

Digital “Women’s Work?”: Job Recruitment Ads and the Feminization of Social Media Employment

Brooke Erin Duffy
Cornell University, USA

Becca Schwartz
University of Oxford, UK

Abstract

In the wake of profound transformations in digital media markets and economies, the structures and conditions of cultural production are being radically reconfigured. This study explores the nascent field of social media work through an analysis of job recruitment ads—texts, we contend, that provide insight into a key discursive site of imagining the ideal digital laborer. Drawing upon a qualitative textual analysis of 150 adverts, we show how employers construct workers through a patterned set of features, including sociability, deft emotional management, and flexibility. Such industrial imaginings incite workers to remain ever available, juggle various roles and responsibilities, and engage in persistent emotional labor—both *online and off*. These expectations, we argue, allude to the increasingly feminized nature of social media employment, with its characteristic invisibility, lower pay, and marginal status within the technology field.

Keywords

Digital, gender, labor, media industries, social media, technology, work

Introduction

The staggering ascent of digital and social media over the last decade has radically reconfigured the processes, products, and people of contemporary media industries. Amid a hyper-saturated marketplace of content, so-called “legacy” media are vying for audience attention with multi-channel networks, independent creators and, above all, social networking sites. As these new players siphon ad revenues away from longstanding media organizations, emergent forms of promotion—influencer marketing, data-driven targeting, and content that surreptitiously blurs the boundaries between advertising and editorial—are fundamentally reshaping the news and entertainment landscapes (Einstein, 2016; Turow, 2013; Usher, 2014). These industrial shifts are occurring against the backdrop of wider transformations in the political economies of communication—a system marked by globally connected networks, the automation of content production and distribution, and regulatory efforts that struggle to keep pace with the breakneck clip of technological innovation.

The implications of these shifts for media workers are profound. While the culture industries are notorious for their long hours and compulsory networking (Gill, 2010), today’s workers face intensified demands on their time and attention. Not only are they expected to circulate cultural products across a sprawling cross-media ecology (Deuze, 2007), they’re also incited to respond to the exigencies of social media by, for instance, bolstering their online presences (Cohen, 2015; Gandini, 2016) and cultivating relationships with digitally

networked audiences (Duffy, 2013; Baym, 2015). At the same time, businesses of all stripes are allocating resources to a newly created position: the *social media professional*. Those enlisted as social media “coordinators,” “editors,” and “managers”—along with more faddish titles like “guru” and “ninja”—are tasked with distributing branded content across corporate blogs, Facebook pages, Twitter feeds, and Instagram accounts. Many also function as community managers whereby they monitor content, engage fans, and placate critics. With the widespread uptake of social media marketing over the last decade,¹ it’s perhaps not surprising that this emergent profession has seen a drastic increase: according to one estimate, social media jobs advertised on LinkedIn swelled more than thirteen hundred percent from 2010 to 2013 (Davis, 2013). Our own search of U.S. job-scouting websites LinkedIn and Indeed.com uncovered 74,777 and 57,579 respective postings mentioning “social media,” with more than 3,200 in the title alone.²

The evolution of social media into a bona fide profession has generated a spate of attention—ranging from the whimsical to the critical. In spring 2016, several pop culture websites spotlighted a rather extraordinary job listing: the UK’s Royal Communication office was soliciting applicants to serve as Queen Elizabeth II’s social media editor (Royal Communication, 2016). More prosaically, media and news organizations have sought to probe the contours of this emergent career field. At the decade’s turn, as organizations were coming to grips with the urgency of the then-nascent social networking landscape, *Adweek* featured interviews with a cadre of newly designated social media editors (“What Exactly?,” 2010). Workers detailed their shape-shifting responsibilities and highlighted the unpredictability of digital communication. One editor chronicled:

putting together a tweets page to pull in live updates from sporting events or breaking stories, grabbing a Droid myself and heading out to grab live video of a car engulfed in flames, [and] co-hosting chat shows using CoverItLive software to engage with our readers (para 4).

She explained how these schizophrenic work patterns require various skills: video editing, coding, and web design, among others (ibid).

Other perspectives have underscored the presumed gender dynamics of social media work. While female employees have marginal standing in the bulk of media organizations, a 2013 survey revealed that women hold a slight majority of social media positions (Lennon, 2013; see also, “Status of Women,” 2017). “Social media,” the report noted optimistically, “is radically reshaping the role of women in the media” (p. 48). As of June 2017, between seventy and eighty percent of social media workers (editors, specialists, managers, and coordinators)

using the salary compilation site Payscale self-identify as female (<http://www.payscale.com>).

At first blush, the high ratio of women in this career sector seems to mirror a gender disparity in social media usage. In 2013, on the heels of findings that U.S. women are more likely than men to use social media, a Pew report declared, “It’s a woman’s (social media) world.” While more recent data reveal that the gender gap is narrowing (Anderson, 2015), discourses about gender-specific social networking remain rife—especially among marketers. As a social media report urged sales professionals, “Visual networks like Instagram, Pinterest, and Tumblr may be among the best in your arsenal to reach female consumers, and well-targeted advertising campaigns on social channels like Twitter and Facebook have the potential to reach many U.S. women” (“Why Women Are,” n.d.).

However, individuals working inside the media and culture industries are less auspicious about social media’s ostensibly progressive gender politics. In 2009, independent publisher Keidra Chaney expressed concern with what she saw as social media’s abatement to a (new) “pink collar ghetto of tech” (The Learned FanGirl, 2009). Witnessing the discrepancy between the predominantly male attendance at technology workshops and the raft of blogging conferences teeming with female aspirants, she offered, “I fear that if social media starts to get too stratified by gender, it will be easier for the work that women do in social media to become marginalized in the tech world” (ibid). Several years later, writer/editor Alana Hope Levinson invoked the telling “pink ghetto” aphorism in a poignant self-reflection on the positioning of social media workers within news organizations. Social media, she offered, is disparaged as a “girly job”—despite its central role in steering twenty-first century news organizations. Levinson compared her then-role as a social media editor to the public relations field, explaining, “they both, at their essence, involve promotion; and they’re both—if done well—invisible” (2015, n.p.).

This article aims to render the field of social media employment *more visible* by examining how the media and culture industries imagine the ideal social media worker. Drawing upon a qualitative textual analysis of entry-level and intern position advertisements, we show how employers construct workers through patterned features, including sociability and leisure; emotional management; and various types of flexibility. Such industrial constructions incite workers to be ever-available, juggle various tasks and responsibilities, and engage in persistent emotional labor—*both online and off*. We conclude by arguing that these expectations point toward the increasingly feminized nature of social media labor, characterized by invisibility, lower pay, and marginal status within the technology sector

In the following sections, we trace the lineages of this proto-profession to two distinct, yet increasingly interrelated, work cultures: the media and culture industries and online activities framed as digital labor.

Media and Cultural Work: Inequalities and Occupational Clusters

At a moment when creativity has achieved such eminence that it appears “almost beyond critique” (Conor et al., 2015, p. 2), the elevated status of cultural work in the popular imagination is perhaps not surprising (Bridges, 2017; Neff et al., 2005; McRobbie, 2016). Narratives of independence, creative autonomy, and economic/social prosperity function as key elements of its valorization, and such optimism endures notwithstanding criticisms of the less idealized features of media and creative work. These features include the characteristically long hours, precarious working conditions, and structural hierarchies (Cohen, 2015; Gill 2002; 2010; Ross, 2009). Large-scale survey data reveal the pervasiveness of the latter. The 2017 Status of Women in Media report, for instance, revealed that men receive nearly sixty-two percent of byline and other credits in the news (“Status of Women,” 2017). In entertainment, meanwhile, just seventeen percent of those producers working on the top 250 grossing domestic films during the 2015-2016 season were female (ibid). These disparities are a testament to larger patterns of gender, race, and class-based discrimination and inequality across the cultural sector (Gill, 2002; 2014; Conor et al., 2014; Eikhof and Warhurst, 2013; Friedman et al, 2016).

Occupational segregation is another index of structural inequity in the media and creative industries. To be sure, inquiries into professions shaped by a sex-based division of labor—or what Charles and Grusky (2004) describe as “occupational ghettos”—are not exclusive to media and cultural work. Rather, there exists a longer tradition of scholarship into such job-related clusters, particularly within the so-called service industries. For instance, drawing upon in-depth research with beauticians, waitresses, and homemakers, Howe (1977) introduced the idea of “pink collar work” to describe sets of tasks, such as cooking and cleaning, traditionally assigned to women. Other late twentieth-century sociologies highlight how women’s positions tend to include an affective element—obligating the worker to sympathize, build relational ties, and engage in forms of what Hochschild (1983) famously described as “emotional labor” (see also, Acker, 1990).

Among the occupational clusters within the media and culture industries is the tendency for men tend to hold senior executive and creative positions, while women are relegated to promotional and service roles (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2015; Mayer, 2013). The implications of this patterned division of labor are rife: prefigured divisions that challenge the ideals of autonomy and freedom;

segregated cultures that make it more challenging for workers to “match their talents to their occupations”; and the fact that jobs performed by a large majority of women typically to pay less (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2015, p. 25; see also, Arcy, 2015; Mayer, 2013). There is an unfortunate, yet telling, backstory to gender-based divisions of labor within the creative industries, namely that the influx of women into certain professions has coincided with a perceived decline in salaries and status (Chambers et al., 2004). This trajectory has colored the histories of journalism and public relations, both of which witnessed “patterns of decline in content, autonomy, and rewards” (Creedon, 1990, p. 68; see also, van Zoonen, 2002). Indeed, though female journalists began to make inroads into American and British newsrooms in the late 19th century, their positions were marginalized by, for example, relegating them to certain content areas such as soft news and features (a “feminine ghetto,”³) and, later, concealing their research and writing contributions with article bylines attributed to male colleagues (Povich, 2013).

The social and economic devaluation of certain professions represents a so-called “feminization,” which, importantly, is less about the actual demographics of an industry and more about the cultural value of certain forms of work (Creedon, 1990; Mayer, 2013). As Webster (2014) makes clear, the feminization of particular career sectors occurs *regardless* of “how much individual jobs may involve competence, skill, and technological knowledge” (p. 143). Offering a potential explanation for *why* certain professional roles may be devalued, Reskin (1988) contends that the allocation of tasks by gender helps to ensure that “dominant groups maintain their hegemony by differentiating the subordinate group and defining it as inferior” (p. 55). A key way that certain roles and tasks become socially subordinated is by rendering their processes or products *invisible*.

Invisible Labor in the Digital Economy

“Invisibility” has been a pervasive theme in articulations of gendered labor—from early politics surrounding the Wages for Housework campaign—a feminist Marxist movement which critiqued capitalist economies for failing to recognize women’s domestic/reproductive labor (Federici, 2008; Weeks, 2011)—to sociologies of (almost exclusively female) service workers who labor invisibly through emotional management (Hochschild, 1983; Acker, 1990). The rise of post-Fordist service and information economies has prompted scholars to interrogate the profound breadth of invisible labor, or what Crain et al. (2016) dub “hidden work in the contemporary world.” They define invisible labor as

activities...workers perform in response to requirements (either implicit or explicit) from employers and that are crucial for workers to generate income, to obtain or retain their jobs, and to further their careers, yet are

often overlooked, ignored, and/or devalued by employers, consumers, workers, and ultimately the legal system itself (p. 6).

In recent years, scholars have cast much-needed attention on the myriad forms of invisible labor that propel the media industries, including internships or creative gigs that encourage aspirants to “work for exposure,” rather than for material rewards (e.g. Corrigan, 2015; Duffy, 2015; Kuehn and Corrigan, 2013; Hesmondhalgh, 2010; Perlin, 2012).

Scholars of ICT and digital media, meanwhile, have illuminated the largely concealed workforce that drives the information economy, including online community management, piecemeal task work, and content moderation (Kerr and Kelleher, 2015; Postigo, 2009; Roberts, 2014). Their work is part of an expansive field of scholarship on *digital labor*—a concept with an astonishingly uneven deployment. While business writers use it colloquially to refer to the automation of tasks, critical researchers tend to focus on how everyday leisure activities—producing content on Facebook, Yelp, or a TV review board, for instance, double as value-generating labor in digital capitalism (Andrejevic, 2008; Jarrett, 2016; Scholz, 2012; Terranova, 2000). Early perspectives were quite polarized: these activities were understood as online forms of creative expression or, alternatively, as free labor exploited in the service of capitalism. However, scholars have recently attempted to break down this binary by, for instance, drawing attention to the economies of particular platforms (Postigo, 2016), highlighting particular reward systems (Gandini, 2016; Kuehn and Corrigan, 2013), or grounding theoretical debates in studies of the agency and aspirations of workers (Duffy, 2015; Fish and Srinivasan, 2012).

Other researchers foreground the need to think through the gender politics of digital labor. Jarrett (2014; 2016) for instance, makes a compelling argument that the concealed nature of *digital labor*—which takes place behind the screens, cloaked by discourses of fun or pleasure—has important continuities with earlier forms of “women’s work” (see also, Duffy, 2015; Arcy, 2016; Shade, 2014). Other scholars have sought to examine the gendered dimensions of labor within various worker subcultures. Examining the hidden work of gaming community managers, Kerr and Kelleher (2015) found that this is an area where “more women are employed, and are where ‘soft’ skills of verbal and written communication, management of emotions, diplomacy, and empathy are valued and exploited” (p. 180).

These lines of inquiry index the need to examine gender and other social identity markers within the emergent field of social media employment: Who is shouldering the burden for companies’ social media communication and promotional activities? To what extent does this nascent work culture challenge or exacerbate constructions of gender in the media, culture, and technology

industries? And what might an analysis of these professions tell us about larger domains of social media work? This project seeks to address these questions while also responding to recent clarion calls to take seriously the gendering of labor in the digital economy (Arcy, 2015; p. 2; see also Duffy, 2015; Shade, 2015).

Method

The focus of this study is on job recruitment advertisements—texts that provide insight into a key discursive site of imagining the *ideal social media worker* (Kerr and Kelleher, 2015). Our initial data sample included 100 entry-level positions as well as 50 internship positions; however, ten results were removed during the first wave of coding due to improper tagging.⁴ Ads in the former category were posted to Glassdoor (n=50) and Mediabistro (n=50) between December 2016 and February 2017; internship ads were collected from Internships.com and a University-specific database designed for job-seeking undergraduates. By including internships in our sample, we sought to discern if there were any significant differences between these listings and entry-/mid-level positions. The scope and level of detail included in the advertisements varied, but most were between 200 and 500 words.

We began by coding the position title, job description, location of the job, and company summary; the requisite skills and qualifications; and salary and benefits information (when available). A coding scheme was developed after the researchers' initial review of the data and was further refined inductively—an approach informed by grounded theory, which consists of “simultaneous data collection and analysis, with each informing and focusing the other” (Charmaz, 2005, p. 508). Coding categories included education, experience, and skills qualifications; references to worker demographics/psychographics; descriptions of the workplace, work culture, and company benefits; mentions of particular technologies/social media platforms; and invocations of brand loyalty and being a “voice” of the company. We also coded the ads for gendered language, a decision based upon earlier perspectives on the sex-based division of labor within the field as well as the supposition that “language is deployed to create hierarchies in ostensibly non-hierarchical organizations and in the creation of occupational roles” (Kerr and Kelleher, 2015, p. 180). While terms like “assertive,” “self-motivated,” “leading” and “management” were coded as “masculine,” references to “collaboration,” “people skills,” “friendliness,” and “organization” were coded as feminine. To be clear, this coding scheme was not based upon any perceptions of actual (i.e., natural) differences between the sexes. Instead, we drew upon *cultural designations* of masculine and feminine traits, such as those classified within the Bem Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1974).

Findings: The Idealized Digital Laborer

The job listings in our sample summoned a sweeping inventory of skills, proficiencies, experiences, and personal attributes that, collectively, seemed jarringly incongruous. That is, social media workers were expected to be self-directed *as well as* community-oriented; creative *as well as* analytic; calculated *as well as* passionate; and highly specialized *as well as* able to juggle multiple roles. Most of the ads catalogued the particular platforms employees should be familiar with: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Tumblr, YouTube, Snapchat, Reddit, and—as one company quipped—“Google+ (JK!) [just kidding].”

Within this maelstrom of patterned ambiguities, a series of consistent themes emerged that cut across our sample and revealed how contemporary organizations are constructing the ideal social media worker. This includes appeals to leisure/informality (“fun” appeared in 9 percent of job ads/16 percent of internships) and sociability (people skills were mentioned in 47 percent of job ads/49 percent of internships); expressions of affect (“passion” was mentioned in 25 percent of job ads/31 percent of internships); temporal and professional flexibility (“flexible” was mentioned in 18 percent both job and internships ads); multi-tasking (38 percent of job ads/27 percent of internships), organization/attention to detail (41 percent job ads/39 percent internships); and self-directedness/being a self-starter (24 percent of job ads/20 percent of internships).⁵ This catalogue of traits presents an archetype of a worker who is sociable, emotive, and flexible—features we attribute to the social media profession’s ostensible *feminization*.

The Sociable Worker: Fun and Well-Connected

Critical reflections on digital labor routinely invoke the blurred boundary between work and play, wherein leisure-time activities have a value-generating function within the circuits of capitalism. In a not dissimilar fashion, the ads in our sample detailed fun workplaces, exhilarating opportunities, and a convivial professional culture. Ranker, for instance, billed itself as a “very casual workplace (i.e. t-shirts and shorts are totally fine) with a fully stocked kitchen including free snacks, soda, Perrier, LaCroix, Mexican Coca Cola.” The ad continued, “We also do catered lunches and breakfast weekly, and free massages every other week.” Similarly, the Points Guy website beckoned applicants “excited to have flexible PTO, free lunches, office dogs galore, and tons of unreal travel perks.” Meanwhile, among the promised “perks” of the Brandman agency is a “supportive, fun office culture.” While these descriptors nod toward the aching hip culture of the startup world—where informality and an aura of bohemia reassure bright-eyed employees that work and play can in fact harmonize—they were ostensibly more feminized than the Silicon Valley set. Aside from the Conservative Tribune’s reference to “video games and VR

machine,” emphasizes on “LaCroix and free massages”(Ranker); discounted membership to “training and Private Pilates, Spa and Café’ services and Shop” (Equinox); “monthly potlucks” (Universal Giving), and the office’s close “distance to great shops and restaurants” suggests a gendered subjectivity.

Invocations of the exciting, pleasurable nature of the workplace were particularly evident in the internship ads—a trend we attribute to their characteristic lack of financial compensation. Indeed, nearly two-thirds of the internship listings were unpaid/for college credit.⁶ For instance, New York Magazine Minute described the “detailed, upbeat work environment” and explained, “We are very serious about having fun. No bores allowed! (You better be caught up on your *Game of Thrones*).” Other positions played up access to seemingly insular industrial spaces. iFashion, for instance, described candidates’ opportunities to network as well as “going to social events and many other interesting and fun tasks,” while Rachel Brown Jewelry suggested that candidates would get a “‘behind the scenes’ view into...creating and attracting a celebrity following.” These positions seem to justify their failure to compensate applicants as a tradeoff for their glittering *non-material* rewards.

In other instances, notions of fun were invoked in ways that fed into—rather than supplanted—the requisite tasks at hand. Her Campus was described as a “fun yet focused” work culture, while boutique firm Alternative Strategies solicited “fun individuals who thrive off our creative and productive work environment.” A brand marketing company, meanwhile, highlighted the enjoyable nature of the work, qualifying, “We tend to have lots of fun here while we also get the job done!” Implicit in these calls is the promise of friendly co-workers who could make going to work *enjoyable*. Other ads hyped a “small but lively team” (Dale Bleckman Show); “a collegial work environment” (StayWell); and the assurance that “we only hire extremely nice people” (Owl Lane Media). These examples stress performances and orientations that are traditionally associated with femininity, such as caring and service skills (Adkins, 2001) and social interactions framed as “chatting” or “banter” (Mayer, 2013).

Of course, work in the media and creative industries has long been marked by a degree of sociality (Wittel, 2001), or what McRobbie (2002) detailed as a “clubs to companies” informality. In more recent years, amidst the proliferation of social networking sites, such forms of “compulsory sociality” (Gregg, 2008; Gill, 2010) have moved onto Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and more. Emphasizing the importance of both *offline* and *online* social networking skills, The Rise Network described the ideal candidate as:

someone who walks into a room of people and can’t leave without making a few friends. Someone who is obsessed with social media and is creative and thoughtful when interacting with online communities and building relationships.

Some employers sought verifiable evidence that a candidate could cultivate relationships in earnest. BuzzFeed was unabashed in their request for evidence of socially networked connections; the ad required that applicants include “links to your social media accounts such as a Twitter, Tumblr, Facebook, Pinterest, or personal blog. DO NOT APPLY WITHOUT SUBMITTING LINKS TO SOCIAL MEDIA PLEASE!”

Perhaps not surprisingly, several of the job ads seemed less oriented around *who* you know and more focused on assessing *how many* you know. Armies of devoted followers, in other words, served as a quantified litmus test for persuasive prowess. A social media internship position (Humanas) detailed its dream candidate as follows: “You are a proven social media maven. You’ve heard of every social media platform out there and have profiles on a fair number of them. You may even have a blog with a solid following.” Clique, similarly, stated their preference for “candidates with an existing fashion blog and/or a strong social media presence.” The emphasis on quantifiable benchmarks of status is a testament to a sprawling reputation economy (Hearn, 2010; Gandini, 2016), wherein social media metrics form the basis of digitally mediated social capital. Crucially, this hyper-social orientation is expected to bleed into the job, too, as the following section unpacks.

The Affective Worker: Passionate and Emotionally Managed

It’s been widely noted that the shift to post-Fordism, marked in part by the rise of feminized service work, placed a heightened emphasis on workers’ outward demeanor (Hochschild, 1983; Adkins, 2001). Ads in our sample similarly called for particular affective expressions, most especially “passion.” Indeed, twenty-one of the ads we analyzed made an explicit reference to passion, including appeals for a “passionate and entrepreneurial social media editor,” individuals “passionate about design, tech, and restaurants,” and candidates “passionate about content.” In other instances, the object of such stated passion was social media *en masse*, such as “a genuine love for and excitement about the internet” or a “passion for social media.” Notably, some calls framed such orientations as “obsessions”; this included stated preferences for candidates with a “deep love of and interest in all things social,” or “someone who is not only passionate about social media—but lives and breathes it.” A post from 70 Faces Media asked, “Are you addicted to Twitter? Constantly refreshing Instagram?” while New York Minute Magazine provoked, “Are you always staying up too late to scroll through FaceBook [sic] or to stalk your friends’ latest photos on Instagram?” Terms like *addiction* and *obsession* were not pathologized but, instead, were bound up with notions of the idealized worker.

Also noteworthy was the expectation that candidates possess an already-present devotion to their prospective employers' brand, such as a "passion for travel and [The Points Guy] brand," or a "deep passion for the UrbanDaddy brand and lifestyle." Such affective ties to the brand underscore the crucial role of social media workers as digital mouthpieces for their employer. Thus, StyleHaul's future employee should know the company's content so well that their communication is "in harmony with our overall brand and aesthetic," while candidates for the Thrillist Media Group should be primed with a "deep familiarity with [the brand's] content, tone, style, and lens." For social media workers, it seems, brand loyalty *precedes* employment. This dual construction of employees as brand producers *and* consumers brings to mind Campbell's (2011) conclusions about corporate efforts to enlist *female* internet users as brand advocates. Marketers aim to harness what he called the "labor of devotion," which is predicated on industrial assumptions that "men loyally consume their favorite brands whereas women actively promote their favorite brands to other women" (p. 494).

In addition to stated calls for "passion" and "love," the ads emphasized a positive demeanor. Feminized language was frequently deployed: "upbeat," "kind-hearted," able to "promote a positive and enthusiastic work environment," and possessing a "warm, enthusiastic personality." Moreover, invocations of emotional labor reveal how the idealized worker was also expected to deftly manage her affective sentiments. Among the most blatant examples of an employers' requirements for emotional management was an appeal for a digital content intern who "must be excited to work on administrative office tasks"—an expectation that most certainly requires a skillful concealment of one's apathy. Another, more cheeky ad, read: "You are a natural leader who through charm, charisma and force can herd vast armies of cats into their proper pens and corrals." Despite the hyperbolic language, the implication is that workers are equipped with the emotive finesse to tackle any social scenario.

Emotional labor is also necessary to withstand the psychologically taxing nature of online communication, especially among those responsible for monitoring and managing the community. Ads thus noted how workers should "maintain composure and a positive attitude" (Staywell), retain a "calm and steady disposition" (Time), and have the equanimity to remain "cool under pressure [with] a pleasant while professional demeanor" (E! Entertainment). These appeals suggest how workers are expected to proficiently cultivate and direct emotion to conform to the wills of the employer, *while also* ignoring unfavorable reactions. Such emotional distance is especially crucial given the harassment and vitriol that digital laborers may face when an internet user's identity is concealed behind the computer screen (Roberts, 2014). As the next

section unpacks, this emphasis on emotional control is also necessary to navigate a field that's always in flux.

The Flexible Worker: Always-On and Professionally Nimble

With the rise of mobile technologies, contemporary workers across industries and career levels are seemingly compelled to remain available around the clock. Against this backdrop, some of the media and marketing organizations in our sample called upon workers who could act with a profound sense of urgency. A job call for Her Campus, for instance, was quite explicit about the need for potential employees to possess a “strong work ethic with the recognition that social media is a 24/7 job.” In other cases, the companies highlighted how workers should be available “as needed on evenings and weekends or whenever duties call” and be able to “move quickly, as news and significant events happen.” The term “flexibility” was routinely invoked to signal this stretched out sense of temporality, whereby one was always just a finger swipe away from the next task at hand. An ad for Bustle noted how candidates must have the “flexibility to jump on to help cover breaking news, TV shows, and live events,” while another emphasized the “ability to be flexible during times of change, shifting priorities, demands and timelines.” In contrast to the gig economy’s upbeat framing of “flexibility,” the employment ads summoned those amenable to the incursion of work responsibilities into their personal lives.

In addition to the temporal demands placed upon social media workers, the ads alluded to prospective employees’ general agility toward work; social media editors must be what Morgan and Nelligan (2015) called “labile labourers.” That is, they must be “mobile, spontaneous, malleable, and capable of being aroused by new vocational possibilities”—orientations which, the researchers note, young men may be less effective at withstanding (p. 66; see also Bridges, 2017). Kate Ryan Inc. made an appeal for the following: “When change occurs you know how to roll with the punches. When everything around you is chaotic you are not easily flustered.” Time Inc., meanwhile, suggested that instability is endemic to the very work culture; applicants must “[work] well within an organization that is experiencing transformation; flexibility is a must.”

The concept of flexibility expanded beyond ever-changing schedules to encompass the cross-platform, multi-project demands of media work. While a Bloomberg job ad stated that candidates must maintain the “ability to constantly and easily switch among different job assignments and responsibilities,” E! Entertainment sought individuals who can “shift gears quickly between multiple campaigns and projects.” Ayzenberg, similarly, suggested a general social media nimbleness; candidates should be able to “shape-shift depending on platform needs to make the most impact.” Other companies exacted the need for multi-

tasking—a concept mentioned in 19 of the ads: workers should therefore “multitask like a pro” (Blacksheep); have the “ability to multitask in a high pressure environment” (Huffington Post); and possess “experience with multi-tasking and managing multiple projects simultaneously” (Thrillist). Or, as J9 Technologies put it: “We need a well-rounded ‘Jack of all trades, Master of all’ to lead the implementation of a new marketing focus.” Despite—or more likely *because of*—this inventory of projects, platforms, and responsibilities, workers are expected to furnish a keen eye for detail and first-rate organizational skills; in fact, references to detail-oriented appeared in 31 of the ads. Importantly, such emphases on time management, multi-tasking, and organizational skills signal a traditionally feminine subject (Mayer, 2013, p. 52).

Moreover, worker proficiencies seemed to extend beyond the spatial and temporal boundaries of the job. To harness cutting-edge platforms and programs, “self-starters” were expected to “keep up with the fast-paced changes in the digital and social spaces” and “stay abreast of key industry trends, competitive insights and emerging social media/marketing/e-commerce technologies.” In anticipation of a radically uncertain digital future, workers must also possess a “fearless attitude toward technology.” Maintaining this level of vigilance within a rapidly changing social media ecology likely requires significant investments in time, energy, and even human capital (e.g., training courses, trade press subscriptions). It is in this vein that ads emphasized what Gill (2010) calls a “DIY learning” style—one which seemed to supplant traditional modes of educational instruction.⁷ And, as part of larger processes of individualization, it’s the worker—rather than the employer—that shoulders the burden for this continuous upkeep of knowledge, skills, and trends.

Discussion and Conclusion

In their recruitment of talent carefully attuned to the vagaries of the social media economy, contemporary employers—especially in the media and cultural sector—idealize a particular type of worker. This would-be employee is sociable and well-connected; able to deftly manage displays of emotion; both temporally and professionally flexible; and responds to these various demands through self-directedness and careful attention to detail. Many of these features, we contend, construct a decidedly feminine worker subjectivity, while also signaling particular age and class positions.

To appeal to aspiring workers and those furtively scouting for a new position, social media employment is presented as “fun”: pop culture gimmicks (e.g., *Game of Thrones*, free LaCroix) and assurances of dazzling opportunities (“networking with other bloggers” and celebrity-mingling) convey an ethos of pleasure that promises to double-back on the worker. Such appeals have familiar echoes of the culture industries, which are known for their bohemian aura and

culture of informality (Gill, 2002; Neff et al, 2005; McRobbie, 2002), as well as of the offices-*cum*-adult playgrounds of Silicon Valley. Yet, in contrast to the buzzy work cultures of Google or Facebook, these organizations highlight collegial employees and a supportive—even nurturing—atmosphere. Assurances of “extremely nice” colleagues and pleas for talent with a “warm, enthusiastic personality” index gender-coded expectations about communication, compassion, and other “people’s skills.” It’s in this vein that social media work carries the specter of early 20th century media positions, wherein “aspects of communication associated with home and family [were applied] to a segment of the labor force” (Mayer, 2013, p. 23).

This hyper-social orientation also alludes to expectations about one’s online relationships: the preferred candidate has a ready-made social media “audience,”—whether through an engaged fashion blog readership or a Twitter account with legions of followers. On one level, these metrics provide evidence that a prospective employee can build connections, rally support for an intangible brand, and strategically direct the audience’s attention. More broadly, these appeals underscore the importance of one’s digital reputational capital, marked by a wider incitement to “(invest) in social relations with expectations of economic return [through] job procurement” (Gandini, 2015, p. 2; see also, Cohen, 2015; Hearn, 2010; Gershon, 2017). Significantly, though, the emphasis on online reputation points toward a profoundly upended relationship between workers and employers: it is the organization seeking to leverage the social capital and networked reputation of the employee—rather than the other way around. But the balance of power remains tipped in favor of the employer in most other ways—a fact made palpably clear in cases when corporate businesses retain the rights to former employees’ social media pages—even when the latter has amassed millions of followers (Ellis, 2017). And importantly, cultivating these digitally networked connections as friends, followers, and subscribers requires significant investments in time and human capital—a marker of the worker’s privileged class position (Duffy, 2017).

Relatedly, an employee “always staying up too late to scroll through FaceBook [sic]” no doubt makes for an ideal social media laborer as she channels her “addict[ion]” toward the monitoring of her *employers’* social media feeds. The employee’s private social media pastime is urged into unpaid, post-work hours spent curating the public corporate image. Here, *passion* becomes a stand-in for one’s social location: similar to those aspiring to get paid to *do what you love*, this affective orientation “disguises the fact that being able to choose a career primarily for personal reward is a privilege, a sign of socioeconomic class” (Tokumitsu, 2014; see also Duffy, 2015; Consalvo, 2008; Harvey and Shepherd, 2016).

The emotional labor requirements of social media work were discernible in other ways, too. Enthusiasm and positivity were among the venerated qualifications, recalling Hochschild's (1983/2012) finding about service workers for whom "seeming to 'love the job' becomes part of the job." Accordingly, the ads also called for workers who can manage their affective sentiments with thoughtful precision. While the expectation that employees remain "cool under pressure" with a "calm and steady disposition" are prerequisites for an ever-changing career, these features may also signal the need to endure the emotional difficulties of labor *behind-the-screen* (Huntemann, 2015). That is, in calling for content/community management, ads raised the possibility that employees may experience psychologically taxing displays of internet vitriol (see Roberts 2014). Indeed, online media workers across various fields—including entertainment, gaming, and journalism—have been the target of trolling, threats, and racist/misogynistic expressions *while on the job* (Hess, 2013).

Flexibility was also a recurrent theme in the sampled ads: though only a few positions invoked *spatial* flexibility (i.e., "work from home"), many expected workers to be *temporally* flexible (i.e., available outside the standard 9-5 workday) or *professionally* flexible (i.e., endowed with multiple proficiencies). But appeals to temporal "flexibility," while celebrated in the popular imagination, contribute to the expectation that employees are always on call, bound by what Ross (2012) called employers' "unforgiving 24/7 leash" (p. 20). Such emphases on flexibility and nimbleness must be understood against the backdrop of cultural constructions of these ideals as gendered within post-Fordist economies (Gregg, 2011). For instance, Bridges (2017) contends that female workers seem to have a higher tolerance for the profoundly precarious conditions that mark the creative industries—a trend which makes them especially vulnerable to replacement amid a saturated talent market (see also, Morgan and Nelligan, 2015). Moreover, appeals to multi-skilling bring to mind social divisions of labor wherein the burden of managing personal (home) and professional (work) demands falls disproportionately upon women.

As feminist scholars make clear, the feminization of particular career sectors is less about demographic composition and more about the realization that certain fields are progressively "insecure, flexible, invisible, and/or poorly paid" (Adkins, 2001; Negra and Tasker, 2014, p. 7). As such, it's important to consider how social media workers are—or *are not*—paid. In the case of the internships, social media positions—much like other glamour industry gigs (e.g., media, advertising, entertainment)—tend to remunerate not with material rewards but, instead, with oft-deferred promises of exposure (Kuehn and Corrigan, 2013; Duffy, 2016). And, as other writers have convincingly argued, unpaid internships tend to reaffirm gender hierarchies and class positions (Perlin, 2012). *Dissent* writer Madeline Schwartz drew a striking parallel between

unpaid interns and domestic laborers, describing the former as the “the happy housewives of the working world” (2013, n.p.). Academics, too, have helped to shed light on the inequitable culture of unpaid internships, including the fact that individuals from upper-class families are better positioned to accept a non-paid position (Shade and Jacobson, 2015, p. 200; see also, Rodino-Colocino and Berberick, 2015). Following from these lines of inquiry, we conclude that young, middle- to upper-class women are likely to be overrepresented in the pool of social media interns.

It’s decidedly more difficult to assess whether full-time positions provide fair compensation: only a handful of those in our sample mention salary or compensation,⁸ and evidence from existing survey data is highly variable. Payscale notes that the average pay for social media specialists is a “modest \$41K,” while a report for Glassdoor draws a more auspicious conclusion that women working in social media earn *more* than men, \$1.02 for every \$1.00 (Nicks and Rezulli, 2016). A more recent analysis of U.S. census bureau data, however, concluded that women in the “‘miscellaneous’ communications and media category,” where social media specialists are likely shoehorned, earn 82 percent as much as men hired into the same role (Radbil, 2017).

Moreover, this field is discursively constructed as *work that doesn’t seem like work* since women, we’re constantly assured, are naturally social. It’s in this vein that these positions draw upon a longer tradition of diminishing the significance of “women’s work” within capitalist economies (e.g., Adkins, 2001; Jarrett, 2014; Mayer, 2013). A great deal of the labor involved—retweeting posts, uploading images, crafting SEO-friendly headlines, and moderating comments—takes place “behind-the-screens” and is thus rendered invisible (Roberts, 2014; Huntemann, 2015). The inconspicuous nature of social media work manifests itself in other ways, too: the absence of bylines/attribution, credit transplanted to male superiors, and the tendency of female employees to absorb organizational “flack” (Levinson, 2014).

We can also witness this proto-profession’s devaluation by comparing the field to *social media work* of a very different ilk, namely the coding and development of Silicon Valley social networks. Despite the fact that the work of the latter (similarly) takes place behind-the-screen, these professionals—overwhelmingly white and male—are impressively valued by their employers: remunerated with a hefty base salary, top-notch benefits, and perks galore. Of course, they are profoundly valorized in popular culture, too. But inside these tech companies, not unlike the media and culture industries, female employees shoulder the burden of labor for communication and branding in ways that, as one former Facebook employee notes, is not valued in “the visible ways that afford women prestige” (Grant, 2013). And therein lies the rub: while the rise of social media work has opened up new opportunities for workers with tech

savvy, this new occupational category has done little to redress systematic inequalities in the tech sector. Instead, the rise of social media employment has transplanted “women’s work” into the digital economy, largely through jobs that remain marginalized at the periphery. We thus close by encouraging employers—as well as those from higher education institutions responsible for socializing (future) workers—to reconsider the value of social media work—both economically *and* socially.

Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to express their gratitude to the organizers and attendees of the AoIR 2016 Pre-conference, “Studying Labor: A Workshop on Theory and Methods”; the suggestions of the workshop participants helped lay the groundwork for this study. Thanks are also due to Alana Hope Levinson for a series of productive conversations about social media work. Finally, the authors are grateful for the insightful feedback and thoughtful recommendations of the three anonymous reviewers.

References

- Acker J (1990) Hierarchies, jobs, bodies: a theory of gendered organizations. *Gender & Society* 4(2): 139–158.
- Adkins L (2001) Cultural feminization: “money, sex and power” for women. *Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 26(3): 669–695.
- Adweek (2010) What exactly is a social media editor/manager? Available at: <http://www.adweek.com/digital/what-exactly-is-social-media/>
- Anderson M (2015) Men catch up with women on overall social media use. *Pew Research Center*, 28 August. Available at: <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/08/28/men-catch-up-with-women-on-overall-social-media-use/>
- Andrejevic M (2008) Watching television without pity: the productivity of online fans. *Television & New Media* 9(1): 24–46.
- Arcy J (2016) Emotion work: considering gender in digital labor. *Feminist Media Studies* 16(2): 365–368.
- Baym, N.K., 2015. Connect with your audience! The relational labor of connection. *The communication review*, 18(1), pp.14-22.
- Bem SL (1974) The measurement of psychological androgyny. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 42: 155–162.
- Bennett
- Bridges LE (2017) Flexible as freedom? The dynamics of creative industry work and the case study of the editor in publishing. *New Media & Society*. Epub ahead of print 1 February. DOI: [10.1177/1461444816688920](https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444816688920).
- Campbell JE (2011) It takes an iVillage: gender, labor, and community in the age of television-internet convergence. *International Journal of Communication* 5: 492–510.
- Chambers D, Steiner L and Fleming C (2004) *Women and Journalism*. Hove: Psychology Press.
- Chaney K (2009) Thinking out loud: is social media the new pink collar ghetto of tech? The Learned Fangirl. Available at: <http://thelearnedfangirl.com/2009/12/thinking-out-loud-is-social-media-the-new-pink-collar-ghetto-of-tech/>
- Charles, M. and Grusky, D.B (2004) *Occupational ghettos: The worldwide segregation of women and men*. CA:Stanford University Press.
- Charmaz K (2014) *Constructing Grounded Theory*. Vancouver, BC, Canada: SAGE.

- Cohen N (2015) Entrepreneurial journalism and the precarious state of media work. *South Atlantic Quarterly* 114(3): 513–533.
- Conor B, Gill R and Taylor S (2015) Gender and creative labour. *The Sociological Review* 63(S1): 1–22.
- Consalvo M (2008) Crunched by passion: women game developers and workplace challenges. In: Kafai YB, Heeter C, Denner J, et al. (eds) *Beyond Barbie and Mortal Kombat: New Perspectives on Gender and Gaming*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, pp. 177–191.
- Corrigan T (2015) Media and Cultural Industries Internships: a thematic review and digital labor parallels. *tripleC: Communication, Capitalism & Critique* 13(2): 336–350.
- Crain M, Poster W and Cherry M (2016) *Invisible Labor: Hidden Work in the Contemporary World*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Creedon PJ (1991) Public relations and “women’s work”: toward a feminist analysis of public relations roles. *Journal of Public Relations Research* 3(1–4): 67–84.
- Davis K (2013) The rise of social media as a career (infographic). *Entrepreneur*, 1 October. Available at: <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/228651>
- Deuze M (2007) *Media Work*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Duffy, B.E., 2013. *Remake, remodel: Women's magazines in the digital age*. University of Illinois Press.
- Duffy BE (2015) Gendering the labor of social media production. *Feminist Media Studies* 15(4): 710–714.
- Duffy, B.E., 2017. (Not) Getting Paid to Do What You Love: Gender, Social Media, and Aspirational Work. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Eikhof RD and Warhurst C (2013) The promised land? Why social inequalities are systemic in the creative industries. *Employee Relations* 35(5): 495–508.
- Einstein M (2016) *Black Ops Advertising: Native Ads, Content Marketing and the Covert World of the Digital Sell*. New York: OR Books.
- Ellis E (2017) Everyone loses when your employer owns your Facebook account. *Wired*, 5 April. Available at: <https://www.wired.com/2017/04/tomi-lahren-the-blaze-sock-puppet/>
- Federici S (2012) *Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction, and Feminist Struggle*. Oakland, CA: PM Press.
- Fish A and Srinivasan R (2012) Digital labor is the new killer app. *New Media & Society* 14(1): 137–152.
- Friedman S, O’Brien D and Laurison D (2016) “Like skydiving without a parachute”: how class origin shapes occupational trajectories in British acting. *Sociology* 51(5): 992–1010.
- Gandini A (2016) Digital work: self-branding and social capital in the freelance knowledge economy. *Marketing Theory* 16(1): 123–141.
- Gershon, I., 2017. *Down and out in the new economy: How people find (or don’t find) work today*. University of Chicago Press.
- Gill R (2002) Cool, creative and egalitarian? Exploring gender in project-based new media work in Europe. *Information, Communication and Society* 5(1): 70–89.
- Gill R (2010) Life is a pitch: managing the self in new media work. In: Deuze M (ed.) *Managing Media Work*. London: SAGE, pp. 249–262.
- Grant M (2013) Girl geeks and boy kings. *Dissent*. Available at: <https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/girl-geeks-and-boy-kings>
- Gregg, M. (2011). *Work’s Intimacy*. New York: Polity, 2011.
- Harvey A and Shepherd T (2016) When passion isn’t enough: gender, affect and credibility in digital games design. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 20(5): 492–508.
- Hearn A (2010) Structuring feeling: web 2.0, online ranking and rating, and the digital “reputation” economy. *Ephemera: Theory & Politics in Organization* 10(3–4): 421–438.
- Hesmondhalgh D (2010) User-generated content, free labour and the cultural industries. *Ephemera: Theory & Politics in Organization* 10(3–4): 267–284.
- Hesmondhalgh D and Baker S (2011) *Creative Labour: Media Work in Three Cultural Industries*. London: Routledge.
- Hesmondhalgh D and Baker S (2015) Sex, gender and work segregation in the cultural industries. *The Sociological Review* 63: 23–36.
- Hess A (2013) Most Female Journalists Have Been Threatened, Assaulted, or Harassed at Work. Here's Why We Don't Talk About It. *Slate*. Available at: http://www.slate.com/blogs/xx_factor/2013/12/03/sexual_harassment_in_journalism_a_new_study_shows_that_the_majority_of_female.html

- Hochschild AR (2012 [1983]) *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Howe LK (1977) *Pink Collar Workers*. New York: Avon Publications.
- Huntemann NB (2015) Introduction: digital labor behind the screen. *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 32(3): 158–160.
- Jarrett K (2014) The Relevance of “women’s work”: social reproduction and immaterial labour in digital media. *Television & New Media* 15(1): 14–29.
- Jarrett K (2016) *Feminism, Labour, and Digital Media: The Digital Housewife*. New York: Routledge.
- Kerr A and Kelleher JD (2015) The recruitment of passion and community in the service of capital: community managers in the digital games industry. *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 32(3): 177–192.
- Kuehn K and Corrigan TF (2013) Hope labor: the role of employment prospects in online social production. *The Political Economy of Communication* 1(1): 9–25.
- Lennon T (2013) Benchmarking women’s leadership: women’s college report. Available at: <http://www.womenscollege.edu.edu/media/documents/BenchmarkingWomensLeadershipintheUS.pdf> (accessed 2 July 2017).
- Levinson AL (2015) The pink ghetto of social media. *Medium*, 16 July. Available at: <https://medium.com/matter/the-pink-ghetto-of-social-media-39bf7f2fdbe1> (accessed 17 February 2016).
- McRobbie A (2002) Clubs to companies: notes on the decline of political culture in speeded up creative worlds. *Cultural Studies* 16(4): 516–531.
- McRobbie A (2016) *Be Creative: Making a Living in the New Culture Industries*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Marketing Cloud (n.d.) Why women are the real power behind the social media #Infographic. Available at: <https://www.marketingcloud.com/blog/why-women-are-the-real-power-behind-social-media-infographic/>
- Mayer V (2013) The feminization of US media work. In: Steiner L, McLaughlin L and Carter C (eds) *The Routledge Companion to Media and Gender* (pp. 51–60). New York: Routledge
- Morgan G and Nelligan P (2015) Labile labour—gender, flexibility and creative work. *The Sociological Review* 63(Suppl. 1): 66–83.
- Neff G, Wissinger E and Zukin S (2005) Entrepreneurial labor among cultural producers: “cool” jobs in “hot” industries. *Social Semiotics* 15: 307–334.
- Negra D and Tasker Y (2014) Introduction: gender and recessionary culture. In: Negra D and Tasker Y (eds) *Gendering the Recession: Media and Culture in an Age of Austerity*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, pp. 1–30.
- Nicks D and Renzulli KA (2016). The Gender Pay Gap in 3 Scary Lists. Time Available from <http://time.com/money/4268374/gender-pay-gap-glassdoor-study/>
- Payscale (n.d.) Available at: www.payscale.com (accessed 4 August 2017).
- Perlin R (2012) *Intern Nation: How to Earn Nothing and Learn Little in the Brave New Economy*. Brooklyn, NY: Verso Books.
- Postigo H (2009) America online volunteers: lessons from an early co-production community. *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 12(5): 451–469.
- Postigo H (2016) The socio-technical architecture of digital labor: converting play into YouTube money. *New Media & Society* 18(2): 332–349.
- Povich L (2013) *The Good Girls Revolt: How the Women of Newsweek Sued Their Bosses and Changed the Workplace*. New York: Public Affairs.
- Radbill S (2017) Equal pay for women in PR? Not quite there yet. *Spin Sucks*, 23 May. Available at: <http://spinsucks.com/entrepreneur/pr-gender-pay-gap/>
- Reskin BF (1988) Bringing the men back in: sex differentiation and the devaluation of women’s work. *Gender & Society* 2(1): 58–81.
- Roberts ST (2014) *Behind the screen: The hidden digital labor of commercial content moderation*. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Champaign, IL.
- Rodino-Colocino M and Berberick SN (2015) You kind of have to bite the bullet and do bitch work: how internships teach students to unthink exploitation in public relations. *tripleC: Communication, Capitalism & Critique* 13(2): 486–500.
- Ross A (2009) *Nice Work If You Can Get It*. New York: New York University Press.

- Ross, A. (2013). In search of the lost paycheck. In T. Scholz (Ed.), *Digital labor: The Internet as playground and factory* (pp. 13–32). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Scholz T (2012) *Digital Labor: The Internet as Playground and Factory*. London: Routledge.
- Schwartz M (2013) Opportunity costs: the true price of internships. *Dissent* 60(1): 41–45.
- Shade LR (2014) “Give us bread, but give us roses”: gender and labour in the digital economy. *International Journal of Media & Cultural Politics* 10(2): 129–144.
- Shade LR and Jacobson J (2015) Hungry for the job: gender, unpaid internships, and the creative industries. *The Sociological Review* 63(S1): 188–205.
- Status of Women
- Terranova, T., 2000. Free labor: Producing culture for the digital economy. *Social text*, 18(2), pp.33-58.
- Tokumitsu M (2014) In the name of love. *The Jacobin*. <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2014/01/in-the-name-of-love>
- Turov, J., 2012. *The daily you: How the new advertising industry is defining your identity and your worth*. Yale University Press.
- Usher N (2014) *Making News at the New York Times*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Van Zoonen L (2002) One of the girls? The changing gender of journalism. In: Carter C, Branston G and Allan S (eds) *News, Gender and Power*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 33–46.
- Webster J (2014) *Shaping Women’s Work: Gender, Employment and Information Technology*. London: Routledge.
- Weeks K (2011) *The Problem with Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Wittel A (2001) Toward a network sociality. *Theory, Culture & Society* 18(6): 51–76.

¹ In the U.S., nearly 90 percent of companies utilize some form of social media marketing (Bennett, 2014).

² The search was conducted in August 2017; positions were limited to the U.S.

³ Chambers et al (2004) usefully nuance the conflation of the feminization of journalism with content shifts (e.g., “soft news”).

⁴ We eliminated jobs if, upon reading the job description, the position entailed duties not including social media.

⁵ Even masculine features were often presented with an affective ethos such that analytics were bolstered through an “innate feel.”

⁶ Among 49 internship ads, 32 were unpaid/for college credit; 15 were paid; and 3 failed to specify.

⁷ To this end, fewer than half (47 percent) of the full-time job ads mentioned educational qualifications (typically a bachelor’s degree).

⁸ Those included ranged from 30,000 to “up to 60,000,” with hourly wages between \$12 and 15/hour. The rest of the paid employment postings noted only that compensation was competitive.