Feminist Perspectives in Marketing: Past, Present and Future
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Feminist perspectives expose many gendered ideologies embedded in marketing and consumption phenomena, as well as the unequal power relations that underpin them. Initially critiques came from outside the marketing and consumer research disciplines, led by second wave feminists in the 1960s and 70s. Activists such as Friedan (1963) saw marketers as being complicit in a patriarchal system that sought to manipulate and control women through domesticity. They targeted advertising in particular where negative female stereotypes abounded, stereotypes that served to reinforce passive, decorative models of femininity.

Despite such critiques, it was not until the 1990s and following the "cultural turn" that scholars within the marketing discipline began to draw on feminist perspectives. This work deconstructed advertising meanings (Stern, 1992, 1993) and the underpinning masculinist ideologies of both marketing (Bristor and Fischer, 1993) and consumer research (Hirschman, 1999; Joy and Venkatesh, 1994). It also introduced innovative theoretical perspectives such as ecofeminism that threw light on the feminine bias in caring for the environment and the androcentric rationale separating humans from nature and guiding marketing activities (Dobscha, 1993). Since this period feminist voices have waxed and waned in marketing and consumer research scholarship, reflecting also the trajectory of feminism and the (so-called) postfeminist era.

After giving a brief overview of feminism's main principles and major types, this chapter chronicles the historical intertwining of feminism with marketing and gives an overview of the contributions feminist scholarship has made to critical marketing. In order to do this we look at what are now often referred to as the four waves of feminism and analyse the different relationship each time period has had with marketing and the scholarship therein.[1] We also highlight key theoretical perspectives within the feminist canon that have driven this work, before detailing key areas where we believe future critique is urgently required.

What is Feminism?
Many misconceptions of what constitutes a feminist still endure and, sadly, the two authors frequently hear young female students using the well-worn expression "I'm not a feminist but…" This denial is usually based on ill-founded assumptions such as the belief that feminists hate men or consider women to be superior to men. We believe, therefore, it is important to set out some of the basic principles of feminism to put the record straight for new readers to the topic. Part of the problem in understanding feminism is that it is not just one unified body of thought and there are many different varieties, each with their own emphasis (see Table 1 below for examples of various types of feminism, although this is by no means an exhaustive list). Broadly speaking, however, a key principle that underpins feminist approaches and theorising is that men and women should be equal and that currently there is an unequal relationship, although this inequality varies greatly depending on a multitude

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[1] Although we find the 'wave' metaphor useful for this analysis – especially in connecting early suffragette activism with that in the 1960s - we also acknowledge that it risks being reductionist in simplifying historical complexities and obscuring other feminist activism/scholarship that does not fall neatly into these periods or that may risk being mis-categorised.

of different global contexts. Another unifying principle is that this inequality is made possible by patriarchy, a system that ensures all major social institutions – economic, political, the family and religion – are male-dominated. Thus feminist theory helps us understand how the workings of patriarchy permeate all aspects of our lives, being deeply embedded in wider socio-cultural and economic structures. Feminist thought also makes a key distinction between sex and gender: sex is the biological category one is assigned at birth (man/women), whereas gender is socially constructed with gender norms (masculine/feminine characteristics) varying across different cultures and time periods.

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The Origins of Feminism: The First Wave (1840-1920)

Women's oppression has a long history, with women's inferiority to men being heavily encoded in many ancient texts, particularly those conveying philosophical and religious doctrine. The Ancient Greeks were no exception and Aristotle (born in 384 B.C.) is accredited with saying that "the courage of a man lies in commanding, a woman's lies in obeying….a female is an incomplete male or 'as it were, a deformity' (Freeland, 1994: 145-46). Given this longstanding misogyny, it is scarcely surprising that there have been dissenting female voices over the centuries although most have been silenced due to the prevalent power imbalances and women's exclusion from the public sphere. For example, one of the first documented critiques of gender ideology is Rachel Speght (born 1597), a poet and polemicist who published a women's rights pamphlet in English under her own name. French playwright, Olympe de Gouges (1748 – 1793) wrote another influential text, the *Declaration of the Rights of Woman and of the Citizen* (1791). And, of course, Mary Wollstonecraft's (1759 – 1797) *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* is one of the most important documents in the history of women's rights.

It was not until the early suffragette movement originating in the 1850s, however, that some change to the status of women in Western society began to happen. This movement comprises the first wave of feminism. The suffragettes viewed marketing favourably and used various marketing techniques to promote their activities and gain publicity for the movement (Scott, 2005). Elizabeth Caddy famously endorsed Fairy Soap; and the notion of women's empowerment was encoded into the fashion for bloomers (so named after suffragette, Amelia Bloomer who started the trend). Wearing bloomers to ride bicycles, suffragettes thereby signalled their independence and right to equal citizenship with men (Finnegan, 1999). A burgeoning number of department stores provided safe havens where women could meet, unescorted by a man and thus afforded new opportunities for suffragettes to get together and plan their activities. Gordon Selfridge and John Wanamaker were known to be keen supporters of the movement (Tadajewski, 2013; Maclaran, 2012), and Selfridges store even flew the suffragette flag from its rooftop. Such stores also provided many new career opportunities for women and were seen as "women's worlds" (Bowlby, 1985).

During this first wave, marketing as a discipline was also in its inception, just beginning to break away from economics and establish itself in its own right. The first

marketing courses commenced around the early 1900s and the history of marketing thought has widely documented the contributions of various scholars such as Wroe Anderson, Paul Converse, Robert Bartels as well as many other male voices from both academia and practice. Female voices are conspicuously absent so does this mean there were no female contributors? Our answer to this question is a resounding 'no': there are many female voices that have been ignored. Just as feminist literary criticism and philosophy scholars have already argued that patriarchy has constructed the literary and philosophical canons, we argue that so too has patriarchy constructed the marketing canon. This means that within marketing scholarship women's voices have been suppressed or silenced because they were not seen as sufficiently significant, while those generally held up as role models have been men.

The goal of much feminist scholarship is to uncover and highlight works by neglected female authors. To this end a special issue of the *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing* highlights the important contributions to marketing thought and practice made by Home Economists and women who were key players in the advertising industry (Tadajewski and Maclaran, 2013). The volume shows how Home Economists such as Helen Woodward, Hazel Kyrk, Elizabeth Ellis Hoyt and Martha Van Rensselaer pioneered much early work in the understanding of consumption behaviours (Parsons, 2013; Tadajewski, 2013; Zuckerman, 2013). For example, Tadjewski (2013) highlights the conceptual and theoretical sophistication of seminal texts by Helen Woodward and Hazel Kyrk, both prolific writers on marketing and consumption phenomena. The same issue also documents the contributions of women women in advertising, such as Helen Landsdowne Resor who worked for J. Walter Thompson's Women's Editorial Department in the early twentieth century (Scanlon, 2013), as well as documenting the barriers on account of gender and race that had to be overcome. Foster Davis (2013) details the remarkable achievements of Caroline Robinson Jones, the first black woman to be vice-president of a major advertising agency. Apart from this special issue and other work by Zuckerman and Carsky (1990), there is little documentation of female contributions to marketing theory or practice and there remains much to be done to emphasise women's contributions to marketing in this early period.

Second Wave Feminism (1960-1988)

This era marked a much greater suspicion of marketers and marketing activities as being complicit in the oppression of women, particularly through stereotypical conceptions of women's roles that perpetuated beauty ideals and reinforced unequal power relations. Whereas suffragettes had focussed on rights to full citizenship, second-wave feminists concentrated much more on the relations encouraged by capitalist configurations of the family and the material base of women's inequality. A major influence at this time was Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949) in which she famously writes "one is not born but rather one becomes woman". Here de Beauvoir analyses the social, political and religious structures that create woman as "other", and render her as inferior to man. Marketers' role in reinforcing these patriarchal structures became heavily critiqued by anti-marketing texts such as Betty Friedan's (1963) *Feminine Mystique* (1963) and Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunoch* (1970). Goffman's (1976) study of gender representations in advertising exposed how men were more likely to be depicted as confident and in control, whereas women were most likely to be portrayed as submissive and vulnerable.

Highlighting such stereotypical media portrayals, Winship (1987), a feminist media scholar, drew attention to the 'work' of femininity as women seek to achieve ideals of beauty. Such critiques alongside many other feminist exposures of negative female stereotyping brought about change in the 1980s as advertisers replaced decorative, passive portrayals of women with more diverse and agentic representations of female empowerment.

During this period, most gender research in consumer behaviour ignored feminist perspectives. Often, through conflating sex and gender, it merely reinforced stereotypical gender roles, positioning men as producers/breadwinners and women as consumers/homemakers (Maclaran, Otnes and Tuncay Zayer, 2017). There was a plethora of studies on the influence of sex-role norms in family decision-making (Schneider and Barich-Schneider, 1979; Meyers-Levy, 1988, 1989; Meyers-Levy and Sternthal, 1991). Heavily influenced by psychology and the information-processing paradigm, such research generally served to reify gender differences rather than question them or critique the role of marketing practice in creating them. There was a small stream of research that drew on feminist perspectives, particularly the feminist critiques of advertising. However, this research was mainly to assess whether contemporary advertising portrayals were keeping up with women's changing roles rather than with the aim of offering a feminist critique (i.e.
 (Sexton and Haberman, 1974; Belkaoui and Belkaoui, 1976; Wagner and Banos, 1973). For example, Whipple and Courtney (1985) recommended different representations of women depending on product group and market segments (i.e. traditional role models for household goods and career-oriented role models for beauty products). As practitioners began to react to the 'women's movement', consumer research studies increasingly reported changing portrayals of women in advertising, noting that more were set in professional contexts (Lysonski, 1983) or including expert female voices (Ferrante, Haynes and Kingsley, 1988), but any feminist critique remained limited. Thus the consumer research of this period does little to explain why gender differences exist (Catterall and Maclaran, 2001), remaining as it does at a descriptive rather than a theoretical level with only "superficial and self-evident inferences" (Artz and Venkatesh, 1992, p. 619).

Third Wave Feminism (1988-2010)

Reacting to the writings of authors such as bell hooks and Judith Butler, third-wave feminists put much more emphasis on queer and non-white women, critiquing second-wave feminists for assuming that all women faced the same types of oppression. Reflecting the wider cultural turn across the social sciences, the concept of multiple feminisms acknowledged the intersection of different systems of oppression such as race, gender, class, ability, and ethnicity. The writings of black feminist theorist, bell hooks, were particularly influential at this time. Her foundational work in *Feminist Theory from Margin to Center* (1984) explored the intersection of race, gender and capitalism. She also paved the way for studies of masculinity by critiquing the second wave for how it treated men and ignoring how patriarchal culture prohibits men from being in touch with their feelings and emotions. The work of poststructuralist gender theorist Judith Butler was also breaking new ground at this time. In her book *Gender Trouble* (1990) she sought to explain the relationship between discourse and the materiality of the body through her theory of gender performativity. By highlighting the fluidity of gender and sexuality, she

destabilised the categories of male and female thereby emphasising the fluidity of gender and sexuality. Butler's ideas inspired a new field of studies, Queer Theory that challenges the validity of heteronormative discourse.

In relation to marketing, the third-wave's recognition of multiple feminisms heralded in a period of reconciliation with consumption as pluralism evolved into individualism. Heralding an era of identity politics and the questioning of binary understandings of men and women, women's empowerment was frequently typified by girl-power, "raunch culture" (Levy, 2005) and porno-chic (McNair, 2002), sexual expressiveness (see, for example, *Sex and the City*, Stevens and Maclaran, 2012), Louboutins, and Brazilian bikini waxes became the way to cultivate new feminist identities. For many third-wavers, empowerment is as much (or even more) about pole dancing as it is about equality in the boardroom. Some argued that the feminists need not reject consumerism in order to "be political" (Baumgardner and Richards, 2004: 62); in fact, for "affirmative feminism", the market simply means more opportunities for agency and possibilities for destabilisation of the old social order, which associates femininity with subordination (ibid.). Nigella Lawson, "domestic goddess," is a prime example here, as well as the globally popular TV series such as *Mad Men* and *Desperate Housewives*, which (re)present an ostensibly feminine aesthetic as a way to claim and assert woman's independence and power, thereby relegating feminism to a past no longer relevant to contemporary femininities. Mumford and Waters (2010) dubbed this turn a "postfeminist mystique" and pointed to its deeply retrogressive nature as it reverted to women's display of femininity and female sexuality as the main means of fulfilment for young women.

It took until the 1990s for feminist critique to enter the field of consumer research as a part of the burgeoning interpretivist turn that drew on alternative modes of theorising. This critique often drew on poststructuralism, for example, deconstructing the masculinist ideology embedded in both marketing and consumer research rhetoric (Fischer and Bristor, 1994; Hirschman, 1993; Joy and Venkatesh, 1994; Stern, 1992). Ecofeminism theory revealed the power imbalances inherent in mankind's treatment of nature and shed light on environmentally related consumption (Dobscha, 1993), while feminist methodologies suggested new ways to make research more collaborative (Peñaloza, 1996).

At this time too, there was a growing interest in the broader intersection of gender and consumption initiated by Janeen Costa's (1991) *Gender, Marketing and Consumer Research Conference* that still exists today. Although feminist voices have always been a part of this (and remain so), it is fair to say that any feminist critique became more muted during the 2000s as the broader field of gender and identity projects (in conjunction with Consumer Culture Theoretics) rose to prominence. This is despite two books on the relationship between marketing and feminism (Catterall, Maclaran and Stevens, 2000; Scott, 2005) and other notable contributions such as: Dobscha and Ozanne's (2001) ecofeminist analysis of women's role in caring for the environment; Bettany and Woodruffe-Burton's (2010) call for feminist reflexivity in marketing/consumer research; Brace-Govan's (2010) feminist deconstruction of advertising portrayals of sportswomen; and Stevens, Kearney and Maclaran's (2013) ecofeminist exploration of brand mascots. Accusing postmodern perspectives of diluting feminism, Catterall, Maclaran and Stevens (2005) highlight how advertisers repackaged "feminist quests for freedom, choice and opportunity as images, desires,

lifestyles and emotions that can be attained through consumption' (McDonald, 2000, p. 38). Critique of wider patriarchal structures became muted as resistance became co-opted by marketers (the 'rebel sell'). More recently, feminist scholars such as McRobbie (2009) and Oksala (2011) point to the role of neoliberalism with its tropes of personal freedom and choice, and how it came to define third-wave feminism, masking new forms of gender power, and undermining both the work of making institutions accountable and the struggle for wide-reaching collective emancipation.

Fourth Wave Feminism (2010 – present)

From a surge of social media hashtag campaigns and student feminist societies to media stars and Disney princesses speaking out against misogyny and encouraging women to support one another - we are possibly witnessing the emergence of the fourth wave of feminism (e.g., Cochrane 2013). There has be a flood of commentary on how the discussions about gender inequality in the workplaces, on the streets, and in the media have become topical again with a slew of celebrities now proudly reclaiming the "feminist" label (e.g., Atkenhead 2014; Magnanti 2014). This recent re-emergence of feminism in popular culture stands in sharp contrast to what is called a post-feminist condition of the previous decade, when gender equality was thought largely achieved (at least in the West) with women's empowerment and freedom being facilitated by individual (consumer) choices (McRobbie 2009). Indeed, the word "feminism" itself was pejoratively abbreviated into "F-word" and banished from 'polite' conversations.

Now the F-word is back in favour as many young women declare themselves to be feminists. Activists use social media to publicise a wide variety of issues around women's inequality (Baumgardner, 2011) and have already successfully banished *The Sun's* notorious topless female photo page in their *No More Page 3* campaign. They appear to be blending aspects of the third wave – particularly intersectionality – with the second wave's recognition of dominant patriarchal structures. For example, UK Feminista, founded in 2010, provides training and resources for activist feminists to challenge wider structural aspects of inequality. Its website offers a template to help women start an Internet campaign. Many of these campaigns have already forced corporations to change their ways, i.e. the #FBrape campaign that succeeded in convincing Facebook to shut down offensive pages.

Of course, many observers are skeptical of the recent cultural 'trending' of feminism, especially as more corporations climb on the bandwagon. Campaigns for Ethical Underwear (endorsing Who Made Your Pants company), "All for #MyGirls" (Adidas promoting female camaraderie), and Let Books Be Books (big publishers dropping the gendering of the children's books) as well as the recent introduction of gender-equal certification by the likes of L'Oreal (e.g., Edge) are said to be nothing more than "rebranding feminism" (Bainbridge 2014), a perverted market strategy in an increasingly socially-aware and online-connected world (e.g., Magnanti 2014). That may be true if the logic of cultural development is seen as separate from an economic logic, rather than equally and mutually indispensable to the revaluation of values and material per*form*ances thereof (Groys 2014). Put differently, if culture and market are not neatly bounded and distinct realms, then the idea of bracketing the market to establish the existence, essence, and authenticity of the newest cultural wave is

problematic, as is the dismissal of the feminist activism based on its 'overexposure' to the market.

Marketing and consumer research has witnessed a parallel resurgence of scholarship drawing on feminist theorizing. Üstüner and Thompson (2015) take a Butlerian lens to their study of the Derby Grrrls' re-signifying practices of femininity, thereby revealing "ideological edgework" that extends gender boundaries. In a recent special issue on theorizing gender in the *Journal of Marketing Management* (Arsel*,* 2015) , feminist theory brings new insights into: person-object relations (Valtonen and Närvänen, 2015); the gendered experience of singleness (Lai, Lim and Higgins, 2015); as well as gender violence (Joy, Belk and Bhardway, 2015). In the same issue, Hearn and Hein (2015) spell out a research agenda around 'missing feminisms,' that includes critical race theory, queer theory, intersectional and transnational feminisms, material-discursive feminism and critical studies on men and masculinities. And at the *Gender, Marketing and Consumer Behavior Conference* (Visconti and Tissiers-Desbordes, 2016), Stevens and Houston (2015) argue that fourth wave feminism uses the body as a site for political activism rather than individual empowerment. Continuing this theme, Matich and Parsons (2015) explore the #freethenipple movement's embodied resistance to patriarchal control of women's bodies.

Future Research Directions

Having reviewed the trajectory of intersections between marketing and feminism from the past up to the present, we now go on to consider future directions for research focus. Our thoughts are necessarily speculative but, taking inspiration from the recent fourth-wave's use of internet technology, we have made the relationship between feminism and technology the central focus for our discussion of key areas where we identify much potential for new feminist theorising. In this respect, we go back to earlier feminist theorising to build a base from which to go forward. Where better to start than with Donna Haraway, a prominent feminist scholar in Science and Technology Studies?

First published in 1985, Donna Haraway's *The Cyborg Manifesto* became a touchstone for feminist discussion of technology and people's relations with machines and non-humans. In it, the figure of the cyborg is a direct critique biological essentialism, a tendency of the emerging at the time ecofeminism and back-to-nature countercultural movements. Haraway (1991, p. 149) defines the cyborg as "cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction." It is significant that the cyborg is not merely a hybrid of human and machines but a product of politics and culture. In other words, the cyborg is a fusion; a figure of unknown origin and ambiguous ontological status. Haraway uses this ambiguity of the cyborg to question the totalising narratives such as 'women's experiences' and the boundaries that these narratives often evoke. She points to three crucial boundary breakdowns - human and animal, organism and machine, and physical and non-physical - that make the cyborg a potent political form. That is, in Haraway's formulation, the cyborg emerges as a figure for boundary breakdowns, which at once challenges the feminist focus on identity politics and invites a re-evaluation of embodiment of boundaries, their power and politics.

Her ideas sparked an explosion of debate about social and political qualities of

technology and the role of socio-technical relations in constituting a modern subjectivity (Wajcman 1991). New perspectives emerged that sought to shift from thinking in terms of human identities to thinking in terms of nodes, networks and modes of being, most notably post-humanism. Some scholars have taken Haraway's ideas to envision the possibilities of creating alternative identity patterns through digital technology in particular, and more generally the liberatory potentialities of the cyberspace (Plant, 1997). In this chapter, however, we would like to set aside these intellectual developments and revisit the original thesis. In the *Manifesto*, Haraway urges us to place the analytic focus on boundaries, their confusion, and the responsibilities for their construction across the locations, folding into a historical vision of women's 'place' (in a Western society - home, market, hospital, church, and so on). She emphasises the need to embrace partial explanations, unresolved contradictions, and a myriad of horizontal - rather than linear, vertical - paths as a way to explore the restructuring of modern societies, including through the social relations to technology. In what follows, then, we concentrate on three arenas of gender performance and gender politics - media, body, and home – which are differently (re)structured by new technology (Gill and Scharff 2011).

Media Representation and a Rise of Selfie Culture

There is a significant body of research exploring market-mediated representation of gender. As discussed above, in the past decades, advertisers notably toned their reliance on women as props, objects of the male gaze, to sell their wares. The dominant modes of representation shifted from sexual objectification to "sexual subjectification" in response to changes in the economy and society (Gill 2003; Gill and Scharff 2011). Depictions of women as active sexual subjects, particularly in advertising targeting female consumers, became ubiquitous. Gill (2008) found three popular 'figures' of agentic women in advertising: young (hetero)sexually desiring woman, who sees her 'sexy body' as the source of capital; the vengeful woman out to punish her (ex)partner for his transgressions; and the 'hot lesbian,' a woman of conventional attractiveness who often appears with her beautiful double. Gill's (2008) critical analysis of these 'figures' points to the multiple exclusions implicated in such representations and to the fact that they operate strictly within heteronormativity.

For feminist scholars, the critique of the narrow and limiting image of women and femininity is inextricably connected to the critique of corporate media; and conversely the potentialities for progressive changes in gender representation linked to development of more democratic digital media technologies, such as the internet (e.g., Fotopoulou 2016). In recent years, the growth of social media platforms held a promise of breaking the singular hold of advertisers and corporate media on constructing and purveying the cultural representation of gender. Some cyber enthusiasts imagined the virtual world as a space for self-authoring and potentially unlimited permutations of gender identities that would render traditional gender relations meaningless, the relics of the real world. The internet indeed opened up spaces for 'gender bending' and opportunities for a spectrum of gender expressions. One example is *Second Life* virtual community where, the researchers found, both female and male users commonly engaged in gender play via their avatar construction. Alternative gender performances, however, tend to be short-lived, often reifying harmful gender stereotypes, and seen as deceptive by other users (see Clinin

2013). Still, today mainstream social networking sites offer a range of gender identity options; *Facebook* (UK) has over seventy definitions of gender and a popular dating app *Tinder* allows users to choose from thirty-seven options. Gender fluidity appears a familiar notion to a new generation raised on social media and online dating sites.

For many feminist scholars, however, it is not the Facebook drop-down menu options for gender but a rise of the global phenomenon of self-portraiture - the *selfie* - that harbours significant opportunities for disrupting normative representations and pushing the cultural boundaries of gender expectations. As photographer Ina Loewenberg (1999) noted that for women in particular, who frequently have been an object in art, "self-portraiture is a way to keep control of their own representation." Easy to use and affordable mobile phone technology enabled production of self-authored images, while the growth of photo-sharing platforms allowed interactive circulation of these images. It is this interactive capacity and instantaneous nature of selfie that sets this photographic object apart from yesteryear self-portraiture. According to Sent and Baym (2015), the selfie is "a *gesture* that can send (and is often intended to send) different messages to different individuals, communities, and audiences." In his thoughtful analysis of "the cultural fascination" with the selfie, Murray submits that, contrary to the popular belief in narcissistic impulse behind selfie practice, young women view selfies as a "radical act of political empowerment: as a means to resist the male-dominated media culture's obsession with and oppressive hold over their lives and bodies." This quote echoes the sentiment of the second-wave feminist visual theory where a control obtained through the act of self-imagining is a feminist tool for resistance (Mulvey 1975). Selfies allow women to depict their lives as they see it, in its multiplicity and form various perspectives, thus become 'a meaning-maker,' in itself an emancipatory act (ibid.) Then, casting the selfie phenomenon in post-feminist terms, Murray (2015) argues that through sharing private moments of their lives such as routines of menstruation, young women reclaim their bodies and produce a new aesthetics of the female body.

The selfie is also a means of resisting erasure. For many marginalised people, whether it is on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, ability, sexuality, or age, the selfie is a tactic toward visibility. Much in line with Susan Sontag's "photography furnish evidence," those lacking representation in corporate media use selfies as a varying tool for their very existence. Sharing selfies *en mass* amounts to an act of colonisation of the societies' visual culture in a bid for recognition. Poorly or unfairly represented groups of people can now narrate their lives in their own terms and from their point of view, thus destabilise dominant representations. For example, Nemer and Freeman's (2015) study finds that teens in Brazilian favelas use selfies to document their suffering, speak about violence, and express their spirituality. Furthermore, the selfie is an effective outlet for a social and at times politically oppositional commentary. Connected via tagging into a massive photo-album, selfies collectively speak to challenge received socio-cultural values. #TreeOfLife or #brefie, breastfeeding selfies, and #ArmPitHair selfie trends are recent examples of selfies enacting a feminist gesture against oppressive societal standards of propriety and social control exerted over female bodies.

Moreover, there are examples when communicative potential of selfies has been used as a direct response to government legislation or a political statement. Saudi women post selfies of themselves driving a car in a country that bans women driving. In 2014

Turkish women launched the #resistlaugh selfie campaign, posting photos of themselves laughing in response to the Turkish deputy prime minister comment that "women should know what is decent and what is not decent. she should not laugh loudly in front of all the world and should preserve her decency at all times" (*The Guardian*, 2014). Women from other countries joined the campaign through social media in solidarity with Turkish women fighting misogyny in their country. The campaign was covered by all the major news media, thus raising global awareness about the politics of gender in Turkey. This case illustrates that the immediacy and spontaneity of the reaction makes selfies into a medium of witnessing, in a journalistic sense; that is, selfies are a record of/from those who experience an event first hand and when shared collectively provide a different perspective, possibly multiple perspectives, on an event observed together. It is this witnessing quality of the selfie on which marketers are seeking to capitalise in campaigns such as the *Dove* brand's use of selfies to celebrate the 10th anniversary of their *Campaign for Real Beauty*.

Marketers' attempts to co-opt notwithstanding, the potency of the selfie as a communication tool is hard to deny. Its capacity for self-authoring gender representation is however less convincing. The cyberspace, it appears, is yet to provide liberation from the dominant modes of gender representation or roles. The growing scholarship on the image-centred social media, such as *Instagram* and *Facebook*, shows that traditional gender stereotypes and 'corporate-engineered' images of femininity/masculinity are prevalent in 'selfie culture.' For example, Doring, Reif, and Poeschl (2016) found that 'classic' gender display categories such as feminine touch, withdrawing gaze, and laying posture (Goffman 1979) as well as new social-media related categories (e.g., kissing pout and muscle presentation) dominate self-presentation on *Instagram*. Furthermore, the comparison of gender categories adherence between selfies and magazine advertisements reveal that both male and female *Instagram* users are far more gender stereotypical than advertisers (ibid.). Similarly, cultural commentators on pervasive self-sexualisation in social media observe that young people, particularly women, tend to replicate normative articulations of (hetero)sexuality and even emulate representational codes of pornography (see Levy 2006**).** Researchers explain the persistence of stereotypical gender and sex images in self-authored representations by noting that the internalised models of female sexuality and competitive *like* culture of social media encourages hyper-self-sexualisation, while the market opportunities to convert the 'Instafame' into real money fosters conformity of sexual expression (Mascheroni et al 2015; Schwartz 2010). That is, returning to Haraway's framework (1991), while the boundaries between the digital or virtual and the real are all but breached (Geiger 2013), the boundaries between the social categories persist.

Technologized Body and Enterprising Self

The body is another key arena where the market and technology intersect and play an important role in contemporary gender politics and making of gendered subjects. In consumer capitalism, the body becomes a source of symbolic capital – both appearance and bodily presentation are crucial to achieving a social status and self-actualisation (Featherstone, 1982; Turner 1996). Feminist researchers have traced the relations between the body and the market; they have investigated how female bodies are structured as a locus of discipline and surveillance as well as pleasure and

transgression in consumer culture (i.e. Joy and Venkatesh, 1994). In *Femininity and Domination*, Sandra Bartky (1990) extends this work through the idea of self-objectification; in her words, "in the regime of institutionalised heterosexuality woman must make herself 'object and prey' for the man (p. 73), woman thus "[takes] toward her own person the attitude of the man. She will then take erotic satisfaction in her physical self, revelling in her body as a beautiful object to be gazed at and decorated." For some third-wave feminists, Bartky's take on beauty as oppression might seem crude; still, her notion of "fashion-beauty complex," akin to the military-industrial complex, captures well the intricate ways in which technology and production work in tandem with marketing and retailing to regulate a female body. In *Unbearable Weight*, Susan Bordo (1993) picks up on the notion to argue that this complex operates not only through beauty standards and gender norms (both often couched in scientific discourses), but through the divergent dynamics of aestheticisation and rationalisation of the female body that take place in women's everyday lives. The focus on aesthetics of body (e.g., slenderness, toned muscles, smooth skin) and body maintenance (e.g., dieting, physical exercise, sleep) is central to the self that is depicted across a variety of different market contexts.

Today's cosmetic surgery market presents a paradigmatic example of how this industrial complex works and the divergent dynamics therein. Over the past two decades, a business of 'aesthetic remaking of body' grew into a multibillion dollar industry, with heavy investments in R&D, aggressive marketing, and predominantly female consumer base (Stein 2015). Feminist scholars note that this complex is fuelled mainly by two ideological beliefs: (a) body is plastic - it can be (re)shaped with improving technology, and (b) body is a form of capital, which is increasingly at play in a competitive labour market (Davis 1995; Duffy, Hancock and Tyler, 2016). The first belief is most prominent in the research on meanings and experiences of cosmetic surgery. Often phenomenological, these accounts show that personal reasons for cosmetic surgery are complex and 'becoming surgical' could be liberating for an individual (Bloom 2003, p. 66; Davis 2003). In her arguments for 'retrieval' of women's own stories, Davis (2003, p. 13) asserts that for some women, a surgical intervention is not merely a remedy for bodily flaws but a way to actively navigate the ideals of beauty and alter their bodies in accordance with their identity projects.

Yet, feminist analyses also show that the interpretative repertoires of cosmetic surgery are fairly limited (Fraser 2003). They pivot on either a socio-historic abjection of female body (flawed and out of control), or a 'culture of narcissism,' fixed on an imperative to 'do something for oneself' and hedonic consumption (where the body is simply a vehicle for recognising/realising one's desires and projects). Though they appear opposite, both situate women as "a proper object of surgical bodily intervention" and reiterate conventional femininity (ibid., p. 120). Furthermore, the empirical studies of popular makeover TV shows point to class structuring of these repertoires. Researchers find that the object of intervention and transformation is almost invariably working class women, whose bodies are deemed unfit for a successful femininity, thus failing as subject/object of desire, and who are judged to be faltering in their identity projects. While coded as universal, such successful femininity is a bourgeois one, with the middle class women serving as operatives in disciplinary processes enacted in these widely circulated shows (Franco 2008; Gallagher and Pecot-Hebert 2007; Ringrose and

Walkerdine 2008).

The second belief –body as a form of capital–is most vivid in the context of a cosmetic surgery boom in so called emerging markets, Brazil, China, and the Middle East. The neoliberal market reforms of the past decades brought in an increased sense of agency, mobility, and self-worth for many women in these regions. Some commentators celebrate the growth of body modifications as sign of prosperity, suggesting that breast augmentation or tummy tuck is a new luxury good. Others cite this popularity of rhinoplasty ('nose jobs') and liposuction as an evidence of growing freedoms for women in the Middle East (Stein 2015). More critical observers link this boom to globalisation and Western-domination media, particularly the rise of global entertainment and celebrity culture, which asserted beauty as prerequisite for success and happiness, and the good life (Edmonds 2010). The feminist reading of the boom, however, takes this critique further seeking to contextualise and politicise it. For feminist scholars, it is no coincidence that as women become more active in labour markets and consumer culture, more and more of them are 'going under the knife' (McRobbie 2003). As Ong (2006) and Gershon (2011) argue, neoliberalism is a political-economic regime that evokes a distinct mode of subjectification, where an individual must become an entrepreneur (a maker and a manager) of her own life – *an enterprising self.* Within this conception of self as a flexible set of competences continuously attuned to the market, the body is valorised as a resource to be invested in and cultivated strategically in order to advance ambitions and evidence achievements (ibid.; Power 2009). Such casting of the body is perfectly aligned with cosmetic surgery's promise of a transformation for a better self and a better life through a bodily modification (Davis 1995).

Indeed, the research on 'newly arrived into middle class' in Brazil, China, and India shows that many women undergo surgery on a path to a social mobility, be it to secure their careers or advance marriage prospects (Jha 2016; Wen 2013). In the ethnographic work in Beijing, Wen (2013, p. 236) finds that women talk of cosmetic surgery as an investment choice, often painful but necessary, for "the more physical capital a woman can hold, the more ability she may have to reshape the social, cultural and economic fields around her." Such a view is not merely an internalisation of the beauty industry marketing message, but endorsed by the state, which historically, since the Cultural Revolution, has conceived of women as a labour reserve and circumscribed the women's bodies accordingly. Today, within the Chinese neoliberal economy, beauty, sexuality, and femininity are legitimized as a currency and a source of capital, contributing to the national economic growth (also Jha 2016). This research supports McRobbie's (2003, p. 57) conclusion that while gender regimes of the past established what women must *not* do, the neoliberal regime works through a "constant stream of incitements and enticements" and encourages capacity, enjoyment, attainment, and social mobility.
Recognising that the body is not only an individual asset but a site of socio-cultural and political struggles (Bordo 2003, p. 16), some feminist researchers focus on varying ways physical features are valued in different national contexts, depending on racial histories, colonial legacy, and geopolitics (e.g., Glenn 2008; Jha 2016). Such focus allows scholars to go beyond the claims of Western-media domination to examine the intersectionality of beauty norms i.e. how interconnected and co-constituting hierarchies of race, class, religion, and so on are implicated in valuing some physical features as normal or desirable, while devaluing others. As an example,

the empirical research of skin-bleaching practices in India reveals that privileging fair skin pre-dates Hollywood and even British colonialism, and has origins in the Hindu cast system. Then, British Imperialism and the Bollywood cinema, along with Hollywood blockbusters and global advertisement cemented the symbolic status of fair-skin by linking it to the notions of progress, modernity, and the good life (Jha 2016). In taking the intersectional and transnational perspective, this body of work effectively reveals structural power relations not only of gender, but class, caste, race, nation, and global inequality, and the ways these are reproduced in both national and individual beauty preferences. This research also makes clear that while cosmetic surgery promises to erase anatomically or at least make the (markers of) difference a matter of aesthetic or stylistic choices, it actually serves to reinforce symbolic difference by (re)articulating the socio-cultural values ascribed to certain (ethnic, racial, age-related, etc.) physical features.

All in all, medical technology has developed to produce a truly technologized body. Global media and celebrity culture normalised a cyborg or Tupperware body, to rephrase Joan Rives' self-depreciating characterisation. A 30-year-old face on a 70-year-old body or a 34FF-breast with a 21-inches waist are often taken as a personal eccentricity, rather than a nonhuman body modification. The plasticity of the body is touted not only by marketers for the industry but by governments and some feminists. At times ideologically divergent, these entities tend to frame this plastic or malleable body in terms of choice, where aesthetic modifications, however painful and costly, are a tool for self-creation, overcoming (physical) constrains and social boundaries. Yet, the advancement of modern medicine and assertions of progressive politics notwithstanding, much of critical feminist research shows that a cyborg, in Haraway's sense (1991), as a figure for boundary breakdowns is as unattainable as ever. The link between the transformative potentialities of cosmetic surgery and broadly beauty practices with emancipated identity replays the body/mind duality and re-signifies the body as productive of a new subjectification (Sassateli 2010). Within the neoliberal ideology, self-realisation is reconciled with the rationalisation of the body and its marketability; one must purchase, including a new body, in order to attain more resources and ultimately a good life (Jha 2016). Often presented as an antidote to deep racial or class inequalities, the emphasis on malleability of the body obscures the unequal access to cultural resources for a neoliberal self-realisation and, more significantly, the material and social structures, and the historical conditions for this inequality. Failure to fully account for a different positionality of individuals and particular groups in aesthetic, social, and economic hierarchies means that liberatory discourses of body projects in consumer culture serve to produce and reproduce the normative discourses along with the existing inequalities and power relations (Power 2009).

Home and Quantified Life

Home has long been a contentious site for feminists: a primary arena for both female oppression and female liberation. To emancipate women after the October Revolution, Soviet comrades sought to dismantle 'home,' as a bourgeois idea, by building communal kitchens, communal nurseries, and communal living. A failed experiment, it nonetheless has exposed how women joining the workforce *en mass* does not lead to a full liberation, instead often results in what is now called a double-burden or the second shift (Hochschild and Machung, 1989). The cultural-

counter revolutionaries of the 1960-70s in the West had a range of ideas about emancipatory home, one that seem to have stood the test of time was the idea of bringing technology into a domestic sphere to free women of domestic labour (Cowan 1989). In early 1970s, Honeywell marketed a device called "Kitchen Computer," that was supposed to make the housewives' job easier in searching for new recipes and such. That machine never made into the American kitchens, but Apple's 1977 version did, thus starting the information revolution at home (*The Atlantic*, 2015). Today, the talks of the revolution of home centre on the idea of "the smart home," while currently something of a buzzword, is often presented superficially as a fridge talking to a phone about milk going out of date.

Feminists have always been wary of the impact of technological innovations on home, especially of those with an ostensible motive to transform a household. In contrast to tech companies, the potentialities of smart kitchen counters, smart mattresses, and smart locks fail to enthuse many feminist commentators (see *Model View of Culture*, a feminist tech magazine). Considerable historical research has been devoted to debunking the myth that modern technology eliminated or significantly reduced housework and turned a household into a site of consumption (for overview see e.g., Wajcman 1991). In *More Work for Mother*, Ruth S. Cowan (1989) examines "the industrialisation of the home" since 1860 and questions 'the production to consumption model' of the household transformation. She argues that domestic gadgets replaced mainly the work previously done by men or servants, and facilitated women's participation in a labour force not by freeing them of housework but by making it possible to keep up with home chores while working outside the home. Furthermore, contrary to marketing promises, modern appliances did not make life more comfortable for middle class housewives, rather more emotionally demanding as they raised standards therefore expectations of cleanliness. In *Feminism Confronts Technology*, Judy Wajcman (1991) makes a larger argument that the higher standards of cleanliness and the emergent idea of 'scientific motherhood', reproduced existing ideologies of gender and indeed increased the women's burden at home by blurring the boundaries of consumption and production spheres. The transportation and delivery services (encapsulated in a 'soccer mom' trope) is one notable example of women absorbing some of the production sphere. Another perhaps less obvious, but for Wajcman (1991, p. 85) a more significant example is a provision of emotional support, entertainment, and ultimately shelter from "the alienated, stressful technological order of the workplace." Now with the smart domestic ecosystem, women and households are incorporated into the capitalist production arguably in more insidious ways – the home becomes a data factory. A consideration of two innovations - tracking devices and intelligent personal assistants - serves to epitomise, in a very preliminary form, some of the problems.

The development of sensor-based technology has led to creation of mobile tracking devices, allowing them to capture a wealth of physiological information about our daily lives. Tools previously available only in a hospital's intensive care unit have been transformed into home and/or wearable gadgets, with millions of people now monitoring own vital signs and tracking steps taken, hours slept, calories consumed, time used, and so on - a phenomenon known as Quantified Self (Wolf 2009). Debrah Lupton in *The Quantified Self* (2016) offers an overview of her pioneering work on this still nascent subject and analyses socio-cultural and

political dimensions of self-tracking across social domains. In the context of this chapter, the stand-out example is Lupton's (2015a) research on health tracking technologies, particularly "quantified sex," which encompasses self-tracking of users' sexual and reproductive activities. She illustrates well the simultaneous pressures of voluntarily surveillance, (apps-) imposed configuration of sexuality and reproduction, and neoliberal self-responsibility in the matters of health. Beyond the issues of data security and surveillance, Lupton highlights the implications for gender politics. In her words, technologies "work to perpetuate normative stereotypes and assumptions about women and men as sexual and reproductive subjects": sex apps for men focus on endurance, whereas the ones designed for women - on fertility. Then, intensive documentation via apps encourages competitiveness, hence possibly anxieties in men, while inviting further medicalisation of women's bodies. What is more, as the personal data is aggregated, new norms of sexual and reproductive behaviour are configured and pushed back to the apps users. Those who fall outside the averaged norms, presented as impressive visualisations, are viewed as aberrant. Researchers find similar dynamics are at work with child-monitoring devices (Lupton 2015b; Nelson 2010). Incessant monitoring of (in)activities combined with splitting them up into a measurable, predominantly biometric components, such as glucose level, brain waves, heart rate, blood oxygen, respiration, and many more, exerts ever more exacting norms of care on mothers and other caregivers. Notably, in contrast to their typical use in a hospital's intensive care unit, at home, these biometrics are not merely indicators of health but of well-being and quality of life. That is, such devices take "intense mothering" to the realm of truly impossible standards, adding further to the burden on mothers to cultivate their children's psychological and intellectual development (Nelson 2010).

To be sure, the notion of 'statistical average' in establishing norms is not new and critiques are abound (e.g., Creadick 2010). As Bordo (1993) noted, women's bodies and physiological functions have historically been surveyed and subjected to social-cultural and state regulations. However, what seems to be different now is that private companies, rather than the state, are in charge of the process. Also, as "numbers are making their way into the smallest crises of our lives" (Wolf 2009), the normative categories generated via the magnitude of data ('big data') are far more detailed and encompassing than before. Arguably, the disciplinary effects of individualised and continuous measuring against a 'near-perfect', 'near-universal' norm performed by the tracking technologies are ever more potent. In this regard, feminist researchers traditionally posit several questions, including whose universals and who is left behind, who is measuring, what is measured, and why (Harding 1987, 2015; Wajcman 1991). Furthermore, the concern with 'repurposing' of personal data for commercial uses goes beyond the issue of data security to the questions of how this data feeds the production cycle of the tech industry. That is, how new products are developed to address the needs 'discovered' by, for example, linearization and quantification of usually messy and quirky sexual and reproductive activities (Lipton 2015a). In general, feminist commentators have just begun to articulate a number of urgent societal, ethics, and political concerns and the research agenda regarding the tracking technology. First and foremost, they foreground disciplining effects of the technologically enhanced biopower, and also the potential for generating new "algorithmic subjectivity", a way of relating to the body and the self, structured by what privileged white men from Silicon Valley deem measurable (Lipton 2016).

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is another technological development currently with more question marks than answers. "Intelligent home assistant" entered the millions of homes around the world in 2016 with the news story about Alexa, Amazon's "home operating system." Apparently, it pieced together some words and phrases into a coherent (to itself) command and placed purchase orders for dollhouses on Amazon. One in response to a child's play and a few more in response to a TV newsreader reporting on the story. Reassurances from Amazon notwithstanding, the public discomfort over the incident registered across the social media. Some commentators noted the fact that "an intelligent butler" tends to have a female name and a female voice as a default setting, thus perpetuating age-old gender stereotypes about domestic labour, child care, and more generally service work (*Slate* 2016). Still more worryingly, others noted that Alexa listens to more than it should. Enthusiasts pointed out that Alexa incorporates a machine-learning technology, thus it *needs* to be listening, recording, and analysing data on everyday practices and social interactions in order to serve a household. That is, before one can say "Alexa, order organic quinoa" or "Alexa, make me coffee," Alexa must recognise a personalised command and have a relevant "skill" (crudely, a function) to perform the task. Skills for Alexa are developed using the information vacuumed in homes and through interactions, and could be downloaded at a *freemium* from Amazon and other app suppliers. There are thousands of skills available, ranging from providing weather and sports updates to offering insults from Shakespeare or a monkey. As with home gadgets of the past, the majority of skills are for leisure - for men and by men (Cowan 1989; Wajcman 1991). However, the issue is not only that domestic technology reflects existing ideologies of gender and power relations, or the amount of time needed to master the assistant in order to see the benefits of efficiency and convenience promised. The issue is that intelligent home assistants are designed to translate all home communication into purchase commands, or in fact, as the story with Alexa suggests, it is programmed to articulate our desires even before we are able to put them into words. As such, Alexa and other AIs are less in the service of a household, and more that of the governing logic of consumer capitalism.
Alexa effectively transforms home into the centre of economic life: it mines data to feed the production cycle, while also structuring desires to spur consumption.

In recent years there has been growing feminist interest in technology, conceived broadly in terms of tech artefacts, cultures, and practices (Wajcman 2009). As we look into the expansion of information processing technology into our living rooms, kitchens, and bedrooms, the normalisation of quantification of bodies and daily life, and the accession of the *Instafame* economy, we see some boundaries, discussed by Haraway (1991), broken, most notably, the boundary between the real and the virtual worlds. Other emerging breakdowns have proven to be more ambiguous and arguably more contentious, such as the one between the private and the public. In contrast to Haraway's vision (1991, p. 151), this breakdown is not ushered in by "a revolution of social relations in the oikos, the household," rather generated mainly through the logic of surveillance, produced either by the willing selfie- and Quantified Self subjects or by the entities of yet-to-be-defined ontological nature, AI assistants. The private becomes not quite the public but open and accessible to other private entities, the corporations. Typical feminist research questions about power, social-political structures of domination and the prevalence of "the perspective of bourgeois white men," remain extremely pertinent

today when our lives are increasingly governed by proprietary algorithms and network infrastructures (Harding 1987, 2015). The implications of many tech developments discussed in this chapter are not entirely clear but what is fairly certain is the need for more feminist consumer and marketing research into the ideology, politics and moral values of algorithms, big data, artificial intelligence, technologized bodies, and quantification of everything.

Conclusion

In this chapter we used the four waves of feminism to document the relationship between marketing and feminism, both historically and in contemporary scholarship. Then, using Haraway's concept of boundary breakdowns enabled by technology, we have suggested key areas for future feminist attention to explore the blurring boundaries of selfie culture, the technologized body and the quantified household. In addition, and as indicated earlier in the chapter, there is also a pressing need for more historical research into the role of women in influencing marketing thought both in relation to scholarship and practice. Hence, we hope this chapter will provide an inspiration for young scholars to reinstate some of the lost female voices, as well as developing their own critical lens on the many intersections of marketing and consumption that would benefit from feminist theorising.

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