Call for Papers

Women and mobile intimacy in an age of social media and affective technology

Special issue of Feminist Media Studies (Dec 2012)

Edited by Larissa Hjorth & Sun Sun Lim

In the burgeoning of emotional, affective labour by the rise of ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) and the rise of public and private intimacies by and through social media, what does it mean to speak of "mobile intimacy" today? In a world aflux with mobile, ubiquitous technologies how are various forms of mobility (and immobility) across temporal, spatial, geographic, economic, socio-cultural and technological differences transforming how we experience and define intimacy? One thing remains certain - these practices are informed by gender and cultural context.

Extant research suggests that women's relationships with mobile technology are fraught with contradictions. As women domesticate mobile technologies and employ their routine-altering affordances, they seek to strike balances between aid-liability, autonomy-dependency, contactability-intrusiveness and intimacy-distance. The very affordances that give women the freedom to sustain intimate, boundary-transcending relationships are the same ones that impel women to create distances between themselves and their significant others. Even as mobile technologies enable women to traverse temporal, spatial and geographic barriers, women are not always prepared to have these barriers dismantled, particularly as they may be averse to there being too much intimacy. With the advent of mobile technologies, the social roles ascribed to women - of daughter, sister, mother, friend and teacher - have to be performed through these always accessible and potentially disruptive platforms, thus intensifying the burden of these responsibilities. How then do women strategically deploy technology so that they can maintain a sense of self, while ceding some parts of their lives to the obligations and joys of "mobile intimacy?"

This proposed special issue seeks to unpack "mobile intimacy" - a notion that encompasses many issues around emotions, co-presence, diaspora, personal technologies and emerging forms of affective, social, and emotional labour. Acknowledging that mobility can take various permutations (technological, geographic, socio-economic to name but a few), the papers should aim to focus upon particular aspects of women and mobile intimacy in order to flesh out some of the defining features of what encompasses mobile intimacy and the associated gender performativity today.

Topics of interest in relation to women and mobile intimacy include but are not limited to:

* Presentation of self
* Identify formation and assertion
* Technology domestication
* Issues of marginalisation
* Issues of empowerment
* Familial, social and professional relationships
* Transnational and diasporic relationships

The special issue editors are Larissa Hjorth (Senior lecturer, School of Media and Communication, RMIT University) and Sun Sun Lim (Associate Professor, Communications and New Media Department, National University of Singapore).

Please submit a 350-word abstract and abridged CV to both larissa.hjorth@rmit.edu.au and sunlim@nus.edu.sg no later than May 1, 2011.

IMPORTANT DATES

Deadline for abstracts 1 May 2011
Decisions to authors 15 May 2011
First drafts 1 December 2011
Decisions 15 February 2012
Second/final drafts 1 June 2012
Final proofs 1 August 2012
Issue publication 1 December 2012

AIMS and SCOPE

Feminist Media Studies provides a transdisciplinary, transnational forum for researchers pursuing feminist approaches to the field of media and communication studies, with attention to the historical, philosophical, cultural, social, political, and economic dimensions and analysis of sites including print and electronic media, film and the arts, and new media technologies. The journal invites contributions from feminist researchers working across a range of disciplines and conceptual perspectives.

Feminist Media Studies offers a unique intellectual space bringing together scholars, professionals and activists from around the world to engage with feminist issues and debates in media and communication. Its editorial board and contributors reflect a commitment to the facilitation of international dialogue among researchers, through attention to local, national and global contexts for critical and empirical feminist media inquiry.
For guidelines on how to submit a paper to Feminist Media Studies please visit:
www.tandf.co.uk/journals/rfms