

**Bridging Gaps:
*Re-Fashioning Stories for Celebrity Counterpublics***

Club Quarters – Times Square
40 West 45th Street Between Fifth and Sixth Avenues
New York City, USA

Friday, August 30 - Sunday, September 1, 2019

Conference Program



Bridging Gaps: Re-Fashioning Stories for Celebrity Counterpublics

In the recent past, there has been an increased interest in exploring intersections of life writing and studies of celebrity culture. Storytelling is central to effective branding in fame. Furthermore, the use of biographical elements has been recognized as a rhetorical device in writing op-eds, personal essays, and public speaking that often raise awareness on critical issues in popular media. Biography, as Lola Romanucci-Ross points out, is mainly a useful symbolic tool for reflecting, rotating and reversing real-life situations. Like biography, autobiography, memoirs, and testimonials play crucial roles in mapping social facts.

The impacts of glamorous forms of storytelling in scandals, gossip, and rumor become so crucial that they are often studied as sociological data, regardless of whether they enable actual social change. For pop culture enthusiasts and social observers, celebrities may or may not be actual role models in telling meaningful stories and constructing subjectivity. Yet, fans and students often invest affective and intellectual labor when it comes to accepting, negotiating or contesting what appears to be significant in understandings of popular figures. Celebrity scholars are equally familiar with the complexities of engaging with and researching “glossy topics”. As Sean Redmond (2014) has shown, acknowledging one’s own celebrity attachments can produce innovative ways of (re)writing fame. Conversely, these first-person accounts may also contribute to the celebritisation of individual academics. What is the critical and pedagogical potential of personal takes on fame within the field of celebrity studies?

Celebrity narratives are perceived to have real power whether or not celebrities are “important” people in the academic or moral sense. Drawing on current affairs, celebrity politicians have used personal claims and outrageous stories to push political agendas in divisive ways. Many other famous personas use extravagant fashion as expressions of their luxurious lives and build persona brands at the cost of ethics. For Elizabeth Wissinger, the “glamour labor” involved in self-fashioning, surveillance, and branding is often an inevitable and unfortunate outcome in the production of consumer values and desirable bodies in fashion industries. Public personas still self-fashion themselves and promote their brand by extending text(ures) of language that sells to consumer tastes. However, the challenge remains to sell the values of social justice. Can public intellectuals learn narrative strategies from celebrity storytelling and fill this gap?

What appears to be a shared reason behind the success of most popular narratives, verbal (including oral) and non-verbal, is a persuasive ‘strategy’ to effectively tell life stories. If studying celebrity biographies/autobiographies, best-selling memoirs, and other popular forms of life-writings and self-expressions carry cultural worth, then biographical elements of rising and celebrated public intellectuals, academics, critics, and activists are equally important to consider in disciplinary and interdisciplinary practices and understanding of fame. For instance, real-life first-hand accounts, such as testimonies and visual evidence, together with literary/artistic representations of gendered oppression provide meaning for progressive thinking and practice. Anecdotal accounts of famous sports personalities, actors, best-selling authors, and top models among other public figures are often useful rhetorical tools that help us to understand popular culture better. With this in mind, we need to extend popular

storytelling beyond celebrity culture and persona branding, and use it to empower social change in academia, politics, and other spheres.

The Centre for Media and Celebrity Studies (CMCS) *Bridging Gaps* conference series uses a reflective practice paradigm and asks an urgent question: Can we learn popular strategies and re-fashion celebrity stories into tools for public intellectualism and social transformation, in addition to studying them? What enables or disables the public to tell personal stories in studies and practices of celebrity culture? Can different forms of storytelling from the lives of rising and celebrated academics, public intellectuals, critics, and activists enable urgent social change? The conference problematizes what it means to be a popular “storyteller” and invites all academics, journalists, publicists, activists and models and guests to attend, collaborate and publish valuable and purposeful work around this key question and related topics in our conference.

The format of the conference aims at being open and inclusive of interdisciplinary academic scholars and practitioners involved in all areas of celebrity culture, fandom, fashion, and journalism. The conference combines paper presentations, workshop panels, roundtables, slideshows, and interviews that aim to bridge gaps in celebrity activism, persona branding, and fashion education. Working papers, media productions, and personal stories will be considered for the conference.

Conference Keynotes: Andrew Zolides, Basuli Deb, and Alex Symons

Conference Media Speakers: Jacque Lynn Foltyn and Hannah Yelin

Conference Committee Members: Kiera Obbard, Sabrina Moro and Diana Miller

Conference Chair: Samita Nandy

	Thursday, August 29 – 7 to 9 pm Pre-Conference Meet & Greet Club Quarters – Times Square (Midpoint Bistro & Bar)
	DAY 1: Friday, August 30, 2019 Club Quarters – Times Square (Priestly Room)
8:10 am	Registration <i>Kiera Obbard and Diana Miller</i>
8:30 – 9:10am	Morning Coffee / Tea Opening Remarks <i>Samita Nandy</i>
Session 1A: Session Chair – Samita Nandy	
9:10 – 9:30 am	Celebrity and Digital Narrative Practice <i>Keynote Speaker – Andrew Zolides</i> <p>For most of its incarnation, celebrity studies has treated its subject as a particular feature of some individuals with increased access to fame and publicity. Social media platforms, however, have altered the landscape, putting tools and affordances of the celebrity industry in the hands of ‘everyday’ citizens. Exemplified through the “demotic turn” (Turner, 2010), digital technologies now play a key role in identity creation, self-narration, and social interaction. In order to better understand the stories we publicly tell about ourselves and the identities we thus construct, we must better understand the platforms on which such activities take place and the celebrity logics built into them and constructed through them.</p> <p>In this talk I aim to connect academic and popular discourses on new media technologies, changes in celebrity culture in relation to these technologies, and extrapolate from those findings a better understanding of the narrativization of the self today. How do social practices, cultural production, and political action change when social networks constantly interpellate (Althusser, 1971) individuals as potential celebrity subjects? This guiding question leads to a framework of celebrity as a <i>process</i> guided by narration and platform politics (Gillespie, 2010; 2018) rather than a unique <i>position</i> held by an individual.</p>

Session 1B – Session Chair – Darren Kelsey

9:30 – 9:45 am

Beyond an Ecological Perspective of Performing Artists: Exploring the Interplay of Heterogeneous Factors Among Performers in the Entertainment Industry

Annette Davies

Performing artists in the entertainment industry as a whole, are not a widely studied population in academic discourse and the narratives of their lives are not well understood outside of traditional media sources. The objective of this study was to use a qualitative approach to generate an in-depth understanding of the life stories of performing artists. More specifically, to explore the interplay and impact of heterogeneous factors on performers as they navigated the entertainment industry during four distinct periods within their career trajectories. The four periods were as follows: the pre-entrance period, the post-entrance period, the pre-retirement period, and the post-retirement period. Bronfenbrenner’s ecological perspective was used as a framework to conceive a new model to discuss the factors that impacted performing artists during those four periods. Specific attention was given to a number of factors- family relationships, social relationships, media, social media, religious faith, and fame – as well as other environmental and cognitive factors which emerged from the interviews. This in-depth analysis of the life stories and meaningful experiences of performing artists helped to generate future directions of research. This in turn may help to produce further insights into this understudied population.

9:45 – 10:00 am

Joan Didion: Bringing the Past to the Present

Jessie Salfen

Sitting at the intersection of life writing, celebrity culture, and social justice is literary celebrity Joan Didion. Her public persona warrants a critical study because by writing about American culture with a skeptical, investigative approach she has intertwined her literary voice with the cultures and movements she describes in print. This persona is a construction in which she reveals parts of herself to better connect with her readers on many topics and values of social justice through the decades. On account of Didion’s personal narrative readers have a better understanding of popular culture and social justice issues of the past and feel their impact on a personal level, allowing readers to make the connection between yesterday and today.

My essay examines the impact of Joan Didion’s literary persona through her two essays: “Goodbye to All That” and “The White Album.” I analyze how the works have been paid tribute to, reinterpreted to reflect changing times and values. In particular, I focus on the social shift that takes place through a

	stage adaptation of “The White Album” for a Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) performance and a collection of essays by twenty-eight authors who emulate Didion’s essay “Goodbye to All That.” Didion’s famed words transcend their original intention through storytelling to new audiences in more modern and complex narratives addressing race, age, class, sexuality, and gender, and violence. The original works in themselves serve as an example of how Didion’s status as a literary celebrity as famed American cultural critic has allowed her to fulfill a social responsibility most other writers and celebrities are not afforded.
10:00–10:10 am	Q & A
10:10–10:30 am	Coffee & Tea Break – Catered
Session 1C – Session Chair – Samita Nandy	
10:30–10:45 am	<p>Theorizing the Showrunner-Star: From Gertrude Berg to Shonda Rhimes</p> <p><i>Stefania Marghitu</i></p> <p>Showrunners in US television are a pervasive force behind the industry, but studies around their reception have been largely overlooked in contrast to the work of film directors or media actors. This paper will explore the ways in which the showrunner as star can be theorized through the lens of celebrity and star studies, through the lens of paratexts. I argue that while the term showrunner first came to existence in 1980s trade press, the role has existed since radio, with Gertrude Berg of <i>The Goldbergs</i>, a popular actress and creator/writer/producer who was not only loved for her TV role, but featured in popular magazines from <i>Life</i> to <i>Good Housekeeping</i>. While the actor-showrunner is the most common showrunner-star model, I also analyze the stardom of figures such as Norman Lear and Shonda Rhimes. I employ discourse analysis, production studies and the principle that the showrunner-star’s “paratexts,” any work outside their primary media text, as a site of investigation. While I do not use <i>auteur</i> theory or methods, I utilize Michael Z. Newman and Elana Levine’s discourse-based “showrunner-<i>auteur</i>” model that uses the myth of the single author for branding and legitimating television. This paper ultimately aims to build a model for analyzing the showrunner-star, which has not been theorized before, by using the self reflexive paratexts as the groundwork for where their brand and persona are established.</p>

10:45–11:00 am	<p>Mythical Pleasures: The Fame/Love Binary in John Andrew Donix’s ‘Loving The Amazon’</p> <p><i>Ian Dixon</i></p> <p>Borrowing from celebrity discourses, John Andrew Donix’s <i>Loving The Amazon</i>—a biographical novel published in 2019—clashes a critique of fame against its own embedded neoliberalist narratives. In the novel, ‘celebritization’ relies on discourses of sex, love and celebrity as lead character Andy Greenwood traverses sexual obsession and the hapless pursuit of fame (Boykoff and Goodman 2009; Gamson 1994; Turner 2006). However, fame comingles with sex to create an impossible super-ego: an amalgam and counter-position of this former binary. Primary in these polemical constructions is sex/love, which is unyieldingly united in the narrative, while fame/love remains bifurcated. Further, while establishing characters that play out the fame disillusionment narrative, Dixon creates the avatar of Donix who in turn writes of his pseudonymous protagonist Greenwood: concentric circles of ‘truth’ built on the ‘emptiness’ of fame and employing celebrity counterpublics in its construction.</p> <p>The paper’s scholarly approach is necessarily interdisciplinary involving autoethnography and drawing upon the canon of celebrity studies and cultural theory. As Carolyn Ellis defines, autoethnographic research connects autobiographical observation with the larger ‘cultural, social, and political’ implications of the narrative (2004, xix). Further, as Richard Dyer (1979) insists, celebrity is not a product of neoliberalist work ethics, but rather a face-ified symbol of political structures. While fame bears no correlation to dividing self from love, the novel nevertheless depends on interlocking subordinate binaries including: Dyer’s ordinary/extraordinary paradigm; Max Weber’s treatise on charismatic individuality; Susan Sontag’s (1965) ‘opposed destinies: unremitting banality and inconceivable terror’; and Michel Foucault’s ‘two great procedures for producing the truth of sex’—the <i>ars erotica</i> and <i>scientia sexualis</i> (53-73), which forms a counterargument to the sex/love narrative. Finally, Sigmund Freud’s love/work division—employed literally within <i>Amazon</i>—suggests that in dreams an attentive crowd of strangers replaces the thwarted love of parental figures. Accordingly, Donix fragments and critiques celebrity discourse to promote and destroy the seat of modern fame.</p>
11:00 - 11:10am	Q & A

Session 1D – Session Chair: Kiera Obbard

11:10–11:25 am

Storytelling, persona & individuation: Jungian reflections on the “journey” of Russell Brand (an auto-ethnographic study)

Darren Kelsey

This paper provides a Jungian analysis of Russell Brand through the concepts of archetype, persona and individuation. By revising Kelsey’s (2017) psycho-discursive analysis of Brand, it considers how his persona has evolved over time. From recovering heroin addict and political activist to self-help guru, podcast host, father and mentor, Brand’s performative personas reflect distinct archetypal forms. This paper will show how Brand has applied Jungian practices for performance and personal growth whilst sharing them for collective benefits and social change.

Brand has faced significant criticism in the press – through accusations of celebrity hypocrisy and leftist ideology – that often compromises those messages on addiction and self-help that he promotes. Nonetheless, Brand’s recent work has flourished beyond the parameters of traditional media platforms. This paper considers how podcasting has enabled Brand to engage with public intellectuals, celebrities and activists to provide more nuanced and expansive conversations on important and popular topics – from mental health and addiction, to social power, religion, science, capitalism, and human consciousness.

This paper provides a multi-dimensional, auto-ethnographic account that oscillates between research and personal perspectives: my academic position that applies Jungian approaches through psycho-discursive research; my domestic/family experience as the younger brother of a recovering heroin addict. In doing so, it considers how we might stimulate forms of collective individuation in a more considered culture; a culture that is significantly influenced by celebrity personas and intellectualism in public discourse.

11:25–11:40 am

The Untapped Celebrity of John Dewey: Co-construction as the Catalyst for Turning the ‘Renowned’ into the ‘Well-Known’

Colin Ackerman

John Dewey remains among the classic social theorist with the highest level of name recognition. Not only are Dewey’s texts used in graduate programs all over the country, but his notoriety in non-academic fields such as K12 education/teaching, public administration, journalism, and social/political activism is also what sets his influence apart. The diverse scope of disciplines and careers (within academia and outside of it) influenced by

	<p>Dewey's works undoubtedly support that idea that his work was renowned, but was he well-known to the point of being considered a 'celebrity'? This paper aims to propose John Dewey's theoretical tenets relating to the co-construction of reality as a potential starting point for bridging the gap between the contextually-based fame and admiration gained from academia and the mass appeal afforded by achieving a contemporary level of 'celebrity.' Drawing from the fields of psychology, communication, media studies, and cultural studies, this work argues that John Dewey's public engagement during his academic career could have been more effectively leveraged towards building bridges between the academy and non-academic publics. Next, a rhetorical analysis of the online presence of two contemporary scholars (Roxane Gay & Anne Helen Peterson) will be used to argue for that a pragmatic, co-constructive sensibility affords scholars connection with parts of humanity John Dewey (and his contemporaries) never could. Finally, it will be argued that contemporary scholars can responsibly create opportunities to transform from 'renowned scholar' to 'renowned, well-known scholar' through the use of the contemporary logic of 'celebrity.'</p>
11:40–11:50 am	Q & A
11:50 – 1:20 pm	Lunch Break
Session 1E – Session Chair: Kenya Davis-Hayes	
1:20 – 1:35 pm	<p>The Apologies of Privileged Feminism</p> <p><i>Tori Halbert</i></p> <p>The stories celebrities tell themselves and their followers can reflect, rotate, and reverse the public's understanding of the intersection between fame and feminism. This work analyzes the scope of four apologies issued by female celebrities who identify as feminists—Mayim Bialik, Amy Schumer, Tina Fey, and Lena Dunham. Using the scales provided by David P. Boyd in "Art and Artifice in Public Apologies" and Slocum et al. in "An Emerging Theory of Apology," I analyze the public speech and life-writings present in the apologies of Bialik, Schumer, Fey, and Dunham and argue that, through them, the actresses fashion personal feminisms. Are the apologies an authentic attempt to enable social change for all women, or an effort towards re-branding to appease feminist followers and capture the attention of counterpublics? Adale Sholock's, "Methodology of the Privileged: White Anti-racist Feminism, Systematic Ignorance, and Epistemic Uncertainty," provides the justification for my argument that the apologies and the actions that spawned them function as exclusionary feminism. This argument will help</p>

	scholars and public intellectuals accept, negotiate, and contest their own feminisms and (re)write their understanding of fame.
1:35 – 1:50 pm	<p>Story-Merging: Perpetuating Georgia O’Keeffe’s Feminist Fame</p> <p><i>Linda Grasso</i></p> <p>Twentieth-century modern artist Georgia O’Keeffe’s celebrity extends far beyond the art world. Currently lauded for her aesthetic choices in fashion and home decor as much as for her iconic paintings in the blockbuster exhibition, “Living Modern,” O’Keeffe represents a creative, domestic, female-affirming feminism to a variety of women’s communities. As such, her after-life stories narrated through museum exhibitions, movies, novels, poetry collections, plays, television shows, and cartoons have the potential to transform women’s lives: O’Keeffe is mentor, role model, and inspiration.</p> <p>This paper analyzes how personal story-telling about O’Keeffe perpetuates her feminist fame as well as a certain kind of feminist politics and practices. How, I ask, do memoirs created from daily journaling such as C.S. Merrill’s <i>Weekends with O’Keeffe</i> (2010), Jennifer Sinor’s hybrid memoir/essay collection <i>Letters Like the Day: On Reading Georgia O’Keeffe</i> (2017) and Jessica Jacobs’ poetry collection <i>Pelvis with Distance</i> (2015) incorporate O’Keeffe’s stories into their own chosen literary forms? Which O’Keeffe stories do they choose and why? What, ultimately, is the effect on ideas about feminism when these authors merge their stories with O’Keeffe’s?</p>
1:50 – 2:00 pm	Q & A
Session 1F – Session Chair: Jessie Salfen	
2:00 – 2:15 pm	<p>Life is But a Story: Female Pleasure and Agency in Beyoncé’s Autobiographical Film</p> <p><i>Stephanie Patrick</i></p> <p>While the rise of new media has led to a blurring of stars’ public personae and private, intimate lives, the musician in particular, as noted by Marshall (1997), has long been expected to share the intimate details of their private life through their music. This is certainly the case with R&B superstar Beyoncé, whose most recent solo album <i>Lemonade</i> (2016) was widely believed to be a revealing portrait of her marriage to hip-hop mogul Jay-Z. Yet Beyoncé has long been playing with the public/private divide as part of her star persona. Her recent but groundbreaking strategy to stop giving interviews has allowed her to maintain unprecedented control of her image.</p>

	<p>That image is now supplemented through the limited narratives that she herself circulates via her music, as well as other media: a notable example being her 2013 autobiographical film <i>Life is But a Dream</i> (HBO).</p> <p>The film uses documentary techniques, not to reveal a hidden truth about the persona behind the celebrity image, but rather to teach audiences how to read the rest of Beyoncé’s cultural work; as work controlled by her and intended for women. This pedagogical film disrupts common readings of her image and performances as being in the service of a “male gaze,” thus opening up new pleasures and potentials for female audiences more broadly. <i>Life is But a Dream</i> is thus a central, rather than a periphery text in Beyoncé’s star image, complementing and complicating the work she produces across other media formats.</p>
2:15 – 2:30 pm	<p>Storytelling, the Nigerian Political Celebrity and the Construction of Public Mythologies: Goodluck Ebele Jonathan and the Pursuit of the Acceptable Self</p> <p><i>Ezechi Onyerionwu and Ifeoma Osuala</i></p> <p>Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, who served as President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria between 2010 and 2015, is one politician whose popularity has been informed by the elements of storytelling (coming from the collectivity of both formal and informal sources). These stories have not just properly positioned his gargantuan celebrity profile and recommended him as a figure of popular culture appeal, but have also framed public mythologies around him. They stories have achieved this by using certain aspects of his life-history to appeal to the emotions of the Nigerian people. First, he is considered Nigeria’s most ‘fortuitous’ president, having been largely projected to the number one office of the most populous black nation in the world by virtually nothing but the huge arm of fortune. Dr Jonathan is the only Nigerian that became both governor of a state and then President of the country without formally contesting in an election. Second, his is a massive grass-to-grace story, having risen from the ruins of poverty in the riverine backwaters of the Ijo sub-nationality, spending most of his early years, as the fable goes, without as much as the privilege of wearing shoes. This unusually humble background recommends him, in the consciousness of Nigerians, as perhaps Nigeria’s most humane president, and that with the most genuine connection with the struggling masses of the country. The impact of this passionate personal narrative comes with the loud-ringing didactic implication that Nigerians, irrespective of their extant social status, should remain hopeful and steadfast, for if ‘luck’ did it for ‘Goodluck,’ it could do it for anyone. Dr Jonathan and his handlers used these ‘collected’ stories to great effect, in building a massive political capital, therefore effecting social and</p>

	political change. These stories have also tended to give Dr Jonathan a reputation as an unusually peaceful politician who goes by the matching axiom, “my political ambition is not worth the blood of any citizen” which has now become the definitive anthem for a country that seems to be losing the war against election-related violence. In the light of the above, Dr Jonathan’s book, <i>My Transition Hours</i> , covering mainly his last days as President, represents an effort by himself to tie up the loose ends of his otherwise highly favourable political identity.
2:30 – 2:40 pm	Q & A
2:40 – 3:00 pm	Coffee & Tea Break
Session 1G – Session Chair: Dionne Bennett	
3:00 – 3:15 pm	<p>“I want to delete this tweet so much, but...”: Teaching and Learning Via Jameela Jamil’s Online Activism and Feminist Reflexivity</p> <p><i>Victoria Kannen</i></p> <p>In February 2018, Jameela Jamil declared that she was “on the war path” against toxic discussions about women’s bodies and, more specifically, weight. Her anger was in response to an Instagram post that estimated the weight of each woman in the Kardashian-Jenner family. Appalled, the British actress took to her Instagram Stories to express her outrage. She posted: “This is how women are taught to value themselves. In kilograms. Grim,” and she followed this by using a full-length mirror selfie where she wrote up a list of how she chooses to weigh herself – through her relationships, career, friends, and activism – not the size of her body. Since that time, she has become an advocate for body acceptance and racial and sexual inclusivity. The politics that she espouses are decidedly feminist, but her representation as a successful, beautiful, thin femme complicates her body acceptance advocacy – with many pointing to how seemingly ‘easy’ it is for someone who looks like Jamil to provide lip service to acceptance. However, her politics incorporate these critiques, honestly engage with her history of self-loathing, while calling out other celebrities for perpetuating body shame via practices such as dieting detoxes (“laxative nonsense”) and photoshopping (“weaponized against women”). In this paper, I will explore the ways in which Jamil explicitly uses her privilege to learn from her fans, reflect on her mistakes, and then leverages her platform for feminist activism. It is through this celebrity feminist reflexivity that she successfully sells the values of social justice. By analyzing a sample of Jamil’s tweet threads, I will explore how her reflexivity positions her as a celebrity who educates her followers on the major tenets of feminism – empowerment, equality, social transformation, and affective solidarity (Hemmings, 2012).</p>

3:15 – 3:30 pm

Our Stories, Our Selves: Star Wars Fanon as Feminist Counterpublic Discourse in Digital Imaginaria

Andrea Marshall

Online fanfiction communities have flourished as digital collaborative cultures for the last twenty years; these include one of the oldest and most enduring, FFN (Fanfiction.net) was established in 1998 by computer programmer Xing Li. A more recent online fanfiction repository, A03 (Archive of Our Own), was founded in 2008 by the Organization of Transformative Works, a nonprofit, fan activist collective; the platform was founded by a fanfiction writer astolat as part of an informal discussion with other female fans on the LiveJournal platform (astolat). A03 particularly has direct connections to feminist activist values, design principles, and freedom of expression (astolat, 2019; Fiesler et al., 2016). As Milli and Bamman (2016) observe, “Fandom has a predominantly female authorship and readership base; these stories often oppose traditional gender norms present in the canon and showcase stronger female characters” (pg 2050). Recent scholarship in the domain of science fiction fandom has explored how fanonical works function as critical data artifacts, expanding fantastical and fanciful exposition into gendered treatises that are “textual rejoinders” (Handley, 2012, pg 98) that “challenge problematic gender ideologies, in critique of and in dialogue with, the original works and their creators” (pg 98). Human fabulation isn’t generated in a vacuum; fictional parables and fairy tales serve as historical, political, and social relics of the cultures that create them.

Fandoms are powerful political and cultural communities both in digital and physical spaces; their significance in today’s globally and digitally savvy cultural infrastructures cannot be understated (Coleman, 2018; Yin et al., 2017). The advent of the “Reylo” fan phenomenon in 2015 with the release of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, immediately sparked controversy outside the fandom and within the public sphere about the disruption of conventional gender norms, the dynamics of toxic masculinity (wasn’t the Ben Solo/Kylo Ren antagonist just another iteration of the Demon Lover-as-Patriarchy?), as well as the significant power of portraying a female hero (Rey) who engages the audience as both a nonlinear narrator and gender rebel in a patriarchal galaxy where ineffective (Luke Skywalker), tyrannical (Supreme Leader Snoke) and conflicted (Ben Solo/Kylo Ren) masculinities fail to stop the heroine from finding her own path and beginning a new narrative with a strong female matriarch (Princess Leia) at the end of the second film, *The Last Jedi*. Reylo, or the Rey/Kylo pairing, often romantic sometimes platonic, sometimes gender swapped both for one or both characters, and set into a myriad of imaginary multiverses within fanonical discourse supports the idea of feminist fanon as counterpublic discourse both in terms of source material that purports to be emancipated with regard to gender dynamics, as well as

	<p>the masculinist and misogynist elements of the <i>Star Wars</i> fandom that resent both the presence of women-as-fictional-heroes and women-as-actual-creators and fans (C. Handley, 2012). My analysis of the Reylo phenomenon incorporates feminist fanonical writings as counterpublic dialogues that engage with source creators as well as fellow fans, to ask the questions: how can fanfiction as an activist labor support, expose, and advocate for more progressive futures, and help us to critically examine the politics of (mis)representation of gender in the public sphere, where women are often silenced and invisible? We can investigate these quandaries through closer scrutiny of fanfiction as celebrity counterpublic diiscourses; when gender is the frame and the fanfiction authors themselves are celebrities within digital communities, female presence in fandom transcends the imaginaria of discourses into feminist performed disruptions with widespread cultural impact.</p>
3:30 – 3:40 pm	Q & A
Session 1H – Session Chair: Cindy Elmore	
3:40 – 3:55 pm	<p>Corporate Fandom: Recreating Media Fans as a Public <i>Jessica Bay</i></p> <p>Current large marketing promotions are placing media fans at the centre of their campaigns in order to incorporate and make use of the most engaged members of their audience. This move to the mainstream indicates an attempt to shift the position of the fan and fandom from the counterpublic, or outskirts, to a public in its own right.</p> <p>Using Michael Warner’s (2002) conception of publics and counterpublics, we can see that historically, fandom was situated very clearly in the position of counterpublic as fans were not only placed on the outskirts by others, but actively participated in acts that ran counter to the mainstream reading and consumption of media content.</p> <p>Current media fans, however, are often courted by corporations and those with the power to influence the mainstream. There is an interest in the types of transformative practices in which fans engage. In actively seeking these audience members and their practices, corporations are forcing these groups into a more public position while helping to shift the types of activities that are considered part of fandom. Essentially, by bringing “desirable” media fans into the mainstream, corporations are reorganizing them as publics in terms of their position within society and this shift could contribute to a change in what it means to be a media fan.</p> <p>This presentation will problematize the current conception of fans and fandom in relation to the perception of the public to consider the shifting</p>

	<p>position of the fan and the role that corporations are playing in this change.</p>
<p>3:55 – 4:10 pm</p>	<p>“Tom Dating Taylor Was Disheartening”: Tales from a Fragmented Fandom</p> <p><i>Daisy Pignetti</i></p> <p>Before <i>The Sun</i> published fifteen “<u>World Exclusive</u>” photos of Tom Hiddleston kissing Taylor Swift on the rocky beach outside of her Rhode Island home in June of 2016, the British actor had held the title of Internet Boyfriend, with fans and journalists alike considering him “a paragon of enlightened masculinity” and “someone surrounded by an aura of authenticity” (Misra 2016). Fan reactions to the highly publicized three-month relationship ranged from confused to disappointed to vehemently ruthless, the latter resulting in the hashtags #famewhoreTom and #hiddlestunt.</p> <p>While there were some who used their social media to state they would remain loyal fans of his work no matter whom he dated, this paper will share survey data I collected in June of 2018 to explore long-lasting fractures to the Hiddleston fandom. Influenced by anti-fan, non-fan, and intra-fandom scholarship, I have coded the 593 survey responses into three significant expressions: 1) frustration with the media coverage of the “Hiddleswift” spectacle, 2) hatred of Taylor Swift, and 3) a loss of respect for Tom Hiddleston, particularly after a GQ profile piece was published in 2017.¹</p> <p>Extending Melissa Click’s (2007) theories about fans who use media stories and gossip to construct opinions about celebrities in order to consider the tensions that arise between an actor’s work in the public sphere and his/her private life, I will interrogate Hiddleston’s own references to himself as</p>

¹ [1] Despite the joy that a new portfolio of pictures of Tom donning fitted, brown, striped suits brought some, others couldn’t help notice he spent the majority of time in the corresponding cover story defending his relationship with Taylor and the infamous “I <3 TS” tank top. Fans turned to Tumblr to dissect it, creating posts such as “I Interviewed Tom Hiddleston and All I Got Was This Lousy Tank Top” and “When to just never bring it up.” while celebrity gossip sites also critiqued it with headlines such as “Tom & Taffy” and “Tom Hiddleston’s Explanation Of That ‘I ♥ T.S.’ Tank Top Is Cringe Fuel.”

	<p>an “authentic” public figure. By pairing with Swift, an act many survey respondents felt was played for publicity, <i>and</i> simultaneously distancing himself from all social media, he became inaccessible to those fans who had been loyal to him early in his career. Ultimately, I will argue that three years later Hiddleston’s name remains pejoratively linked to Swift’s, thereby proving the impact this short-lived romance had upon his celebrity narrative.</p>
4:10 – 4:20	Q & A
<p>Session 1I – Session Chair : Alex McVey</p>	
4:20 – 4:35 pm	<p>Make Tiny Changes: How Frightened Rabbit Fans Effect Change</p> <p><i>Valerie Gritsch</i></p> <p>When a celebrity dies, fans are always struck by the loss as they grieve for someone who impacted their life in a major way. Musicians, especially, are celebrities whose deaths can deeply affect fans, as their relatable songs comforted them and connected them to a community of like-minded souls. Musicians give their audiences pieces of themselves through their art which allows fans to develop a parasocial relationship, creating an even stronger sense of grief after they pass. This grief from a musician’s death forces fans to come together to make sense of their feelings both online and in the physical world and, in many instances, inspires fans to collectively create a lasting memorial to honor them.</p> <p>This essay explores ways a celebrity’s death inspires fans into action for a cause. Fans of Scott Hutchison, the guitarist and singer of the rock band Frightened Rabbit, were inspired to create community-building activities after his passing in May 2018. Initially, Hutchison’s death inspired fans to crowdfund a memorial bench in his home of Glasgow, Scotland and raise funds for causes he supported in his name; mainly towards mental health services and combatting homelessness. Now in 2019, his fans have undertaken a global initiative to share their love of Frightened Rabbit’s music and continue to raise money and awareness for the causes that were near to Hutchison’s heart. Through activism, Frightened Rabbit fans are able to transform their grief.</p> <p><i>*Trigger Warning: This paper discusses suicide</i></p>

4:35 – 4:50 pm	<p>Come as you are: The legacy of Kurt Cobain</p> <p><i>Paul Ziek and Mira Pantic</i></p> <p>April 8, 2019 marks the 25th anniversary of Kurt Cobain’s death. Since that day, Kurt Cobain has become the quintessential celebrity in that the public’s fascination with him exceeds both his talents as either an artist or musician. Beyond the fact that Nirvana’s music is played on alternative and classic rock stations around the world, Kurt’s image has been immortalized in a variety of other ways: there are documentaries and popular press books dedicated to his life and death, he has a park in Aberdeen, Washington named after him, his personal paintings are part of a traveling art show and his handwriting is available as a downloadable font. Moreover, dozens of retailers sell Nirvana and Kurt Cobain merchandise including Target, 7/11, 5 Below and Kohls, to name a few. Although there has been a tremendous amount of academic literature on Kurt Cobain, and the music he created, there is still a gap: little to no work investigates the rise in Kurt Cobain’s celebrity. The current paper considers the legacy of Kurt Cobain as we approach the silver anniversary of his death. What is more specific to the conference call, Bridging Gaps: Re-Fashioning Stories for Celebrity Counterpublics, is that the paper relies constitutive view of communication to explain how the narratives surrounding Kurt Cobain create both a rise in his fandom as well as the commodification of his reputation as an antihero.</p>
4:50 – 5:00 pm	Q & A
5:00 – 7:00 pm	Dinner Break
7:00 – 9:00 pm	<p>Reception Drinks - Catered</p> <p>Midtown Bistro & Bar</p> <p>Club Quarters – Times Square</p>

	DAY 2: Saturday, August 31, 2019
8:10 am	Doors Open
8:30 – 9:00 am	Morning Coffee / Tea - Catered
Session 2A – Session Chair: Samita Nandy	
9:00 – 9:20 am	<p>From MeToo to UsToo: From Celebrity Counterpublics to Immigrant Counterpublics</p> <p><i>Keynote Speaker - Basuli Deb</i></p> <p>Powerful as the MeToo Movement has been in foregrounding sexual violence at the workplace, this celebrity inspired feminist movement has inspired coalitions among a particular class of society. There needs to be recognition of distinctively different stories of working class and immigrant cisgender women and LGBTQ people, and visa holding temporary workers in the United States who have faced gender based discrimination at the workplace intensified by their economic and legal vulnerability. I argue that it is time for an UsToo Movement to actively work in bringing to the forefront the testimonies of economic violence that often accompanies gender-based discrimination where perpetrators discriminate with impunity, often counting on the vulnerable positions of these populations to assume their own invincibility. Extending popular storytelling beyond celebrity culture to include first-hand accounts and visual evidence from those least empowered to speak out against gender based workplace discrimination because of their economic or legal precarities, redistributes power in the workplace in a way that an elite class based movement cannot. I situate my keynote in the context of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa which came under criticism for granting reparations for violence during apartheid by prioritizing sexual and bodily violence on women above economic violence. This keynote is an act of transnational feminist praxis, testifying with visual evidence to my own experience of workplace harassment In the US as a woman academic of color from India when I was a visa holder.</p>

Session 2B – Session Chair: Aleksandra Krstic

9:20 – 9:35 am

“Utilizing Celebrity as Propaganda at the Height of the Cold War”: Lee Bouvier, Nationalism, and the American Woman at the 1958 World’s Fair

Kenya Davis-Hayes

During the Cold War, the US struggled to win the European public in the face of growing Soviet influence. In response, the Eisenhower Administration allocated incredible funds to dazzle international audiences with American consumer goods. Interestingly, the persona of the American woman became an integral aspect of this attempt at international influence and during the 1958 World’s Exposition in Brussels, the perception of American women became seen as a weapon for democracy.

The 1958 World’s Fair allowed for the nations of the world to present their best selves and the Eisenhower Administration, specifically, insisted upon the need for the presentation of the “American Woman” but a conceptual crisis arose. Professional women diplomats clamored to present an increasingly professional American woman while the Eisenhower Administration appointed fashion celebrity and socialite, Lee Bouvier (the famed sister of Jacqueline Kennedy), to construct a glamorized American feminine mythology that reflected more the glossy pages of *Vogue* and her lifestyle. Under the leadership of Lee Bouvier, the Women’s Exhibit found itself reimaged by the latest American fashions. It was this use of a celebrity’s feminine narrative for propaganda purposes which I propose to present. Top diplomats like Katherine Graham Howard recollected feeling sublimated by the pressure of share the American narrative with a fashion maven like, Lee Bouvier, and balked at her efforts somehow intellectualize American fashion for skeptical international audiences particularly the Soviets. In short, this paper will explore the historic use of a celebrity’s feminine experience as the reference for the broader American woman’s experience at the 1958 World’s Fair.

9:35 – 9:50 am

Celebrity Politicians, New Trends and Narratives before the US 2020 Presidential Election

Lea Diaz

In the run for the Presidency of the US or any other form of political campaign, Mark McKinnon agrees that citizens support the candidate who comes with the best narrative. Political storytelling does not have to do with credibility, qualification, policies or complex arguments; but with connecting with the people through friendly good stories. David Axelrod has emphasized the power of narrative arts which he learnt while working with Barack Obama.

	<p>During the 2016 Presidential Campaign, the current President of the US crafted a narrative that resonated deeply: “Make America Great Again”.</p> <p>As the 2020 Election unfolds, our paper will examine the narratives being shaped, whether candidates are connecting with the citizens effectively: through stories that reflect who they are, how they see the world, in what they believe, what they stand for.</p> <p>The last part of our paper will pay special attention to the presence of Misinformation and the use of fake news in political discourse, as part of storytelling tactics. Misinformation, "Fake News" are considered nowadays some of the greatest threats to democracy, free debate and the Western order: on the one hand, this phenomenon undermines citizens’ right to receive true, accurate information; on the other hand, it prevents them from being properly informed and aware of the sociopolitical context in order to vote or get involved in the polity regime in many other forms. According to David Lazer, “such situations can enable discriminatory and inflammatory ideas to enter public discourse and be treated as fact. Once embedded, such ideas can in turn be used to create scapegoats, to normalize prejudices, to harden us-versus-them mentalities and even, in extreme cases, to catalyze and justify violence” (Lazer, et. al, 2017, p. 5).</p> <p>Political leaders on the left and right have used fake headlines, websites and articles in order to bolster their election efforts (Fischer, 2017). As a matter of fact, the deliberate making up of news stories to fool or entertain is nothing new. Nevertheless, the arrival of social media has meant real and fictional stories are now presented in such a similar way that it can sometimes be difficult to tell the two apart, and these stories are propagated in a faster way with technology (Nougayrede, 2018). In addition, various studies, (Pew Research Center, 2017), confirm the increasing proportion of (US) adults getting their news from social media.</p> <p>All in all, our proposal will explore 1) narratives being shaped by the candidates, 2) and storytelling tactics related to the use of misinformation in political discourse, as tools and strategies to win an election.</p>
9:50 – 10:00 am	Q & A
Session 2C - Session Chair: Jessica Bay	
10:00–10:15 am	<p>Visual political communication in times of democratic erosion: celebrity politics and image building of Serbia’s president on Instagram</p> <p><i>Aleksandra Krstic</i></p> <p>Visual content has become an important element of digital political communication. Still photos and moving images created and published by</p>

	<p>political actors worldwide serve for their communication with constituencies. The growing popularity of visual-centric social media platforms, such as Instagram and YouTube, made them highly utilized tools in contemporary “post-democratic” (Crouch, 2004) political communication or the age of “democrataintment” (Turner, 2004), celebrity politicians (Street, 2004; Marsh et al., 2010; Wheeler, 2013) and “superstar” celebrity politicians (Wood et al., 2016). A growing body of literature has examined the ways in which politicians in various national contexts have been using visual political communication tools for marketing, image management, campaigning and self-presentation (see for example: Flicker, 2013; Krogstad & Storvik, 2010; Lalancette & Raynauld, 2017; Liebhart & Bernhardt, 2017). However, only a few studies have explored how visual digital platforms are used in political communication in non-Western settings, particularly in the context of growing populist leadership in Central and Eastern Europe and anti-democratic turbulences triggered by authoritarian leaders in new democracies of the Western Balkans region. Building on theories of mediatisation, celebrity politics and visual framing, this article examines how Serbia’s President Aleksandar Vučić uses digital visual content to create and maintain his public image, push out his political agenda and build support in times of the country's rapid decline, return to competitive authoritarianism and to address growing counter-publics accusing him of abusive leadership, unfair elections and subversion of press freedom. Therefore, a visual framing analysis of the official Instagram account of Aleksandar Vučić's current political campaign “The Future of Serbia AV” (@buducnostsrbiave) has been conducted, focusing on the main visual strategies and stylistic choices used for the president’s image-making, political messaging and reputation management.</p>
<p>10:15–10:30 am</p>	<p>Missing Michelle & Modeling Meghan: Black Women Fashioning Gendered Racial Fantasies and Reframing the Endurance of Empire in the Post-Obama Era</p> <p><i>Dionne Bennett</i></p> <p>Michelle Obama and Meghan Markle women have shaped fashion and culture on a global level with success stories that are unusual for any women and unprecedented for black women. Their wardrobe choices become best-selling fashion commodities as women of diverse races dress themselves in Michelle- and Meghan- colored fantasies. They have been carefully designed, dressed, and displayed leading ladies in nuanced narrative, stars of a professional and domestic “Post-Racial Black Cinderella Story.” Yet the stories of the actual women have been colored by very real racism and sexism, adorned with stereotypes that have been used to degrade black women throughout the history of European colonialism. As America’s first African American First Lady, Michelle Obama and her family, represented a</p>

	<p>colorblind fantasy of American democracy, a fantasy that faded to race every time the Obamas were compared to polished primates or another unarmed black body – men, women, and children who had no White House in which to hide – fell dead before a police officer’s gun. This status-subjection paradox, was symbolic of a deeper tension in America’s cultural-political landscape. Over two years after Michelle Obama walked out the White House, another African American woman, biracial actress Meghan Markle, walked down the aisle and into the British royal family. The two women occupy different racial, generational, and even national roles. Even their differences in skin color are a form of political fashion that shapes their stories and stereotypes. Yet both women simultaneously embody and escape conflicting narratives of conventional gendered domesticity and restriction as well as historically extraordinary narratives of racial celebrity and freedom. Fashionable and fashioned celebrity wives of powerful men, they have simultaneously experienced elite privilege and insidious attempts at profound racist and sexist degradation as they depict and defy their historical eras.</p>
10:30–10:40 am	Q & A
10:40–11:00 am	Coffee & Tea Break
Session 2D - Session Chair: Dilli Bikram Edingo	
11:00–11:15 am	<p>Wish upon a star: when celebrities in Thailand enter the political stage</p> <p><i>Alongkorn Parivudhipongs</i></p> <p>Under what conditions and how can serious politics be combined with fame-based entertainment? While this question is much debated by scholars of political science and of political communication, it is undeniable that importance of the candidates’ media personalities and celebrity status have grown in political campaigning across many parts of the world. In Thailand, for example, many well-known actors, musicians or TV show hosts have sought to enter politics and some have gained seats in the legislature since the mid-1990s. In the current campaign for the 2019 legislative elections, celebrities again feature prominently, capitalizing on their fame and access to communication technology to appeal to potential voters. Whether this is the sign of welcoming diversity in a representational democracy or a political device to lure citizens to vote for celebrities whilst the real power holders remain obscure is a question that deserves close examination.</p> <p>The paper analyzes the elements of Thai celebrity culture, particularly</p>

	<p>personalization and fandom, as articulations of popular culture and their effects on contemporary Thai politics. Based on a systematic analysis of relevant newspaper and social media reporting, the qualitative study focuses on entertainers and TV celebrities who turned politicians at national legislative elections between 1995 and 2019. The research documents how entertainers have used mediated discourses, such as celebrity status, personal touch, drama-like narratives, and fandom in their efforts to attract voters. Less is known about the impact of celebrity power on voters' choices at the ballot box. In relation to celebrity storytelling, the paper also notes that entertainers-turned-politicians typically assume political roles such as party spokespersons or PR-envoy rather than emerging as real power wielders. This narrative practice suggests that celebrity is primarily employed by political parties and political power brokers in order to mobilize voters.</p>
<p>11:15–11:30 am</p>	<p>Censored by Prestige: The Nobel Prize and non-Western Writers</p> <p><i>Michael Ka-chi Cheuk</i></p> <p>The prestige of the Nobel Prize in Literature is often coupled with overwhelming academic and public attention for its winners. Saint Lucian poet and playwright Derek Walcott remarked how he was unable to work due to the “demanding” attention of being a 1992 Nobel laureate (qtd in Kirn 1998); Mainland Chinese writer and 2012 Nobel Prize winner Mo Yan hoped to have “another Chinese writer to win the Nobel Prize,” so he can concentrate on writing novels again (qtd in Leng 2017). The Nobel Prize has even prompted French émigré writer Gao Xingjian to embark on a “second escape” from the “public’s halo, flowers, prizes, and crown” (qtd in Liu 2004). On the one hand, the Nobel Prize generates an unprecedented amount of economic, symbolic, and celebrity capital for its laureates. On the other hand, these very capitals poise as a heavy burden on Nobel laureates. Of particular interest is celebrity capital, which refers not necessarily to prestige, but media attention and “recognizability” (Driessen 2013). Why and how is the Nobel Prize a burden to non-Western Nobel laureates? Can non-Western Nobel laureates manipulate the burden of the Nobel Prize into a source of creative inspiration, and serve as celebrity counterpublics in a global context? Can the works of Walcott, Mo Yan, and Gao Xingjian, for example, open up new discourses about race, trauma, and individuality for subaltern groups via the prestige of the Nobel Prize? Ultimately, this paper is part of the first systematic study of the Nobel Prize as a “kiss of death” for non-Western writers.</p>
<p>11:30–11:40 am</p>	<p>Q & A</p>

Session 2E - Session Chair: Nidhi Shrivastava

11:40–11:55 am

Putting the “You” in Glamour Labour: Performing Canadian and Celebrity Glamour in Sheila Heti’s *How Should a Person Be?*

Kathryn Franklin

This paper examines the performance and practice of glamour and celebrity in Toronto in Sheila Heti’s experimental 2010 novel *How Should a Person Be?* Heti’s text functions as a counterargument to Amy Lavender Harris’ (2010) claim that Toronto suffers from cultural amnesia when it comes to its own literary genealogy: “[I]n a city where nearly everybody seems to be a writer or aspires to be one, where books have their own festivals and television shows, where celebrity authors are jostled and fawned over in the street — books, no matter how enthusiastically they may be read, reviewed and rewarded when they are first published, soon slide irretrievably into oblivion like flotsam beneath a somnolent sea (*Imagining Toronto*, 21).” By forging and articulating her own artistic space through the myth of the bohemian, the character of Sheila in *How Should a Person Be?* challenges the assumptions of fame, mythology and glamour in Toronto in the early 21st century as it navigates the onslaught of gentrification leading up to the Great Recession of 2008-09. Heti, therefore, challenges the conception of the celebrity artist in a city and country that is often described as suffering from “tall poppy syndrome” by democratizing the notion of public glamour in making expressions of conspicuous celebrity accessible for the ordinary Torontonian. *How Should a Person Be?*, I argue, articulates a particular feminized urbane glamour that builds upon the dimensions of Canadian urban writing and showcases glamour and celebrity as an integral component in the development of Toronto as a modern city.

11:55 - 12:10pm

**The Intersection of Commerce and Celebrity Culture:
A textual analysis of Bravo’s *Real Housewives***

Gigi McNamara

Celebrity culture has become an omnipresent force in American popular culture. Nowhere is that more evident than in the Bravo reality show franchise *Real Housewives*. Specifically, reality television has proven to be highly receptive to cross promotional and integrated product placement. I will argue that several housewives have successfully used this reality show vehicle as a platform for several lucrative product launches. Furthermore, as it has

	<p>become increasingly difficult to discern content from commerce, many housewives have gone on the home shopping networks QVC and HSN to peddle their wares. Using the theoretical frameworks of parasocial interaction and commodity feminism, I contend the <i>Real Housewives</i> program has shown legions of women that it is possible to purchase a “piece of the brand.”</p> <p>My presentation will offer a textual analysis of three current housewives: Bethenny Frankel from the New York franchise, Lisa Rinna from the Beverly Hills franchise and Shannon Beador from the O.C. franchise. (Frankel in particular has been lauded as introducing the fastest growing premade liquor product in the United States and was featured on the cover of <i>Forbes</i> magazine. Her current “Skinny Girl” empire is comprised of food products, candy, salad dressings and designer jeans. Rinna sells fashion separates and Beador focuses on frozen food selections.) These three examples will provide a current context of the ever-growing market of celebrity as “branded pitch people” promoted on a weekly basis through their participation in the <i>Real Housewives</i> program.</p>
12:10 - 12:20pm	Q & A
12:20–1:50 pm	Lunch Break
Session 2F - Session Chair : Paul Ziek	
1:50 – 2:05 pm	<p>A Magnificent Failure: Dialectical Cinema and Stardom in Norma Mailer's <i>Wild 90</i></p> <p><i>Glen Wood</i></p> <p>Recently the Library of America published a two-volume collection of Norman Mailer’s writings, excluding the author’s work as a filmmaker. His first of three improvisational films, <i>Wild 90</i> (1967) encapsulates Mailer’s own conception of “Dialectical Cinema” expressed through the unique relationship between the actors and crew. The confluence of Mailer’s personal history and cinematic style complicates certain notions of self-performance and staged reality found in the discourses associated with docu-dramas and “portrait documentaries” of the 1960s. Indeed, the enlistment of D.A. Pennebaker as <i>Wild 90</i>’s cinematographer compounds and contributes to his own legacy by simultaneously expanding the parameters of his oeuvre and tarnishing an</p>

	<p>otherwise first-rate filmography.</p> <p>Audiences and critics ultimately rejected the film, seemingly confounded by its paradoxical construct; a fictive narrative combined with an aleatory production process. Nevertheless, the film’s failure precedes contemporary debates surrounding non-fiction film and television in what has been referred to as the “post-documentary era”. An examination of <i>Wild 90’s</i> form (production), signification (articulation) and reception (classification) is undertaken with respect to the film’s foundational triptych: the documentary aesthetic, the dialectic that evolves around Pennebaker and Mailer (including the auxiliary actors), and the (un)intentional portrayal of the rupture between the self and the persona. In particular, <i>Wild 90’s</i> reception speaks to our understanding of what audiences demanded and rejected from its stars in a given era. This writing uncovers a moment in filmmaking history that has disappeared almost entirely, only to emerge decades later in a resurgence of Mailer’s (un)intentions and production practices.</p>
2:05 – 2:20 pm	<p>A modern way to look: Vulnerability and voyeurism in LaBeouf, Rönkkö & Turner’s #ALLMYMOVIES</p> <p><i>Alyssa Tremblay</i></p> <p>This presentation examines the vulnerability and violence in #ALLMYMOVIES, a performance art project by artist collective LaBeouf, Rönkkö & Turner, in which American actor and oft-memed celebrity Shia LaBeouf livestreamed himself watching his entire filmography in reverse chronological order over the course of three days. Through compositional interpretation of an archived version of the livestream, two research questions are considered: First, what happens when the voyeur has explicit permission to watch? Does the deliberate offering of visual access shift power from the watcher to the watched? And second, what are the implications and/or effects of watching Shia LaBeouf’s movies <i>through</i> Shia LaBeouf himself? Is his body a storytelling medium, material, or mirror? Employing theories of visual culture, I argue that the unseen livestream audience’s watching and assessment of LaBeouf’s cinematic performances (and to an extent, of LaBeouf himself, as he eats, naps, grimaces and laughs on camera) is complicated by the positioning of the celebrity’s physical body at the forefront of their gaze, a comment on how individuals, celebrity or otherwise, are seen and judged based on increasingly refracted representation of themselves, the digitally disembodied and simulated often standing in for flesh. I ultimately conclude that this marathon livestream— presented without camera direction or editing, in which the performed self is chipped away, made raw and vulnerable through the variable of time as the stamina required to maintain the performance recedes as LaBeouf grows fatigued—might be read as an attempt to have that flesh be seen.</p>

2:20 – 2:30 pm	Q & A
2:30 – 2:50 pm	Coffee & Tea Break – Catered
Session 2G - Session Chair: Kiera Obbard	
2:50 – 3:10 pm	<p>Op-Ed</p> <p>Getting Something Good for the Thing We Hate: Funding Watchdog Journalism from a Tax on Targeted Advertising</p> <p><i>Cindy Elmore</i></p> <p>In her book, “Speaking Personally: The Rise of Subjective and Confessional Journalism” (2013) Rosalind Coward argues that personal, first-person writing has a valuable place in journalism. Lindgren (2016) has similarly documented the importance of personal narrative in the fast-growing field of podcasting. In this OpEd, the author draws on her experience as a journalist at a well-staffed, mid-sized newspaper in the 1990s to explore some of the watchdog journalism routines and practices that have been lost as the news industry’s funding model has mostly collapsed. This has left vast “news deserts” – broad swaths of the U.S. where no community journalism exists at all, much less the kinds of watchdog reporting that examines the claims of political candidates, the spending practices and decisions of local officials and municipalities, or anything that can be gleaned from good local or regional data journalism. As a result, reliable information is hard to find about important community issues, and the public is more easily misled by those in positions of power. Moreover, students of journalism are finding the traditional entry-level doors closed to them – doors that have historically served as the places where the best journalists always learned their craft. This OpEd applies a personal narrative to illustrate and introduce support for a new proposal by the “Free Press” organization to tax online targeted advertising to pay for community journalism run by independent, noncommercial organizations. This proposal has gotten little national attention as a potential solution to disappearing community journalism.</p>
3:10 – 3:15 pm	Q & A
Session 2H – Session Chair: Samita Nandy	
3:15 – 3:45 pm	<p>Maximizing Your Personal Brand</p> <p>Interactive Panel</p>

	<i>Jacqueline F. Strayer</i>
Session 2I - Session Chair: Samita Nandy	
3:45 – 5:00 pm	Scholars as Critics - Media Workshop <i>Andrew Zolides, Basuli Deb, Alex Symons, Jacque Lynn Foltyn, Hannah Yelin</i>
5:00 – 7:00 pm	Dinner Break
7:00 – 9:00 pm	Day 2 – Conference Social Library Bar – Fireplace, Sheraton Hotel (Times Square)

	DAY 3: Sunday, September 1, 2019
8:10 am	Doors Open
8:30 – 8:40 am	Morning Coffee / Tea – Catered
Session 3A - Session Chair: Samita Nandy	
8:40 – 9:00 am	<p>“Cultural Citizenship” in the Digital Age: Activism and Risks for Comedians in America</p> <p><i>Keynote Speaker - Alex Symons</i></p> <p>More so than before, American comedians are able to exhibit their “private” life stories and promote personal causes thanks to the “limitless” possibilities of digital culture – specifically through YouTube, Twitter, and digital television. It was via Netflix that Seth Rogen shared his family experience of Alzheimer’s in his show <i>Hilarity for Charity</i> (2018), and on Twitter that Amy Schumer has expressed her liberal beliefs as is her family tradition. Similarly, Sarah Silverman has drawn on her Jewish, New England upbringing to advocate progressive politics in <i>I Love You, America</i> (Hulu, 2017-).</p> <p>Yet at the same time, digital culture been known to “backfire” by exposing comedians’ “private” lives and beliefs to intense criticism. This has been facilitated by the rise of “cultural citizenship” whereby “participation in popular culture” has come to be expected of modern citizenry. Such criticism of behavior online has led Kevin Heart to recently withdraw from presenting the Academy Awards, Roseanne Barr had her television show cancelled by ABC, and Kathy Griffin has endured months of venue cancellations across America. These cases considered, American comedians are now more able to express themselves, and exhibit their “private” selves, but they are also at greater personal risk for doing so.</p>

Session 3B - Session Chair: Nidhi Shrivastava

9:00 – 9:15 am

Laughter in Postcolonial Life-Writing: Trevor Noah's Born a Crime

Kiera Obbard

In the introduction to *Cheeky Fictions: Laughter and the Postcolonial*, Susanne Reichl and Mark Stein urge academics to consider laughter as a textual device in popular culture. As seen in the case of South African comedian political commentator and television host Trevor Noah, humour is strategically employed as a rhetorical tool to disrupt power relations, diffuse oppositions, create communities, and heal in postcolonial contexts. This paper considers humour theory in relation to postcolonial cultural productions to examine Trevor Noah's autobiographical book *Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood*.

Since he became the host of *The Daily Show* in 2015, Trevor Noah has become an influential public figure in North America as well as South Africa. Topping the *New York Times*' Bestsellers list, Noah's book uses laughter to recount his life growing up as "coloured" or mixed race person in apartheid South Africa and the racial injustices carried out under the apartheid system. In this paper, I explore the ways in which Noah employs laughter as a strategic storytelling device, and its implications on what appears to be a predominantly Western target audience. Particularly salient considering the rise in xenophobic discourse in the United States (e.g., the border wall), Noah's book encourages us to consider the function of laughter as a strategic tool not only to share important celebrity stories, but to repurpose those stories into tools for social transformation. As opposed to making light of a serious social issue, using the theoretical lens of humour allows us to explore how laughter thrives in power imbalances to diffuse oppositions and, in the process, bridge gaps between self/other, colonizer/colonized, and more in specific postcolonial contexts.

9:15 – 9:30 am	<p>Celebrity Illness Narratives in Stand-Up Comedy</p> <p><i>Karma Waltonen</i></p> <p>When TV / internet celebrities like Will Wheaton open up about depression on personal social media pages and in interviews, we respond. In the last few years, we've also responded to an unprecedented number of successful comedians opening up about physical and mental illnesses in their shows, including Maria Bamford, Tig Notaro, Neal Brennan, and Hannah Gadsby. In telling their stories, these comics have transformed their careers, reaching greater levels of success. They have also transformed the genre; their excessively personal material is complemented by the risks they take in performance style, subverting and questioning what stand-up comedy is understood to be—the breakout routines of each of the comics above broke comedy genre rules. Finally, these comics have also transformed their audience—as their fame grows, they reach more new fans, some of whom focus are drawn less to the comedy and more to the honesty about illness. Celebrities of all stripes (politicians, actors, etc.) have long been counseled to hide illness, at least until their celebrity status was unassailable. In contrast, contemporary stand-up creates a powerful space, in which comedy celebrities de-stigmatize and pave the way to help with laughter.</p>
9:30 – 9:40 am	Q & A
<p>Session 3C - Session Chair: Aliaa Dawoud</p>	
9:40 – 9:55 am	<p>Interaction and affect in comedians' rape humor on a live podcast: Fear, anger and desire</p> <p><i>Anna G. Franzen, Rickard Jonsson and Björn Sjöblom</i></p> <p>In 2015, a Swedish comedian known as Kringlan launched a series of sexualized insults and threats, including rape and assault, on a live podcast. His utterances were ambiguous in their delivery, being simultaneously framed as comical and as serious, but were mainly treated as jokes by the all-male hosts of the show. Both Kringlan and the hosts were severely chastised in the media afterwards. While a common understanding of rape humor is that it is a homosocial practice that reproduces patriarchal order while normalizing sexual violence (Pérez & Green, 2016), this paper investigates <i>what else</i> is going on in the delivery and uptake of such humor by scrutinizing the Kringlan case. Through studying rape humor in interaction, we focus on affect and desire established and maintained in such talk (Cameron & Kulick, 2003:</p>

	Wetherell, 2012). More precisely, this paper investigates pleasure, as well as displeasure, fear, anger and unlaughter (Billig 2005), in performances where the participants engage in highly tabooed sexist talk.
9:55 – 10:10 am	<p>Leslee Udwin’s India’s Daughter (2015): The Power of Story Telling, and Question of Social Change</p> <p><i>Nidhi Shrivastava</i></p> <p>In an op-ed, Leslee Udwin, the filmmaker of the controversial but meaningful documentary, <i>India’s Daughter</i> (2015) speaks of the tensions she faced in India as she was about to attend the first media screening of her documentary. She left India abruptly for the fear that she would be arrested because her film would lead to a “disruption of law and order” and thus her film was banned from screening in Indian theatres. As a powerful storyteller, Udwin’s documentary was released amid difficult circumstances online worldwide. Her documentary told the story of one of the most heinous rape cases in India to the date that resulted in a national and international media frenzy and nation-wide protests. While there were many filmmakers who responded to the rape case, Udwin’s documentary, however, drew criticism when the trailer released because it allegedly focused on the narrative of the rapist, Mukesh Singh, and his lawyer, M.L. Sharma, who felt that if a girl was out in the late night, she was responsible for her rape. Drawing upon my interview with Leslee Udwin, archival research, and response to her documentary with a counter-documentary made by Vibha Bakshi, I explore the multitudes ways in which Leslee’s position as a storyteller, but also an “outsider,” influenced her documentary’s success within and outside of India. Moreover, her documentary underscored the gender-oppressive attitudes that continue to exist within India while simultaneously challenging the role of the State, politicians, and law enforcement who were in charge of protecting the women. The final question I ask: Did India’s Daughter become a medium of social change?</p>
10:10–10:20 am	Q & A
10:20 – 10:40	Coffee and Tea Break – Catered

Session 3D - Session Chair: Elizabeth Castaldo Lundén

10:40–10:55 am

Stories told by handicrafts. Subversive Aesthetic Strategies in Art and Fashion

Natalia Anna Michna

Craftivism means the use of crafts for political and activist purposes; as such, it is now gaining ground as a popular and effective way to call for social and political change. The use of crafts to express political opinions has a long history, especially in women’s movements of the twentieth century. For example, Great Britain’s suffragettes embroidered slogans onto their clothing or painted them on their umbrellas as part of their campaign for women’s rights. In recent years, crafts have again become a social tool to express emotions of indignation and anger and to protest against cases of sexual violence that have come to light in the film industry and celebrity world (the #MeToo campaign). In 2017, many celebrities joined the #MeToo campaign on social networking sites, expressing their solidarity with the victims of sexual harassment by providing access to the cross-stitch “Boys Will Be Boys,” the handiwork of Shannon Downey. Celebrities such as Emily Ratajkowski, Willow Smith, Colin Hanks, Zoë Kravitz, and Adriana Lima have made this image available, thus creating another chapter in the story of their lives, as told by means of social media, and at the same time making their voices heard in the public debate, so important in the first decades of the twenty-first century, on the phenomenon of sexual harassment. In this way, craftivism has become a part of celebrity storytelling, which nowadays is often a more readily accessible way of affecting social consciousness than traditional art forms.

In the paper, I will present the way that crafts (i.e. knitting, weaving, embroidery, and quilting) have emerged in celebrity culture as subversive esthetic strategies enabling the undermining and breakdown of class-based and patriarchal narratives and of divisions into high and low, objective and subjective, public and private, masculine and feminine. In other words, I will demonstrate how celebrity culture uses, transforms, and esthetizes crafts, whose presence in the celebrity world makes them an area in which—in addition to imperatives and esthetic values—social attitudes, ethical values, and world views are shaped.

10:55–11:10 am

Powerful Soles: How Shoes Can Determine Status in Celebrity Culture

Alexandra Jordan Thelin

Throughout history, choices in footwear defined one’s sense of belonging. Shoe experts Riello and McNeil noted, “membership of a social group entails looking like a member of that group. Except within the world of fashion, a style

	<p>group is also a social group, and the symbolism of its chosen style expresses the group’s ideological posture and cultural identity.” In the world of fashion, one’s choice of footwear determines identification. Status can be enhanced also by limiting physical capabilities, becoming a unique example of contradictory gendered oppression when the user has agency in deciding their own footwear options. Foot binding for women in Imperial China and the chopine of the Italian Renaissance are examples of how the foot was used to limit movement.</p> <p>This concept still holds true as footwear can be used as a vehicle of displaying wealth and position in today’s society. Celebrities such as Lady Gaga are synonymous with extreme footwear, and this connotation sets her apart from the average woman. Just like in the past, limiting movement purposefully sends a message, sets the wearer apart, and defines status.</p> <p>Additionally, designer shoes such as red-soled heels by French designer Christian Louboutin create an illusion of distinction with their high cost. Louboutin’s shoes show how a single characteristic, such as color, symbolizes attributes for a culture. This paper presentation will discuss how shoes are important in the branding of celebrities and how footwear is a symbol whose cultural meaning should be studied.</p>
11:10–11:20 am	Q / A
Session 3E - Session Chair: Kathryn Franklin	
11:20–11:35 am	<p>A Woman’s Job: Edith Head’s Transformation from School Teacher into Hollywood’s Most Iconic Costume Designer</p> <p><i>Elizabeth Castaldo Lundén</i></p> <p>Costume designer Edith Head has become a symbol of Hollywood costume designers. With more than 50 years career designing for the big screen, her iconic look has inspired several characters that pay homage to her legacy. Edith Head started her career in 1924 as Howard Greer’s assistant. Without any background in drawing or costume design, Head rapidly ascended to head of the costume department in 1937, when Travis Banton left Paramount and join Howard Greer in his Beverly Hills fashion atelier. Scholars have presented her career as a linear story of costume design success, focusing mostly on her time at Paramount Pictures and basing arguments on Head’s own media declarations. However, Head’s media appearances and the widespread popularity as a public persona demonstrate that a large part of her work for the studio rested on being a promoter by exploiting her role as a mediator of fashion discourses for female audiences. Head used the looks of the stars to educate women into finding “their type” and showed them how to adapt screen looks for real life situations. Storytelling became key to Her media appearances rehashed anecdotes from Hollywood’s golden age,</p>

	<p>building her own celebrity status through the discursively constructed proximity to Hollywood stars.</p> <p>This paper looks at the media construction of Edith Head as symbol of Hollywood success through her media appearances as costume designer and fashion expert. Drawing from archival holdings at the Margaret Herrick Library of the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences and the Wisconsin Film and Theater Research center, the study focuses on Head's battle horse anecdotes that filled in interviews, radio segments, books, as well as her work as the Academy Awards fashion consultant. The presentation will demonstrate that Head was a key PR figure for the studio and that this strategy also worked on her favor to perpetuate her position in the job market after the demise of the studio system by means of her own acquired celebrity flare.</p>
11:35–11:50 am	<p>Celebrating Gary Cooper: the reinvention of a Hollywood star through the prying eyes of an Instagrammer daughter</p> <p><i>Luis Fernando Romo</i></p> <p>Due to the (r)evolution of the Internet-based information and communication technologies, the dissemination of celebrity as a concept has shifted qualitatively and quantitatively. In the case of (Golden Age) Hollywood stars, the result is an information overload which may interfere in the need to understand the past to comprehend the present better. To what extent that revolution is a real evolution? Many classic Hollywood names are unfamiliar for the digital native generation, so more than evolution, it seems that they have had a regression. In the post Millennial era, this paper aims to examine how Maria Cooper Janis curates and (re)configures the qualitative significance of her father, Gary Cooper, through the posting of pictures and messages on Instagram. As a testimonial of an era already forgotten, Maria creates storytelling that illustrates the biography of 'The Ball of Fire' and 'High Noon' actor. By rewriting his life, Maria Cooper Janis offers a unique perspective on Gary Cooper creating a celebrity narrative as a form of communication and persuasion to getaway from the economic and political crisis around the world. This escape valve is similar than the one that Hollywood studios created during the Golden Age, because the reinvention allowed the (counter)public to fantasize with a pure fairytale. It can be said that Maria's Instagramming is the perfect tool to continue mythologizing Gary Cooper, although from a real-life first-hand perspective.</p> <p><i>*I have direct access to Maria Cooper Janis. I have known her for ten years, and I have been at her apartment many times.</i></p>
11:50 – 12 pm	Q & A

12:00 – 1:30 pm	Lunch Break
Session 3F - Session Chair: Kathryn Franklin	
1:30 – 1:45 pm	<p>Police Officer or Social Media Star? – <i>Live PD</i> and Microcelebrity</p> <p><i>Alex McVey</i></p> <p>The smash hit TV show <i>Live PD</i> broadcasts a live look into the actions of on-duty police officers as they patrol the streets in six cities across the United States. <i>Live PD</i>'s popularity is due at least in part to the show's coordinated social media promotions which encourage viewers to engage with the departments and officers they see on TV in the digital sphere (Anderson). A number of the officers featured on <i>Live PD</i> have gained significant followings on social media, functioning as what Media Studies scholar Alice Marwick might call "microcelebrities." Social media disperses access to the trappings of fame, making it easier for ordinary people to garner widespread online recognition without the traditional media architectures of celebrity. Many of the police officers featured on <i>Live PD</i> deploy the attention practices of microcelebrity to earn an online following and engage in visual self-presentation strategies to present their work to engaged publics online. This paper applies the theoretical lens of microcelebrity to understand the range of media practices <i>Live PD</i> uses to craft a rhetoric of policing. I ask: when we begin to see police officers as celebrities, how does that change our understanding of their role as public servants? What might the ideological function be of thinking of an agent of state violence as a celebrity? How does celebrity constitute a new frame for retelling the stories of policing, particularly in the context of increased mediated scrutiny of police behavior after the #BlackLivesMatter movement? How does the celebrity frame complicate questions about the role of police work in society?</p>
1:45 – 2:00 pm	<p>Sinister Internet Celebrities: YouTube Influencers</p> <p><i>Charlie Wiseman</i></p> <p>In the past decade, YouTube has become one of the largest global media platforms and its most successful content creators, dubbed <i>YouTube Influencers</i>, are now regularly co-opting their role as entertainers to provide personal and social narratives with varying degrees of ethical practice. A growing number of them are relying on fabricated storytimes, staged pranks, rigged social experiments among other techniques to simultaneously validate their personas and generate views; thereby negatively impacting the agency of their viewers. This is supported by recent studies that indicate Internet users, predominantly children, struggle to negotiate reality and fiction online due to limited media literacy skills.</p>

	<p>Using Crystal Abidin's (2018) discussion on the manipulative practices of <i>YouTube Influencers</i>, whom she recognizes internet celebrities, I argue that some can be distinguished as digital cult leaders and claim that their YouTube channels function as mediated cult spaces. By analyzing current discourse on participatory culture and existing literature on cult dynamics, this paper identifies how ideologies are packed into YouTube content for consumption and describes how channel engagements (subscribing, commenting, turning on notifications) are re-socialization processes. There is also an emphasis on crowdfunding projects (Patreon, sponsored advertising, merchandise) which exploit the economic capital of fans and case studies regarding the hostile treatment of "whistleblowers" - individuals that challenge the authority, authenticity and morality of content produced by certain <i>YouTube Influencers</i> . Consequently, I suggest that the content posted on YouTube requires greater regulation (disclaimers, accountability systems, reformed age restrictions) to dismantle digital cults for the protection of vulnerable audiences.</p>
2:00 – 2:10 pm	Q & A
Session 3G - Session Chair : Daisy Pignetti	
2:10 – 2:25 pm	<p>Online Celebrity Discourses on Facebook</p> <p><i>Dániel Hegedűs</i></p> <p>The web 2.0 phenomenon and social media – without question – have reshaped our everyday experiences. These changes that they have generated affect how we consume, communicate and present ourselves, just to name a few aspects of life, and moreover, opened up new perspectives for sociology. Though many social practices persist in a somewhat altered form, brand new types of entities have emerged on different social media platforms: one of them is the video blogger. These actors have gained great visibility through so-called micro-celebrity practices and have become potential large-scale distributors of ideas, values and knowledge. Celebrities, in this case micro-celebrities (video bloggers), may disseminate such cognitive patterns through their constructed discourse which is objectified in the online space through a peculiar digital face (a social media profile) where fans can react, share and comment according to the affordances of the digital space. Most importantly, all of these interactions are accessible for scholars to examine</p>

	<p>the fan and celebrity practices of our era. This research attempts to reconstruct these discursive interactions on the Facebook pages of ten top Hungarian video bloggers. All findings are based on a large-scale data collection using the <i>Netvizz</i> application. As part of the interpretation of the results, a further consideration was that celebrity discourses may be a sort of disciplinary force in (post)modern society, which normalizes the individual to some extent by providing adequate schemas of attitude, mentality and ways of consumption.</p>
2:25 – 2:40 pm	<p>Branding Fame on Facebook: Changing Social Movements through Multimodal Narratives</p> <p><i>Dilli Bikram Edingo</i></p> <p>In this research paper, content analysis method has been employed to critically analyse publicly available Facebook fan pages of a film-actress and film-maker and a CNN Hero award-winning celebrity activist from Nepal to find out what digital and/or rhetorical methods of narratives they apply to communicate their professional glamour, ideas and inspirational activities that contribute something to social, cultural and educational changes. Next, 113 persons were interviewed to accomplish a survey about what components of the celebrities' Facebook wall posts draw their attention much and what media such as TV, books, newspapers and social media are a better choice for them to remain updated about the celebrity lives. The research findings indicate that visual and acoustic components of the celebrities' Facebook wall posts can speak much more about their daily inspirational activities than other components do. The findings further indicate that traceability and intertextuality of the communicative acts such as posting on Facebook wall, providing comments and sharing information provide more information also about what others think and say about them. Though Facebook wall posts are short, they can communicate much about celebrities and are understood very easily and quickly by fans or audiences even while they are too busy because they are digital and multimodal narratives comprising texts, images and videos. Such multimodal narrative methodologies can be adopted as the teaching pedagogies that best fit in the global academia in the current digital age.</p>
2:40 – 2:50 pm	Q & A
2:50 – 3:10 pm	Coffee & Tea Break – Catered

Session 3H - Session Chair: Samita Nandy

3:10 – 3:25 pm

An Analysis of Facebook Users' Reaction to The Unusual Marital Union of an Egyptian Actress & an Islamic Preacher

Aliaa Dawoud

In June 2018, two famous people - who could not be more different - announced their union in marriage. The two people in question were the Jordanian but Egyptian based Islamic televangelist Moez Massoud, and the Egyptian actress Sheri Adel. This announcement sent shockwaves in Egypt and many other Arab countries; televised talk shows and social media outlets became replete with attacks on Massoud. They largely revolved around accusing him of being a hypocrite and having double standards because, like all other Islamic preachers, Massoud had repeatedly highlighted how important it is for Muslim women to dress modestly, or preferably to wear the hijab, or Islamic head covering. Thus, people found it very ironic that he ended up marrying an actress who - like all Egyptian actresses - wears short skirts and sleeves dresses.

Massoud – who has almost 8.5 million followers on Facebook- responded by posting a lengthy post on his official Facebook page, defending and explaining himself. In other words, Massoud used storytelling to frame himself as an ordinary man who followed his heart and married the woman that he happened to fall in love with, despite their apparently different lifestyles. But at the same time, he also tried to defend his authenticity as an Islamic televangelist, by arguing - in that same lengthy post - that he had always focused on the importance of dressing modestly and not on the hijab per se. The post in question was shared more than 15,000 times, it received more than 170,000 reactions and it was commented on more than 72,000 times.

This work in progress seeks to analyze a sample of the comments on this post, and hence on this unusual marriage. A preliminary analysis indicates that one of the main themes seems to be accusing Massoud of using religion to achieve fame, while not practicing what he has been preaching. Another important theme seems to be an argument that some of the young women who decided to wear the hijab based on his televised programs, were now going through a crisis due to his actions.

3:25 – 3:40 pm

Made In My Image: Co-Produced Fantasy & the Politics of Play

Chris Campanioni

How have digital media affected our inter-action with others; the ways in which we articulate intimacy and desire, and paradoxically, the “freedom” that arrives within the borders of the Internet, in which pleasure is mediated by and materializes within a space, or edge, for the deployment of cruising and wish fulfillment-as-direct-message? What does the tableau of fantasy offer its audience when mediated through technology, pop culture, and the economy of images? This contribution combines film and TV analysis, art criticism, cinema technique, and celebrity studies with phenomenological and psychoanalytical frameworks to investigate the empowerment of “playing” with culture, particularly for marginalized players to re-envision their current landscape; to re-write not only their cultural texts but the cultural norms that have prevented them from accessing different versions of themselves. This matrix informs the paper’s exploration of our everyday performative selves, probing issues of manufactured intimacy and the subversive potential of play.

In contemporary celebrity culture, the use of social media have become an inevitable choice for celebrities in the process of branding their fame. Dessewffy and Váry (2014), Hou (2018), Marwick (2013) and Nouri (2018) argue that social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram have become very useful media for various celebrities to influence fans or audiences who are the consumers of their professional glamour. These authors focus much on how celebrities use social media to commodify their fans. Next, Parveen (2018) argues that celebrities have used social media to brand themselves with exaggerated content which harms young people. However, no extensive studies have been conducted on how celebrity activists use social media to effectively narrate their social life and exemplary anecdotes that can influence citizens for social, cultural and education changes.

So, Anuradha Koirala and Puspa Basnet, two CNN Hero award-winning celebrity activists from Nepal, have been chosen for this case study to examine how they have used Facebook as a multimodal way of narrating their inspirational lives and activities which have been recognized as social movements in Nepal. As Facebook best converges all visual and acoustic media, these celebrity activists have best narrated their stories not only by telling, but also by showing and performing.

Finally, this study proposes to argue that such multimodal narrative methodologies can also be adopted as teaching methodologies that best fit in the global academia in the current digital age.

3:40 – 3:50 pm	Q & A
Session 3I - Session Chair: Samita Nandy	
3:50 – 4:05 pm	<p>Life Writing and the Framing of Superstardom: Re-evaluating the Celebrity Profile of Tuface Idibia</p> <p><i>Ezechi Onyerionwu and Onyekwere Okpara</i></p> <p>Nigerian pop music star, Tuface Idibia (a.k.a. TuBaba) has deservedly established a cult status for and around himself and is arguably Nigeria’s most celebrated performing artiste of the 21st century. His contribution to the Nigerian musical and popular culture arena, as whole, in terms of its social, historical and intellectual significance is simply legendary. But TuFace’s real cultural value as a celebrity draws from sources that are beyond his musical artistry and his performative dexterity. The construction and reconstruction of his profile as an icon have benefitted immensely from narratives woven around his personal life, which have in turn, sparked off an overwhelming curiosity about him. This paper shall examine the extent to which the controversial lifestyle of this influential young Nigerian has helped in securing his status as an authentic 21st century celebrity. We would be relying on social media stories, and of course, the one biography published about him – Ayeni Adekunle’s <i>A Very Good Bad Boy: The Story of Innocent ‘TuFace’ Idibia</i> – in determining the real worth of the ‘private’ to the public perception and reception of the TuFace Phenomenon.</p>
4:05-4:20 pm	<p>Constructing Meaningful Personas in Celebrity Culture Through Storytelling</p> <p><i>Diana Miller</i></p> <p>Constructing meaningful personas of leaders and role models is an important means for voicing targeted, underrepresented and marginalized people in American celebrity culture. Millions of fans and viewers have access to celebrities, their opinions, and their example using social media. Actor Ashton Kutcher, for example, stands up for girls who are victims of human trafficking. Various comedians on SNL tirade about Trump and Congress working on the border, or anything supporting American “values.” News personalities like Dale Hanson and John McCaa speak out for human justice. Indeed, political servants and personalities including actors and performers, and expert scholars and journalists have a responsibility to present non-biased information that can influence how the public will be united or divided on addressing critical issues and social change. Celebrity personas projected in</p>

	<p>storytelling is effective for reaching others through passion and emotion but lacks the depth and validity of scholarly research to bring about change. Scholars could benefit by combining a professional persona imagery and personal storytelling strategies with research to gain interest and attract public and private support in bringing change.</p> <p>Mahatma Gandhi once said, “You must be the change you wish to see in the world.”² Change starts with the individual and expands outward. Whatever passion for justice one has, only story-driven action supporting justice will make it happen. As scholars, writers, journalists, and researchers, we present important information that functions to influence the public, and we have a responsibility to be the change we wish to see. For example, I’ve spoken in a SMU sponsored TEDx Talk to inspire awareness of immigrant crisis in education and integration issues in America by telling my own story connecting disability degradation to the degradation of immigrants.</p> <p>This paper examines performative use of social media stories of popular political leaders, actors and performers that greatly influence public opinion, and analyzes how they might be re-shaped and presented by scholars to give true value and promote change. Scholars can use stories to do more than bring awareness and attention to celebrities and public figures on important subjects. In fact, they can become citizen journalists and meaningful rolemodels or “celebrities” through presentation performance in public venues that reach not only fellow scholars, but anyone passionate about making meaningful changes affecting human growth and development, and reparation of broken relationships among America's diverse citizenry. Performance, creative writing, and storytelling are compelling artistic means scholars can use to give valuable messages of awareness and offer solutions with real-world results.</p>
4:20 – 4:30 pm	Q & A
Session 3I - Session Chair: Samita Nandy	
4:30 – 5:20 pm	<i>Gap Bridging – Storytelling & Networking</i>
5:20 – 5:30 pm	<p>CMCS \$100 Best Paper Award, Runner-Up Prizes and Closing Remarks</p> <p>Samita Nandy, Kiera Obbard and Diana Miller</p>

² Gandhi, Mahatma. Fearless Motivation Strong Mind Strong Life, 11 June 2017.
<https://www.fearlessmotivation.com/2017/06/11/famous-mahatma-gandhi-quotes/>

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Selected papers will be invited to adapt their presentation into a full text for the Journal of Applied Journalism and Media Studies (Intellect Books). Further details will be emailed out in the coming

months. Please keep the conference conversation happening through #CMCS19 @celeb_studies on Twitter. For more information on the Centre for Media and Celebrity Studies, please check out our website cmc-centre.com or email us at info@cmc-centre.com