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encouraged to declare their love of sites, products, and other women. This includes the proliferation of heart emojis in posts, heart-shaped favorite buttons, and passionate declarations from women about the beauty and sexual desirability of women on wedding sites.

Gazing and being surveilled produce affective as well as identificatory experiences. For Laura U. Marks (1998), haptic media viewing includes graininess, camera positions close to the body, and other depictions that evoke the senses. The horror genre underscores how viewing is incorporated into the body, felt, and conceptualized as distant gazing. Horror characters and spectators, as suggested by Isabel Cristina Pinedo (1997), do not completely see, recoil from painful sights, enjoy fluid spectacles of gore, and fully view and comprehend. Bodily movements in theaters can be related to Internet participants' gazes, swipes, and other actions. Internet viewers jerk back from upsetting material, swipe away representations, and move along with game characters. In a different conjunction of viewing and swiping, Tinder provides representations of a white heterosexual woman who is supposed to be available through its swipe-based dating application and develops female to-be-looked-at-ness by placing play and cancel buttons over her. Women nail polish bloggers reorder presumptions that women will make images of their faces, breasts, and buttocks accessible by depicting their working hands, but mainstream society still links them to frivolous aesthetics. Such practices, sites, and technologies connect gazing, hand movements, touch, and access as a means of physically intensifying experiences and too often perpetuate male power. Analysis of such text and gazes also foregrounds overstated claims that individuals are equally empowered by digital media.

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Gender
Rosalind Gill

Looking back from the vantage point of the twenty-first century, early analysis of gender and media is notable for the extraordinary *confidence* of the analyses produced. Reviewing a decade of studies in the late 1970s, Gaye Tuchman (1978b) unequivocally titled her article "The Symbolic Annihilation of Women by the Mass Media" and wrote of how women were being destroyed by a combination of "absence," "trivialization," and "condemnation." Such clear evaluations were not unique and were often accompanied by similarly robust calls to action—whether voiced as demands for more women in the industry, campaigns for "positive images," or "guerrilla interventions" into billboard advertisements. Writing about this period of research on gender and the media, Angela McRobbie (1999) characterized it as one of "angry repudiation."

By the late 1980s, this angry certainty had largely given way to something more equivocal and complex. As Myra Macdonald (1995) noted, one reason was that media content changed dramatically. The notion that the media offered a relatively stable template of femininity to which to aspire gave way as media offered a more plural and fragmented set a of signifiers of gender. There was a new playfulness in media representations, a borrowing of codes between different genres, and a growing awareness and interest in processes of image construction. Media content was shaped by producers and consumers who were increasingly "media savvy" and familiar with the terms of cultural critique,

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including feminism (Goldman 1992). Feminist critiques made their way into media content, exemplified by Nike advertising that critiqued media for offering unrealistic images of women, and L'Oréal advertising that addressed female anger about constantly being addressed in terms of unattainable images of female beauty (Gill 2007a). Another striking feature of advertising of the 1990s and early 2000s was its use of strategies highlighting female empowerment, agency, and choice—taking a cue from feminist ideas but emptying them of their political force and offering them back to women in terms of products that may make them feel powerful (but won't actually change anything) (Gill 2008).

The early twenty-first century has seen further important shifts, including a proliferation of different theoretical languages for discussing media representations of gender. What Liesbet Van Zoonen (1994) has characterized as the "transmission model" of media was replaced by more constructionist, poststructuralist-influenced accounts. These tend to see meaning as fluid, unstable, and contradictory, and to emphasize the media's role in constructing subjectivity and identity.

Scholarship has also been influenced by queer theory, which has produced "gender trouble" (Butler 1990), interrogating traditional understandings of a gender binary, based on cisgendered males and females, and highlighting performative rather than essentialist readings of gender. This has brought to the fore questions about trans and genderqueer, opening up space for thinking about both gender and sexuality in more open terms, which might include, for example, "female masculinities" (Halberstam 1998). Queer theory has also been influential in offering alternative readings of cultural products, and in "queering" contemporary media.

Another shift is growing interest in representations of men and masculinity. This has been particularly evident in film studies and research on the proliferation of men's magazines or "lad mags" such as *FHM*, *Loaded*, *Zoo*, and *Nuts*. Some research has examined the way the media are implicated in dominant representations of masculinity such as the figures of "new man," "new lad," "metrosexual," "hipster," or "lumbersexual"—which come to be powerful popular means of reading and understanding masculine identities, endlessly recycled in marketing, PR, academic, and journalistic texts until they come to seem like reflections of reality rather than particular constructions. Another focus is on changing representations of the male body in sites such as advertising or fashion magazines—including the mainstreaming of eroticized or idealized images of the male body that represent a challenge to earlier understandings that "men look and women appear" (Berger 1972; Mulvey 1975). Iconic figures such as David Beckham and David Gandy have been central to this shift, which has led to discussions about whether "sexual objectification" is now a routine practice for depicting men as well as women, and raising questions about masculinity "in crisis."

A concern with "intersectionality" (Crenshaw 1989) has also animated contemporary interests in gender and media. It seeks to understand the connections between multiple axes of oppression and exclusion, on the understanding that these are not simply "additive" but constitute distinct experiences and subjectivities. In media studies, the notion has challenged singular definitions of "woman," and—with postcolonial and mestizaje interventions—has argued for a far greater specificity in accounts of how gender is mediated, thereby helping to create space for a multiplicity of foci on—for example—constructions of Latina/Chicana, African American, or Asian American women in the media, and pushing beyond the whiteness of dominant theorizing.

This is linked in turn—though is not reducible to—a marked interest in questions about global media among

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gender scholars. At its most straightforward, this has translated into a greater international focus and more cross-national comparisons, such as the Global Media Monitoring Project, which, in a series of reports since 1995, has indicated the woeful representation of women in news genres across the world—showing up disproportionately as victims rather than as journalists or experts. An interest in globalization has also produced a focus on how representations "travel" (Machin and Thornborrow 2003) or, alternatively, how they are designed to have appeal across multiple contexts. Michelle Lazar (2006) has produced fascinating research about globalized advertising in Asia, pointing to the construction of an almost "identikit" image of desirable youthful femininity: the ideal model should look a little bit Indian, a little bit Thai, and a little bit Malaysian and is carefully designed to exemplify a "pan-Asian blend" of "consumer sisterhood." More recently, Ofra Koffman, Shani Orgad, and Rosalind Gill (2015) have examined how ideas about "girl power" materialize in different national and transnational contexts, constructing an idealized neoliberal feminine subject.

Another major development has been the "turn to production" in media studies, which for gender analysts has focused attention on persistent inequalities in the media labor force. This is horizontally segregated and vertically segregated, meaning that women are both concentrated in particular areas—for example within filmmaking they are disproportionately found in "makeup" or "wardrobe" functions—and are also concentrated lower in the hierarchy of desirable roles. Martha Lauzen's important research on Hollywood highlights the long-term lack of women in key creative roles such as cinematographer or director, with only one female Academy Award winner for best director—Kathryn Bigelow—in its history (2015).

Some research has been concerned with whether the lack of women in key creative roles impacts the kinds of media that get produced. Television seems to be doing better than film both in the diversity of its workforce and in the range of shows that get made, with *Girls*, *The Good Wife*, *Orange Is the New Black*, and *Damages*, for example, featuring "strong" women on both sides of the camera. Other research has examined the reasons for continued inequalities in media worlds that pride themselves on being "cool, creative, and egalitarian," but seem in reality to be anything but. Deborah Jones and Judith Pringle (2015) have pointed to the dominance of small-scale, project-based employment in the media and creative industries, arguing that it gives rise to "unmanageable inequalities"—through processes of finding work, hiring, and evaluation that are largely informal and lie outside legislative apparatuses designed to protect equal rights. In turn, others have called attention to the meritocratic and neoliberal dominance of media and cultural fields, which instill an idea that sexism (and racism) are "over" (Ahmed 2012) and cultivate a climate of "gender fatigue" (Kelan 2009) in which inequalities become "unspeakable" (Gill 2014)—problems that are connected to a postfeminist sensibility (see below). Feminist research on media labor has also generated new topics of interest such as aesthetic labor and affective or emotional labor—highlighting the extent to which an ever increasing range of "soft" skills and qualities are put to work in a moment of passionate capitalism (see Elias, Gill, and Scharff 2016).

Meanwhile, the boundaries of media production have been called into question by reality TV programs featuring "ordinary people" rather than professionals. New media are also said to have collapsed distinctions between producers and consumers, rendering many of us—simultaneously—as both. Early feminist research on the Internet looked at gendered practices in online

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sites such as chat rooms and multiuser dungeons. Approaches tended to be polarized between, on the one hand, techno-utopians who believed the World Wide Web would offer unparalleled opportunities to transcend the body and to explore futures devoid of social divisions such as gender, and, on the other, the cyberpessimists who argued that the technology could never escape its origins in the military-industrial complex and who pointed to new forms of oppression that were practiced in online communities, for example, flaming, trolling, and cyberbullying. In the past few years, the excesses of both positions have given way to more measured and cautious research, exploring (for example) the impact of dating sites on the way in which people conduct their intimate relationships, or the emerging forms of sociality on network sites such as Facebook and Snapchat. Self-representation has become a key topic of interest (for example, selfies, sexting), as has the proliferation of different forms of surveillance—from the "top-down" surveillance of media companies such as Google and Facebook to the peer surveillance (Ringrose et al. 2013) and the "girlfriend gaze" (Winch 2014) of social media or the self-monitoring of mobile phone apps that track exercise, calorie intake, weight, and beauty regimes (Elias and Gill forthcoming).

A crucial concept in contemporary studies of gender and media is "postfeminism." The term is used to highlight the "entanglement" of feminist and antifeminist ideas, and a sense in which, as Angela McRobbie (2009) has argued, feminism is both "taken for granted" in contemporary culture yet also "repudiated," as women are offered opportunities for individual success and advancement, on condition that they disavow collective projects for social change. Postfeminism does not simply denote a complicated and contradictory relationship to feminism, but also is constituted through the pervasiveness of neoliberalism in which the enterprise form is extended to all forms of conduct and "normatively constructs and interpellates individuals as entrepreneurial actors in every sphere of life" (Brown 2005, 42). It appears that women to a greater extent than men are constituted as active, autonomous, and self-reinventing subjects, called on to "make over" their selves again and again.

Indeed, makeover is a central theme of postfeminism—seen not just in the hostile scrutiny of women's bodies on shows such as *10 Years Younger* or *The Swan*, but more broadly regarded as a central part of a neoliberal disciplinary apparatus (Heller 2007; Ouellette and Hay 2008; Ringrose and Walkerdine 2008). It has been argued that this makeover paradigm increasingly moves beyond homes, gardens, bodies, and intimate relations, but now calls forth a transformation of subjectivity itself, a central element of what elsewhere I have called the psychic life of postfeminism. One clear example of this is in the contemporary incitements to confidence (Banet-Weiser 2015; Gill and Orgad 2015) in which women are exhorted to "lean in" and become more confident and involved at work (Sandberg 2013), to "love your body" (by brands like Dove, Gap, and Weight Watchers), and to believe that "confidence is the new sexy" (Bobbi Brown). *Elle* magazine had a Confidence Issue in 2015, and even the Girl Guiding Association now offers a badge in "body confidence"—one indication of the force and reach of this postfeminist imperative.

Postfeminism has proved a valuable and productive lens for exploring contemporary mediations of gender. The term is contested—referring to historical, epistemological, and backlash versions. One productive and much-used formulation regards it as a cultural sensibility that should be the object of critical interest—rather than a position or a perspective. Elements of this sensibility seen across media culture include the notion of gender as grounded in the body, and with an intensified

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focus on women's appearance; the shift from objectification to subjectification as a mode of representing women; an increased emphasis upon self-surveillance, -monitoring, and -discipline; a focus upon individualism, choice, and empowerment as the "watchwords" of postfeminism; a resurgence in ideas of natural sexual difference; and an emphasis upon consumerism and the commodification of difference (Gill 2007b). These elements coexist with and are structured by stark and continuing inequalities and exclusions that relate to "race" and ethnicity, class, age, sexuality, and disability. The contemporary foci on postfeminism, neoliberalism, and subjectivity offer challenging and exciting directions for new work on gender and media.

25
Genre
Jason Mittell

"Genre" is a keyword used broadly outside academia, a concept that seems so widespread and self-evident as to not require detailed analysis. We all know what we mean when we talk about sitcoms or musicals, Westerns or cartoons, right? But what most people probably imagine when they think about genre—the particular programs, films, books, or more generically "texts" referenced by a genre label—is not actually what makes up a genre. Instead, genres are produced by the very process of categorization itself, making the topic more interesting and sophisticated than it might seem.

What might it mean to think of genres as categories, rather than collections of texts? In the first instance, we should consider a genre as a product of cultural practices, rather than a stable, self-evident term. Genre categories do not simply emerge from the texts that they categorize, but rather are created, debated, refashioned, and dismissed in various cultural sites. While most genre criticism uses textual analysis to closely examine the formal features and interpretive meanings in any given genre's texts, another way of studying genre looks at genre categories themselves as key cultural practices (Altman 1999; Mittell 2004).

It is easiest to understand such an approach to genre categories by exploring a specific case study. Take soap operas, a well-known television genre category—thinking of the term "soap opera" probably generates some examples in your mind. Perhaps it's specific daytime dramas that ran for decades on US television,

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