

Technology, Gender and Working Life: Organisational technologies and the nature of the gender-technology relationship

Convenors

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Gender relations are interwoven with technology and culture (Wajcman, 2006). In workplaces, hierarchies of difference relating to gender, have sometimes relied on a perceived mastery of particular technologies to provide power (ibid.). Wajcman highlights the rapidly changing nature of the gender-technology relationship. Faulkner (2001) argues for a “feminist gaze” of technological artefacts, in order to explore how these are gendered. Using a “hard-soft dichotomy”, kitchen appliances are examples of smaller scale and therefore “soft technology” (Faulkner, 2001, p. 85). This as opposed to the “hard” technology of “industrial plants, space rockets, weapon systems ... large technological systems associated with powerful institutions” (ibid.). Technology may be gendered in a material way, or symbolically, by association.

The boundaries between everyday life and digital media are dissolving (Wajcman and Jones, 2012) and the spread of smart mobile technology to the domestic realm has challenged the meanings of ‘work’ and ‘home’ (Chambers, 2016). While communication media and machine intelligence are transforming the labour process through workplace technologies that are ubiquitous and increasingly intangible, technologies in the home environment may present different challenges for the mediation of work and life. Since the advent of the first smart phone in 2007, a proliferation of devices and associated connectivity has changed our technology behaviour beyond recognition (ibid.). Technology is now integrated with all areas of life. Therefore, an integrative analysis, that takes everyday life into account, is needed.

The core question of this stream is: *How does the gender-technology relationship impact everyday life at home and at work?* Organization and management research has often neglected organisational technology (Orlikowski, 2010) and ontology of organisational technology is often taken for granted. Different technological capabilities produce particular effects for example, the materiality of specific technologies afford particular modes of interaction (Orlikowski, 2010). A relational ontology rejects the idea of a world made up of individuals and objects with separate properties (ibid.). Some organisation scholars have used perspectives such as Actor Network Theory to examine workplace sociotechnical relations. The conceptualisation of sociomateriality for example, can be used to focus on how materialities and meanings are enacted in everyday practices.

Submissions are welcomed from a wide variety of ontological and epistemological positions. Please submit papers on the following indicative topics:

- Information literacy, the digital workplace and organisation level information culture; technological literacy and gendered practices in organisations
- Gendered relationships between ICTs, workplace technology use and work-life articulation: the use of workplace internet for leisure or life project pursuits; rules and norms pertaining to technology use at work and equality of access to technology goods at work
- Human-machine interfaces at work and individual technology behaviour: the regulation of algorithmic governance in the workplace; exploring quantification and the infiltration of metrics to everyday life, in the quantified and gendered self
- Technologies that are implicated in the work of social reproduction for example the use of internet and Apps to manage housework tasks like food shopping, bills and remote parenting
- The connections between gender, work-life navigation, labour market power and attitudes to technologies
- Feminist philosophy of technology perspectives on how the social world of work is mediated by technology
- Agential and structural factors that enable and constrain technology adoption by women and men
- Industry 4.0, cyber-physical systems, Internet of things, cloud computing viewed through the lens of the gender-technology relationship
- Gendering of technology in the career context; the relationship between technology and gendering of work in the gig economy; the role of technology in gender segregation
- Gender-sensitive issues of the 'people analytics' organisation agenda and the HR use of people analytics to address business performance and productivity
- Technology, activism and organisational democracy: How technology is implicated in producing gender (in)equality; Technology's role in the project of gender equality in organisations
- Digital divides, emerging from gendered participation in the digital world

If you wish to propose a session within the stream, that is, 3-4 papers tied together with a specific focus or theme, the organizers will try to accommodate them in the programme.

Abstracts of approximately 500 words (submitted direct to stream leaders, ONE page, WORD NOT PDF, single spaced, excluding any references, no headers, footers or track changes) are invited by Friday 1st November 2019. Decisions on acceptance of abstracts will be made by stream leaders within one month and communicated to authors by Monday 2nd December 2019. All contributions will be independently refereed. Abstracts should include FULL contact details, including name, institutional affiliation, mailing address, and e-mail address. Abstracts should be emailed to j.monroe@newcastle.ac.uk.

References

Chambers, D. (2016) *Changing Media, Homes and Households: Cultures, technologies and meanings*. London: Routledge.

Faulkner, W. (2001) 'The technology question in feminism: A view from feminist technology studies', *Women's Studies International Forum*, 24(1), pp. 79-95.

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Wajcman, J. (2006) 'TechnoCapitalism Meets TechnoFeminism: Women and Technology in a Wireless World', *Labour & Industry: a journal of the social and economic relations of work*, 16(3), pp. 7-20.

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