

TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED GENDER VIOLENCE: GENDERED AFFORDANCES, ONLINE MISOGYNY AND NETWORKED HARASSMENT.

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Abstract:

Although there appears to be an abundance of literature and opportunities available for discussion on the topics of online misogyny and the emergence of networked harassment in a variety of forms, it is imperative we continue to understand how toxic technocultures develop and multiply, inasmuch as they pose a threat to women's safety and prevent their participation in the construction of democratic networked publics (Massanari, 2015; Ging & Siapera, 2018; boyd, 2010). This field of research remains significant for several reasons. First is the rapid and complex evolving digital media environment. New apps, novel platforms and diverse functional characteristics are transforming fast the media landscape, engineering cutting-edge technological innovation, further contributing to the continuous development of networked societies.

As a consequence of the emerging of new digital technologies, novel affordances are appearing, resulting in the (re)production of discriminatory behaviours which may "reinforce the social structures of gender inequality" (Schwartz & Neff, 2019). The rise of toxic online practices such as gendertrolling, doxxing, non-consensual sharing of intimate images, revenge and deep fake porn, cyberstalking and algorithmic-enabled sexism (Mantilla, 2013; Wu, 2015; Semenzin & Bainotti 2020; Hearn & Hall, 2019; Hao, 2021; O'Connor 2021) is leading to the solidification of a networked misogyny and technology-based abuse of women (Banet-Weiser & Miltner, 2016; Messing et al., 2020).

This has prompted productive discussions over the masculinist techno cultures where masculine identities are constructed, performed and asserted through "virtual manhood acts" of technologically facilitated misogyny (Moloney & Love, 2018). Consequently, crucial attention has been paid to the complexity and variety of masculine subjectivities, identities and mediated homosocial relationships that emerge within what has been referred to as "the manosphere" (Ging, 2019; Sugiura, 2021). An emergent field of study focusing on the manosphere is exploring the rise of heterogeneous masculinist digital subcultures united through their shared anti-feminism.

Building on these considerations, we are calling for papers that aim to advance knowledge and discussion on current debates exploring the multiplicity of intersections of gender and technology. The panel will provide a holistic overview of the most recent and relevant studies that look at the role of technology in the perpetuation (and emergence of new forms of) of gender violence. The objective is to elucidate on the politics of technoscientific futures from a gender perspective that aims to offer novel understandings of the varying forms violence against women can be exerted through a diversity of technological means. The conference welcomes paper proposals exploring thus the gender-technology dyad in relation to networked misogyny, online anti-feminism, mediated affects and affective publics, technology affordances and algorithm and AI-facilitated sexism.

Key words:

cyber violence against women and girls (cyber VAWG); online misogyny; gendered affordances;

toxic technocultures;