their networking is virtual, transnational, and dependent upon new social media.

Iam-chong Ip and Oi-wan Lam (Chapter 22) question the relationship between activism and official policy and politics in the Chinese context. Taking an approach that diverges from the largely Western project of focusing on cosmopolitan democracy as a sign of *transnational* democracy, they argue that Chinese feminists' new cosmopolitanism features their creative appropriation of global feminist ideas for *local and national uses*. Their analysis, based in an examination of archive documentation and unstructured interviews, reveals that counter-publics not only contribute to the civil rights movement but also engage in more subtle struggles against state feminism *and* for trans-institutional spaces within the state. Exploring this largely neglected dimension in the literature on Chinese politics is crucial for understanding the tension between legitimacy and efficacy facilitated by the new political-economic realities of authoritarian countries.

Part III: Images and representations across texts and genres

Many of the arguments connected to gender and media turn on issues about the representations of women and men, and of masculinity and femininity. Indeed, although the evidence for assuming "effects" is uneven at best (and considered passé by most critical scholars), many of the arguments about the gender (or intersections of gender with race, ethnicity, national origin, or sexual orientation) of the producers of media content assume that this matters in some way to the content they produce and also that representations of gender have some impact on their audiences. Certainly, women and men are not always represented dichotomously, and should not be represented as such. Nor are representations static over time or stable across space, platform, or audience. Content does not have a predictable, much less direct, impact on audiences. The premise of Part III, however, is that representations of women and men, of masculinity and femininity, become the basis for the stories told about what it means to be a woman or man in a specific time and place. Sophisticated and nuanced analyses illustrate a broad set of issues regarding how gender is represented differently in cultural formations across the globe.

One of the major themes is sex and sexualization, although this issue is complicated and our authors often turn arguments on their head. Leading off, Karen Boyle (Chapter 23) challenges the usual arguments about "sex for its own sake" and the "sexualization of culture" in order to highlight the significant differences between the place (and power) of heterosexual women and men in the sexual marketplace. Boyle offers several examples of products sold to heterosexuals that claim to enhance sexual pleasure either directly (sex toys, such as the "Rabbit" vibrator, whose sales rocketed after it was featured on *Sex and the City*) or indirectly (e.g. pole dancing exercise classes that promise to remodel women's bodies). Unsettling casual equivalences sometimes are made between commercial sex, pornography, and "sex shows," while contemporary women, allegedly "empowered" by their sexualized consumption (or even by high-pay sex work), still face power inequalities.

Heather Nunn and Anita Biressi (Chapter 24) examine the popular British docusoap series *The Only Way Is Essex* (*TOWIE*), i.e. a semi-scripted highly structured hybrid combining highly realistic observation with a continuing narrative about its working class characters. Early working class docusoap characters often worked in unglamorous, low-reward jobs and were judged on the basis of their authenticity. No longer needing to be genuine, the new reality docusoaps such as *TOWIE* are set in glamorous media, consumer, and service industries. More to the point, their performers are judged for their elaborate and costly grooming and participation in consumer culture, thus encouraging individuals—including men—to regard makeover practices as the route to social success and recognition. Similarly, Shelley-Jean Bradfield (Chapter 25) looks at distinctly post-apartheid South African femininities in the miniseries *Society*. Bradfield critiques *Society*'s complicated postfeminist sensibility of sexual choice and empowerment, for example with a television "weather girl" character who must rely on a possessive boyfriend to pay her rent. In particular, Bradfield notes how a neoliberal focus on the individual (but also a preference for "traditional" community and family values) ignores systemic constraints, making women responsible for their failures.

Karen Ross (Chapter 26), who herself ran for political office, examines news coverage of political candidates. Journalists increasingly adopt the salacious tone of tabloids regarding *all* politicians, and some women politicians receive gender-neutral or even "positive" coverage. Nonetheless, Ross generally finds journalists obsessed with women's coiffure, couture, and conjugal relations, thereby still ignoring their policy positions. Thus, women achieve their political ambitions *despite* news media, not *because* of them. Ross suspects a variety of factors are in play, including gender-based stereotypes, the male-ordered nature of many newsrooms, and the reliance on the "usual suspects" as sources and subjects for news discourse. In examining televised representations of Chaz Bono's transition to a transgendered self, however, Katherine Sender (Chapter 27) finds Bono having skillfully put his "brand" into circulation on a transnational basis. Sender predicts that gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) media representations produced at the media "center" will be most normative: gender conforming, family oriented, non-sexual, and apolitical. At the margins of this center, low-budget reality television both allows and demands riskier GLBT images. Self-funded media at the periphery, for microniche audiences, can circulate the widest range of GLBT images. Accordingly, Bono's transgender narrative emerged differently in two documentaries (marginal media), as contestant on *Dancing with the Stars* (media center), a memoir, as well as print, television, and online news media.

Milly Williamson's (Chapter 28) history of female celebrity and scandal—since sexualized scandal and concentration on the personality are not new—emphasizes the paradox and contradictions at the heart of the bourgeois society from which modern fame emerged: it expresses growing freedom and democracy but also shows the limits of freedom and democracy, including that of women. Media treatment of women celebrities continues a social hierarchy based on class, race, and gender, and significantly expresses the economic needs of commercial entertainment and media. So while celebrity culture seemingly provides women with social mobility and increasing opportunity to participate in the public sphere, Williamson underscores the limits to social mobility.

Sara Bragg (Chapter 29) challenges the terms of public debates about the "sexualization" and "commercialization" of childhood, exposing how some standard views of contemporary consumer culture are often simplistic, unreflexive, and (wrongly) reiterating the same old story about how "sex sells." To Bragg, the view that children are inherently more vulnerable to media influence than adults is patronizing, ignores children's own views, and proposes problematic pedagogy. The media cannot directly cause social ills, so literacy will not ameliorate them. Being critical will not "cure" children of their attachments to disapproved cultural texts. Analyzing constructions of female and male sexuality in teenage-oriented television dramas, Susan Berridge (Chapter 30) implicitly agrees with Bragg. Berridge also rejects a patronizing, simplistic notion of a cause-and-effect relationship between what viewers watch and their behavior. That said, she finds that dramas for teens "naturalize" distinctions between male and female teenage sexuality. Male sexuality is presented as unstoppable, something boys cannot control, thus removing culpability for their actions. In contrast, female sexuality is portrayed as devoid of desire; girls are responsible for their sexual actions—and less entitled to sexual pleasure—thus rendering sexual violence a girl's personal problem.

Moving to representations of older women, Josephine Dolan (Chapter 31) notes that as early as 1973 Molly Haskell observed that, given the conflation by Hollywood and other national film industries of beauty and youth, women stars were, at the first visible signs of aging, deemed too old to be cast except as a marginalized mother or older sister. The same was not true for similarly aged men, who continue to be cast and often romantically coupled with much younger women. Dolan points out that old(er) women stars currently enjoy visibility—but only in the context of discourses about "successful aging," which requires and naturalizes "cosmeceutical enhancement" and age-appropriate decorum. Women are protected from pathologized abjection, but only if they conform to a "beauty myth" now extended into old age. Meanwhile, J. Robyn Goodman (Chapter 32) highlights the practices that ideologically promote these perfect bodies. Over the past 20 years, cosmetic surgery has grown dramatically worldwide, despite safety concerns and risks. In 2010, more than six million people had liposuction, breast augmentation, and surgery on their eyelids, nose, or abdomen; millions more had minimally invasive skin procedures. Goodman emphasizes the media's role as an information source for, and influence on, cosmetic surgery and ideal beauty; indeed, a single global beauty ideal for women. Since sociocultural pressures are behind cosmetic surgery's growth, and media are behind these pressures, Goodman blames media for not discussing risks and complications while overemphasizing social and psychological benefits, and finds that media emphasizing how easily, painlessly, and magically we can be transformed into the ideal.

Radhika Parameswaran (Chapter 33) turns to beauty regimes in India—not the "old" India, with its condemnation of conspicuous consumption as sinful and its suspicions of the West, but a "new" India, which embraces affluent Western lifestyles (and beauty products) and a capitalist climate favoring the middle classes. Returning to the sleepy hometown in Hyderabad she left 20 years ago to illustrate the contradictory ways beauty culture intersects with cultural imperialism, nationalism, and glocalization, Parameswaran offers a personal account of the beauty choices of her upwardly mobile niece, who disdained shabby Indian-style beauty parlors, with their

"third-rate Indian products," in favor of high-end salons where Western-attired English-speaking professionals offered products imported from Europe and America.

Gargi Bhattacharyya (Chapter 34) argues that the "war on terror" has shaped popular culture representations of sexualized racism. To show the links between discourses around personal and national security with those of feminism, race, and sexuality, she contrasts the narratives of the first series of the immensely popular and influential US television program *Homeland* with news media representations of women who have been associated with UK terrorist suspects. Bhattacharyya concludes that, in the name of the security state, we are witnessing a replaying of older mythologies of good and bad girls and of domesticated and disorderly femininity across the media, drawing on certain features from popular feminism in the name of securitization. Deploying a much more direct effects argument, Nahed Eltantawy (Chapter 35) criticizes Western media's dominant portrayal of Muslim women, covered in the traditional black abaya, eyes peering out from black veils. She blames such one-dimensional images, especially after 9/11, for encouraging dread, dislike, and mystification of Muslim women. She concludes that Western cartoons, news, and editorial columns portray the Muslim woman as an enigma, an oppressed victim, or a faceless clone. Moreover, she says, even Western feminists wrongly view the veil as signaling Muslim women's oppression.

Finally, David Rowe (Chapter 36) analyzes the gender-based insult in sport, where slurs denigrating (male) athletes' masculinity are so common that their use neither shocks nor incurs widespread condemnation. Journalists and media commentators usually focus on more "spectacular" narratives in sport of racial abuse, yet gender-based insults are typically treated as deplorable but almost banal. Organized, institutionalized sport has always been a major domain of sex/gender hierarchy; men put themselves at the center, sexualize women, and position femininity as inferior and contemptible. Rowe finds increasing evidence that gender-based insults are routine even within men's team sports that are subjected to intense scrutiny, whose official associations are mandated to foster respect, and despite policies dedicated to eradicating sexual and gender inequality.

Part IV: Media audiences, users, and prosumers

Audience studies have long been a central feature of media and gender research, with enquiries ranging from quantitative surveys of gendered media consumption habits to qualitative analyses of the ways in which men and women make sense of media messages. While in the past the demarcation between media producers and consumers was regarded as clear, today the line between them is increasingly blurred. Media and gender research on "prosumers," or those who use and create media content, often in online environments, extends audience research beyond the traditional production/consumption binary. This part of the *Companion* addresses such issues, beginning with chapters that focus on the ways in which the imagined and often commodified audience shapes decisions about media production in gendered ways. Later chapters report on empirical audience studies interrogating how certain users and prosumers make sense of and reconfigure media output through their active and often creative use of new media.

Laurie Ouellette (Chapter 37) looks at the imagined, commodified audience for reality television, which she analyzes as a "cultural technology." Focusing on the contradictory ways in which young women are addressed and regulated as "subjects of capacity," she investigates MTV's network programs *Jersey Shore*, *16 and Pregnant*, and *Teen Mom* to reveal tensions between the display of young women's sexual freedom and empowerment and the proliferation of programs claiming to help prevent teenage pregnancy by instilling in girls the right choices, behaviors, and technologies of self-regulation. Ouellette situates reality television within neoliberalist and postfeminist frames, showing how institutional constructions of the "audience" reflect (sometimes conflicting) consumer agendas and governmental goals.

Taking up similar points, Esther Hamburger (Chapter 38) notes that since the mid-1970s Brazilian television companies have exported telenovelas; the genre has since become one of the most popular and economically successful in the world. Although telenovelas attract both male and female audiences in Brazil, they remain defined in gendered terms as "feminine" by producers, market researchers, and audiences. Hamburger's analysis suggests that telenovelas often provide audiences with progressive narratives that question the binaries of feminine and masculine, melodrama and newscast, private and public, mass culture and modernism.

The need to sell audiences to advertisers has long driven journalistic choices in the packaging of news, argues Dustin Harp (Chapter 39). In the 1890s, US newspaper publishers started segregating content related to women by creating special pages for them, although many newspapers dropped women's sections or renamed them in the face of arguments against segregating gendered content. She finds that "women's content" remains marginalized and isolated, thereby reinforcing gender divisions and inequalities. So, little has changed from previous generations in arguments both for and against separating "women's content" from the rest of the news. Therefore, what started as a way to attract women readers to sell to advertisers remains a standard means for attracting women readers to newspapers in a way, for the sake of advertising revenue.

The significance of gender portrayal as part of the wider experience of game play is explored by Christine Daviault and Gareth Schott (Chapter 40). Despite the perceived gender imbalance in terms of the greater numbers of male players, most critical research has focused on girls and women, with very little attention paid to male characters and their impact on male players. The authors conclude that the experience of play does not necessarily permit the player to engage in extensive interpretive work.

Discussing queer female fandom, Julie Levin Russo (Chapter 41) focuses on the development from its pre-digital roots to its present-day internet bounty, emphasizing both internal diversity and external dynamics. The phenomenon of fandom asks us to consider the value of subtext, she argues. In mainstream media, boosting the visibility of marginalized groups goes hand in hand with boosting their commercial profile. Russo's historical survey of fan communities, and analysis of their current exploits and conflicts, points to some of the vitality and multiplicity of queer female fandom.

Toby Miller (Chapter 42) interrogates the question of who is the implied spectator for the *bourgeois* media's coverage of sport. Sport and masculinity, he suggests, jumble together in a complex and protean weave of contradictory commodification. As

part of the desire to address media spectators and capture their attention for advertisers, the masculine body has become an object of lyrical rhapsody. Sculpted masculine features, chiseled waistlines, dreamy eyes, administered hair, and an air of casual threat are the currency of the day. Like beauty and fitness of all kinds, Miller predicts that the media will identify new names, new bodies, new Eros, new Euros.

Matthew B. Ezzell (Chapter 43) examines men's use of pornography. Pornographic images, he explains, are produced primarily for heterosexual men by and through a global, multibillion dollar industry. Men's choices to consume pornography, he adds, express a patriarchal masculinity that reinforces sex inequality. So, while men who consume pornography are caught up in an equation that provides a collective economic gain for men as a class, this exacts an individual cost. Ezzell calls for more research on the male pornography "refuser."

Gender researchers have long questioned whether the internet would become a male domain and reinforce gender inequality or, conversely, strengthen feminist politics. Tanja Carstensen (Chapter 44) shows how both older and newer technologies have shaped the gendered access, use, design, identities, and politics of the web. She argues that gender no longer seems to play a significant role regarding access to and usage of social media. And while social media have become male domains reinforcing gender inequalities, social media also provide opportunities for feminist politics and political activism.

Shakuntala Banaji (Chapter 45) reports on her research with young viewers of Hindi films. Critical studies of gender representation in Hindi films often assume that male viewers all identify with a limited number of sexist—and heterosexist—discursive positions mapped out in these films. Banaji argues that, although sometimes equally worrying or retrograde, other contextual and sociocultural identities and experiences—from race and ethnicity through geography and surroundings to sexuality and class—complicate young audiences' responses to and uses of gender representation in Bollywood films.

What grasp do we have of the relationship between the consumption of media and the shaping of individual lives and identities, asks Youna Kim (Chapter 46)? What do we know about the experience of non-Western women? Based on her ethnographic studies, Kim analyzes the consequences of women's media consumption at a time when the political, economic, and technological contexts in which the media operate are becoming increasingly global. She argues that media globalization in Asia needs to be recognized as a proliferating, indispensable, yet highly complex and contradictory resource for the construction of gender identity within the lived experience of women's everyday lives.

While gendered audiences for film and television are the subject of considerable research, few scholars work with radio audiences. Tanja Bosch (Chapter 47) notes that in Africa talk radio has contributed to the development of a range of public spheres (based on gender, ethnicity, sexuality, social background, and region); diverse and sometimes geographically disparate audiences use radio as a platform for deliberation. Bosch shows how radio listening is integrated into women's daily routines, contributing in many positive ways to their gendered sense of self-worth.

Dawn H. Currie (Chapter 48) explores the ways that girls read adolescent fashion and beauty magazines. Adults' plausible and legitimate concerns with how these

magazines address girl readers as "young women" have resulted in calls for "media education" to "inoculate" girls against the harms of popular culture. However, Currie rejects the "protectionist" approach. Instead she argues for acknowledging and mobilizing the agency of girls as readers. Having shown how commercial media work through girls' reading pleasure, she proposes harnessing this pleasure to promote critical media literacy. The shaping of self-perceptions in commerce is also a concern for Dara Persis Murray (Chapter 49). Her focus is the Dove Campaign for Real Beauty (CFRB), which she says communicates problematic messages of beauty and feminism to audiences. Though people who posted on the campaign's Facebook page may consider CFRB a liberating philosophy of resistance to dominant ideologies of beauty, because it showcases "real" women with diverse sizes, colors, and ages, Murray concludes that such "liberation" encourages an individualized pursuit which necessitates work on the self, a focus that detracts from the feminist argument for collective thinking and structural change.

Andrea L. Press and Francesca Tripodi (Chapter 50) analyze posts related to women's sexual attractiveness on a US-based university online message board, Collegiate ABC. While women's bodies and sexual behaviors are targeted for praise and critique, few women have raised objections to these discourses. Most think they know sexism when they see it, the authors' research found. Meanwhile, their focus group interviews suggested that young women want to claim the freedom to be "hot," to enjoy when friends are so labeled, and to enjoy the status of associating with such women. The entrenched nature of sexism in media culture demands continuing attention, Press and Tripodi conclude.

As camera phones become more commonplace—as well as social media like microblogging and location-based services (LBS)—new types of visuality are overlaid onto place as part of users' personal journeys and forms of self-expression, maintains Larissa Hjorth (Chapter 51). LBS camera phone practices take on new gendered visual cartographies that rehearse and revise traditional Korean notions of place (*bang*) and intimacy (*ilchon*). Hjorth considers how Korean women use LBS games and camera phone images, which are generating new cartographies of place-making overlaid with playful socialities.

Sahar Khamis (Chapter 52), drawing on in-depth interviews, examines how young Arab women journalists/activists from Egypt, Syria, Libya, Yemen, and Bahrain are engaging with social media to redefine their activism, empowerment, and resistance. These women have used "cyberfeminism" to launch a parallel *sociopolitical* revolution which challenges discrimination, harassment, and gendered abuse. While new media are relevant to processes of sociopolitical change, she argues that they are *catalysts*, not *magical tools*. Arab women's activism will bring about social change, she concludes, through their challenging gender discrimination and facing real risks in the struggle for women's rights.

Part V: Gendered media futures and the future of gender

So, where do we go from here? What should be done? Indeed, what do we want? Chapters in this final part of the collection disrupt and complicate the oversimplified, polarized debates over key issues and concepts. The authors urge us to

move beyond outmoded concepts, assumptions, and paradigms and to reject exaggerated either/or dichotomies that forbid researchers or activists from embracing ambivalence. People make choices and are constrained by economic, social, and political circumstances.

Angharad N. Valdivia (Chapter 53) explores the implicit utopia guiding much of the activism as well as research about production, representations, and audience interpretation. Her points about Latina/o studies apply equally well to debates in ethnic studies and gender studies: The narrow line separating demeaning stereotype from merely easily recognizable discourse generates seemingly insolvable tensions. We prefer complex characters that suggest diversity and heterogeneity. Yet, again referring to Latinas, although we disdain stereotypes, we want a recognizable Latina presence. Moreover, if that presence is too subtle, we complain that she has been whitened or assimilated. Valdivia's television and film examples illustrate the ruptures and continuities in the limits and possibilities of inclusion of Latinas. She shows that we can say what we dislike—stereotypes of Latinas as aberrant or abnormal. But what *specific* type of presence we want has not been clearly articulated beyond a vague and unsustainable cry for authenticity.

Anxieties about the "sexualization of culture" have been addressed by journalists, policymakers, and academics, including feminists. Others, too, worry that societies—and not merely in the West—are becoming saturated by sexual representations, with practices like lap dancing and pole dancing now becoming respectable and regular features of corporate entertainment or recreational activity. Describing herself as neither anti-sex nor anti-porn, but rather "anti-sexist," Rosalind Gill (Chapter 54) criticizes the concept of "sexualization." Rhetoric about sexualization pushes moralistic rather than political solutions and homogenizes significant differences in the way bodies are figured in the media. Gill suggests that we are neither helpless cultural dopes nor autonomous agents who are made immune to sexual content through media literacy.

Catharine Lumby (Chapter 55) analogously challenges the polarized and polarizing debates within feminism over the term "postfeminism." Some celebrate how postfeminism marks liberation from feminism's outdated ideological shackles; others say it represents a panicked backlash against feminism. Her position is that, at least in the West, feminism made fundamental inroads in law, public policy, and education. Rejecting the feminist/postfeminist debate in media studies that unproductively opposes woman as sexual object and as sexual subject, Lumby emphasizes that popular media representations of women and the pleasures women may (or may not) take in them cannot be neatly categorized as either authentically "feminist" or flippantly "postfeminist." Instead, as in everyday life, popular culture is often a site of ambivalent pleasure for women. Urging feminist researchers to move beyond the putative feminist/postfeminist binary into a new "post-postfeminist" phase, Lumby urges careful attention to the speaking positions we adopt, being aware of the forms of power we enjoy, with their specific claims to authority, and how others are disempowered. Indeed, when we listen actively to others, we learn to hear more clearly how we sound when we speak.

Brenton J. Malin (Chapter 56) focuses on changes in media representations of manhood, suggesting the elasticity of dominant conceptions of masculinity in the

West, where after the late 1980s there was much discussion of a "crisis of masculinity," indicating dissatisfaction with the so-called traditional manhood, whose hypermasculine toughness and emotional control were increasingly seen as problematic. Therefore, a sensitive, "metrosexual" masculinity was constructed. But the new ideal man, except for his alleged emotional expressiveness, reiterated most of the dominant categories of traditional, hegemonic masculinity: He was white, heterosexual and enjoyed middle-class cultural capital. Malin notes that the media's inability to think beyond narrow dichotomous stereotypes highlights a lack of creativity and betrays the media's interest in economically and politically safe images, i.e. that do not upset advertisers.

Linda Steiner (Chapter 57) critiques several theories that use problematic and universalizing gender binaries to explain why more women are not executives in US news media and why women journalists or women leaders have not had more impact on journalism. These theories assume not only that representations reflect their makers, but also that women always want to produce content that is different from men's content. The leading theory was that until women comprise at least one-third of staffs they cannot challenge prevailing practices, so cannot achieve significant organizational change. Now that women are at least one-third of newsroom staffs, the paucity of women in the upper echelons of news organizations is referenced to explain why women and men do not produce significantly different news. Steiner objects to what she regards as claims about women's superiority, arguing that fairness should be sufficient. She criticizes binary understandings of gender for obscuring how sexism and discrimination prevent women from being hired and promoted, and for enforcing implausible distinctions between men's and women's topics.

Koen Leurs and Sandra Ponzanesi (Chapter 58) apply intersectional analysis and postcolonial theorizing to Moroccan Dutch youths who use online social networking sites to articulate their online identities. They first look at a short video that presented an exaggerated inventory of the consequences—according to prevailing Islamophobic stereotypes cultivated by sensationalist news media—of what the Netherlands would look like if all Moroccans left the country. Media discourse constructs "Moroccan youth" as a danger, problem, financial burden, or nuisance. Rejecting mainstream understandings of digital culture as either liberating or disenfranchising, their multi-method research shows how these youths both understood and subverted intersecting digital spatial hierarchies. Such intersectional approaches are well suited to showing how power relationships get organized, reorganized, and reformed online.

Online power relations are also a central feature of Cynthia Carter's (Chapter 59) examination of online anti-sexism political action initiatives in the UK and USA. She highlights how feminist anger around media sexism is helping to fuel the establishment of a growing number of online gender education initiatives, databases about women experts, and targeted anti-sexism campaigns. While much of it is constructive and progressive, in some instances anger over media sexism effectively closes down discussion. Future advances toward fairer gender relations are partly contingent, Carter concludes, on turning personal and collective anger into positive, constructive political achievements, with women and men working both separately and collaboratively toward this goal.

Each chapter of *The Routledge Companion to Media and Gender* addresses concrete issues in ways that illuminate important aspects of our current understanding of the relationships between media and gender. The time is long overdue for revisiting and re-imagining many of the issues and concerns first noted by researchers several decades ago and which continue to be significant in considerations of media and gender. The *Companion* offers an extensive examination of a wide array of contemporary critical perspectives and diverse contexts in the field of media and gender studies. Given the stated aim of reinvigorating current debates related to the place and importance of media and gender research, innovative thinking that reflects cutting-edge developments is of the utmost value for students, scholars, and practitioners.

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