

12 JUNE 2025 09.00 - 11.00

Panel 18. What comes next for Feminist STS?

Convenors:

Anna Jabloner, Universidad Instituto de Empresa

Danya Glabau, New York University

Keywords: Black feminism, Feminist STS, disability, technoscience

Feminist STS has been a hub of activity in recent years, with new journals and interdisciplinary theory reinventing the center of the field from what had previously been treated as a marginal set of scholars and concerns. In particular, Black feminist theory has motivated intersectional and justice-based critiques of digital technologies, care work has become a sustained area of theoretical interest, from the laboratory to the hospital to the home, and disability theory has gained its footing in STS via feminist research on biomedicine and medical innovation. Indeed, the subfield marks an important moment in 2025: the ten year anniversary of a dedicated feminist STS journal, *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory Technoscience*.

Now that feminist STS has gained broad institutionalization and recognition, what comes next? This roundtable invites scholars from any methodological and/or disciplinary perspective to map out future directions for feminist STS. What possibilities, for example, has an intersectional perspective on digital and biomedical infrastructures opened up for teaching, research, and activism? How does feminist STS translate into innovative pedagogy, and what variety of institutions host such programs? How does feminism unsettle taken for granted commitments in STS, like the interest in the laboratory as a primary research site or "studying up" among scientists and other experts? And how might feminist STS provide a platform for the pursuit of other commitments in the field, like better recognition of scholars in/of the Global South?

For our roundtable discussion, we invite short, 5-minute summaries of forward-looking concerns or research in feminist STS. These short statements can alternately consist of short demos or multimedia presentations of engagements with feminist technoscience beyond traditional academic texts. Please indicate what you wish to briefly present as well as the questions you want to discuss with your fellow discussants in your abstract.

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ID 236 - Feminist STS in Trump 2: tech nerd goes macho

Anna Jabloner, IE University

Keywords: Black feminism, Feminist STS, disability, technoscience

The global lead disseminator of fake news, conspiracy theories, and other untruths is back in power in the US, and with a vengeance. Populists, autocrats, and fascists are in charge in numerous EU countries and across the globe. As Trump belligerently starts into his second administration, fake news and overtly anti-science ideas are not just being amplified but find strong and real political leadership in his loyalist institutional shake up. In addition, Silicon Valley leaders, long identified with a nerdy and distinctly (white-) American style of being a tech-nerd or -bro, are all over the news re/discovering their meat-eating, chest-beating virility at the onset of Trump 2. What a twisted double challenge for feminist STS folks! In this potential contribution, I'd like to briefly connect the political moment to some possible futures of feminist STS. And trying to stuff my LeGuin-ian satchel with some talking points as the tech-nerd goes macho, I suggest the following discussion questions:

- In light of a shifting political landscape, what are the futures of an institutionalized feminist STS? Are those institutions secure? Why or why not?
- Who do we talk with/against/vis-à-vis in this political moment, when official scientific institutions may change or even be dismantled?
- How do feminist STS scholars argue for the need for feminist critiques of science and technologies



when we may no longer be addressing the major scientific institutions and funders, but more explicitly those in power who might find in "feminist sts" the perfect evidence of a woke takeover?

- How might we address, especially with students and in everyday language, the need to critically study objectivity under Trump 2?
- If we are, as feminist STS scholars, reacting to chest-beating, meat-eating neo-machos re-discovering their lost virility, how do we do so? Where, and when? How do we bring intersectional feminism in/to a flaring US-style macho politics?
- Or, do we explicitly keep quiet in this moment – in order to protect feminist STS structures in what might amount to the emergence of (some kind of) fascism?

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ID 370 - Body, Water, Camera. A Sensory Feminist STS Project.

Lily-Cannelle Mathieu, McGill University

Keywords: #corporeality, #cyborg, #feminist STS, #film, #non-word-based methodology

A multimedia presentation: I would be thrilled to participate in this panel and to have the opportunity to discuss my (yet untitled, and perhaps forever so) short ethnographic film with a group of scholars actively working in Feminist STS. The 5-minutes film presents unedited, yet highly technologically-mediated images and sounds produced by a GoPro HERO10 camera handled by myself, a young anthropologist who was then learning to dive in the hope of glimpsing at common octopuses in Sicilian waters. This film was produced in the context of the ethnographic fieldwork I conducted for my doctoral research, in which I propose to think of, and invite to try to experience, cognition from both octopian and AI 'bodies' and perspectives.

The short film nods poetically to an experience of learning to breathe underwater, through a cyborgian apparatus, and to an unexperienced filmmaker's corporeal and mediatic negotiations with her new GoPro recorder. The film proposes itself as a sensory engagement with water, corporeality, and mediaticity, and invites reflections on what feminist STS can look like, beyond words. Indeed, it is my hope that the film's sensory qualities are heightened by the absence of words, and that they can transmit, viscerally, an experience of being a body in water, of being somewhat of a (temporary?) cyborg, of breathing through a complex apparatus, and of seeing (or pretending to see) through an AI-powered camera encased within a transparent box protecting it from the sea water's pressure changes. Here are a few questions I would be very excited to think about with fellow discussants:

- What can an engagement with the concepts of water, liquidity and viscosity bring to contemporary Feminist STS (Jue 2020)?
- What are the stakes of referring to corporeality in Feminist STS today (Alaimo 2014, Parisi & Teranova 2021)? (How) can we think with or within this paradigm without reiterating a dichotomic association between the feminine and the body, on one side, and the masculine and the concept of a 'disembodied' mind, on the other? How can the processes and outcomes of thinking with one's body be articulated in contemporary conversations?
- How can 'cyborg-ness' be made present to a public; how can it be made felt, beyond words and discursive explanations (Stevenson 2017)? How can one viscerally transmit (Diamond 2003) an experience of 'cyborg-ity'? Can film, for example, allow an empathy towards cyborg-ness to emerge? An embodied empathy towards other or Other bodies?
- Very pragmatically, how can a junior scholar 'do' STS or academic work beyond words in an institutional landscape normatively constructed around discourses (Ahenakew 2016)? How can one seek academic approval and recognition when conducting non-word-based methods and creating non-word-based academic works?
- What are emergent possibilities at crossroads between More-than-Human and Feminist STS studies (Haraway 1991, Haraway 2016, Alaimo 2016, Swanson 2017, Braidotti 2019)? What forms can feminist sensibilities take in more-than-human relationships and entanglements?



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ID 741 - Can Technology Be Feminist? New Directions in Technology Assessment

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Natalia Fernández Jimeno, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas

Keywords: Feminist technoscience studies, technology, assessment

Well-known feminist philosophers of science, such as Evelyn Fox Keller, Helen Longino, Sandra Harding, and Donna Haraway, participated in the lively academic debates of the 1980s and 1990s concerning the possibility of a feminist science. These feminist epistemologists challenged the presuppositions of mainstream epistemology while advocating for the relevance of the knowing subject and the social context in the shaping of knowledge, or, in Haraway's (1991) words, 'the situationality of knowledge.' Although these reflections and their differing positions were developed as a result of the intersection of science and gender, the approaches and terms of the debate can be easily extrapolated to the analysis of technology, while accounting for its specific features. In the philosophy of technology, a similar discussion has been unfolding since the 1970s, primarily focusing on the extent to which technological development contributes to the oppression or liberation of women. An example can be found in feminist reflections on reproductive technologies, where more 'techno-optimistic' approaches, which saw in technological development the possibility of emancipating women from reproductive tasks in the future (e.g., Firestone, 1970), were contested by more 'techno-pessimistic' positions that viewed reproductive technologies as inherently patriarchal and aimed at the oppression of women (e.g., Corea, 1985). However, since the 2000s, there has been an explosion of constructivist and post-constructivist studies that approach the technological phenomenon with new perspectives. These new perspectives have reignited the debate in feminist technoscience scholars, as demonstrated in several publications (e.g., Layne, Vostral, and Boyer, 2010; Loh and Coeckelbergh, 2019; Loh, 2023). The objective of this contribution is to engage with the current debate by analyzing the possibility of a feminist technology. To this end, the discussion in feminist philosophy of science will be reviewed in order to explore what lessons can be drawn for feminist perspectives on technology.

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ID 791 - Establishing a Feminist AI Lab in a University of Technology: Navigating Tensions and Disciplinary Boundaries

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Ariane Lucchini, Technische Universiteit Delft

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Keywords: Feminist AI, Academic Research, Epistemic Hegemony, Feminist STS

We write this abstract as members and affiliates of the newly founded Feminist Generative AI Lab to unpack the challenges we are facing in positioning ourselves and our research in a technology-driven academic context, and in navigating disciplinary and epistemological boundaries. This work explores the key struggles we face in establishing a feminist approach to generative AI research, particularly within Science and Technology Studies (STS), Human-Computer Interaction (HCI), and Design & Engineering.

First, we deliberately use the term 'feminist', acknowledging its political and historical meanings. While ethical considerations in AI are increasingly gaining attention, feminist AI is not simply about fairness or neutrality. Feminist approaches challenge power structures, hegemonic narratives, and epistemic exclusions, seeking to reconfigure who designs, benefits from, and governs technology. However, within academia, the use of explicitly political terms is often met with skepticism, particularly in disciplines where technology is still framed as objective and neutral. This tension between feminist positioning and academic legitimacy creates a fundamental challenge for those working at this intersection.



Second, feminist research requires engagement with diverse forms of knowledge, extending beyond conventional epistemological paradigms in academia. Feminist STS and HCI scholars emphasize co-creation, participatory research, embodied knowledge, and elevating emotions as fundamental methodological commitments. However, academic research in science and technology often privileges specific epistemic traditions, making incorporating activist, artistic, or community-based knowledge within dominant scientific frameworks difficult.

In the field of AI, feminist critique is gaining growing attention. However, our challenge is to balance theoretical critiques with the practical aspects that allow for centering feminist values in technology development. We position our work as part of this affirmative, constructive feminist approach - not solely as a critical deconstruction but as an active effort to redefine generative AI in practice, through feminist principles.

This work is authored by design and HCI researchers from European, North American, and South American contexts, each bringing distinct disciplinary backgrounds and research perspectives. Despite these differences, we share common challenges in applying feminist methodologies within a technology-driven academic context. Acknowledging that these are our first steps into feminist STS, we aim to use this session to present our Lab's manifesto, critically reflecting on the decisions, negotiations, and compromises that shaped its development. This manifesto is not a static declaration but a living document, evolving alongside our research.

We conclude by posing key questions to the panel and attendees: (1) What constitutes a feminist research lab, and how does it manifest in different technological and scientific fields? (2) What tensions arise between opening research practices (through participatory, activist, or co-creative methods) and maintaining scientific "reliability"? (3) How can feminist scholars working in technology redefine "rigour" in ways that acknowledge positionality and lived experience?

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ID 855 - Durable for Who? Examining Memory Systems and the Climate Crisis through a Feminist, Decolonial STS Framework

Kaitlyn Rich, Rutgers University

Keywords: Climate Change, Libraries/Archives, Information Infrastructure, Feminist STS, and Decolonial STS

Increasingly, library and information science research has focused on the impact of climate change-related disasters on archives and libraries (i.e., flooding, material damage, storage issues, material relocation, increased focus on ecological sustainability practices in the field, private companies entering public cultural knowledge preservation, and library closings impacting community climate justice). However, there is also an element of libraries, archives, and information systems being implicated in the climate crisis and climate justice issues in the forms of data centers' energy consumption, data centers' impact on surrounding communities, digital preservation access and resources (memory workers labor and energy resources), and community/public access to climate knowledge and climate justice resilience resources of the academy. This paper is interested in how the material of information infrastructure, archives, and libraries are impacted by the climate crisis and also implicated in the escalating climate disaster. Increasingly precarious information, produced and preserved by memory systems and infrastructure, plays a significant role in quantifying, supporting, and interrogating societal knowledge, power, and ideology. Most existing research on archives and climate change usually separates the impact and implication discussion of memory sites and systems. Scholarly work either focuses on the threat of climate disasters on memory sites, such as libraries and archives, or the research work focuses on the natural and labor resource toll of memory systems, such as the energy need of data centers and digital preservation. This paper argues that examining both impact and implication through a feminist and decolonial science and technology studies (STS) lens could provide the needed critical theoretical framework to integrate socio-political, economic, and increasingly ecological questions and help ask and understand new connections between memory, power, infrastructure, and climate.

