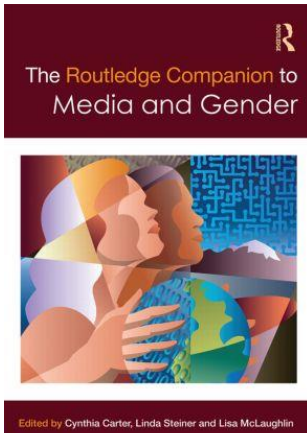Cynthia Carter, Linda Steiner, and Lisa McLaughlin (Eds.), **The Routledge Companion to Media and Gender**, London and New York: Routledge, 2015, 688 pp., $45.44 (paperback).

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Offering a comprehensive understanding of connections between gender and the media, *The Routledge Companion to Media and Gender* is based on the most recent international research exploring various dimensions of the key debates at the intersections of media and gender. The main objective of the book is to be an essential guide for academics and graduate students in investigating recent concerns as well as the rooted tensions both in media and communication research and gender and sexuality studies.

The comprehensive 688-page volume consists of 59 chapters arranged into five subcategories. Focusing on the gender representations and images on media, part I, "Her/Histories," provides a conceptual and methodological evaluation of the field and shares insights from the history of feminist studies. Part II, "Media Industries, Labor, and Policy," considers policymaking, along with issues of labor, unequal employment opportunities based on gender perceptions and sex segregation in media industries, commodification of gendered audience, violations of privacy rights, and censorship. Part III, "Images and Representations Across Texts and Genres," explores a diverse body of research on media and gender, examining media texts and media forms from different conceptual approaches. Part IV, "Media Audiences, Users, and Prosumers," concentrates on the changing nature of media consumption and production within the context of Web 2.0. Part V, "Gendered Media Futures and the Future of Gender," concludes the book with a closer examination of upcoming trends and themes in the field of media and gender.

Part 1: Her/Histories

Focusing on the histories of key topics relevant to media and gender research, the first four chapters revolve around common stereotypical frameworks where women are silenced (chapter 1) and victimized (chapter 2) through media discourses. In terms of gender power relations, this results in the underrepresentation of women in society. From traditional groundworks to contemporary field studies, the male gaze remains important in making men the central protagonists.

However, in the last four chapters of part I, audience labor is read via media texts highlighting new ways for a better understanding of gendered labor in an ever-changing world. Neoliberal globalization and technological development turn the face of feminist audience studies toward an intersectional approach. Chapter 6 is important here in considering how and why the concept of intersectionality can be used as an interpretive frame to examine media, its effects, and audiences.

Part II: Media Industries, Labor, and Policy

The chapters in part II focus on the underrepresentation of women in media industries, including media conglomerates, as well as in music and culture industries. In addition, the chapters address the gendered division of labor in terms of male domination in ICTs and inequality in pay and representation in higher-level positions, hinting that the promises of the online world have not been fulfilled yet. Despite the fact that the Internet serves as a wider public sphere for both sexes, the real world seems to be imitated in the digital world.

Supporting stereotypical constructions of gender from childhood to adulthood, the political economy of media industries plays a major role in producing a consumerist population. Video game industries (chapter 15), men's magazines (chapter 18), children's media (chapter 16), and the pornography industry (chapter 19) are only some of the platforms where such essentialist constructions are produced.

The last three chapters of part II examine the digital policies and feminist movements as a counter force against state authority both in Europe (chapter 21) and in China (chapter 22), explaining how ICTs are important in forming alternative ways for activism.

Part III: Images and Representations Across Texts and Genres

Part III revolves around key processes such as commercialization of sex and sexualization of culture, with a major focus on class. This part examines contemporary articulations of class in the British mini-series *The Only Way Is Essex* (*TOWIE*) (chapter 24) and looks at the portrayal of conspicuous consumption and the highly sexualized representations of middle class women in South Africa in *Society,* a miniseries on South African femininities (chapter 25).

Gender representation in media is elaborated along with the fame and celebrity culture reinforced by social media. Providing a cross-border mobility, social media can be regarded as forming new spaces beyond stereotypical gender constructions. The story of Chaz Bono's gender transition travelled across the globe not only on TV but also via social media tools, making Bono a brand (chapter 27). Female politicians' underrepresentation in news coverage (chapter 26) and Hollywood's relationship with women actresses' aging (chapter 31) are other topics explored in this part.

The final four chapters in this part of the *Companion* discuss sexualized racism in non-Western contexts. Mediated undermining of Third World women is discussed, with a specific focus on Indian women in New India and Muslim women, whose subjectivity is reified as and reduced to veil, which is a piece of cloth worn by Muslim women as a requirement of their religion. Exploitation of Third World women's bodies and labor through beauty regimes in India for the consumption of First World women is considered in Chapter 33, while Chapter 34 explains how the "war on terror" and Islamophobia shaped popular culture representations of sexualized racism. Offensive language in gender-based insults in male dominated sports is another important example that stands at the intersection of gender and ethnicity (chapter 36).

Part IV: Media Audiences, Users, and Prosumers

This part's main focus is convergence culture and the changing structure of the audience and consumption of media. While prosumers seem to have more agency in the contemporary moment and are partly able to influence media production processes, the moral dynamics of this participatory culture are still conservative. Chapter 37, for instance, examines the mediation of teen pregnancy as the center of a national moral panic. Like Brazilian telenovelas that blur gender boundaries and build an imaginary bourgeois model of living (chapter 38), the way newspapers package news to women means excluding them from real life and pushing them to live in an imaginary bubble, as consumers (chapter 39).

The remaining chapters concentrate on other important issues, including representation of women in video games (chapter 40), queer fandom from its predigital roots to its current status (chapter 41), male consumers and exploitation of sport (chapter 42), and pornography that targets heterosexual men (chapter 43). This part is also noteworthy in terms of its focus on non-Western contexts, looking at young viewers of Hindi films in which women are seen as inferior based on sexist stereotypes. However, consumption of media in terms of media globalization in Asia pushes women to self-reflexivity and pursuit of individualization with social change and transition within their everyday experiences (chapter 46). This is also evident in the radio listening experiences of women in Africa as a daily routine that can be considered as a mediated form of the public sphere, making women participate to the society (chapter 47). The changing role of camera phone practices as a new site of empowerment in South Korea (chapter 51) and how Arab women redefine activism via social media (chapter 52) are important topics examined in chapters addressing cyberfeminism as an effective tool in the struggle for women's rights.

Part V: Gendered Media Futures and the Future of Gender

The final part of the book makes an intersectional analysis and includes postcolonial theorizing of non-Western ethnicities along with future trends in feminist studies. Chapter 53 examines Latinas' representation on TV and film where the body of the woman is regarded as a sexual meta overlapping with her race and gender. Identity formation of Moroccan Dutch youth via social media tools is analyzed in Chapter 58, with a discussion of the restrictions and problems they face. Chapters in this final part also deal with the debates regarding postfeminism and sexism; a post-postfeminist approach is even proposed for the ongoing discussions over postfeminism (chapter 55).

Critical Reflections and Further Research

The *Companion* is a sound and effective book offering the reader the most up-to-date studies from a diverse set of theoretical/methodological perspectives and geographies. The selection of the articles of leading scholars along with certain case studies fulfills the primary objective of being an essential guide to the key concepts and current debates in gender and media studies.

The book has the quality to stand out among its counterparts—*The Gender and Media Reader* (Kearney, 2011) and *Gender, Race, and Class in Media* (Dines & Humez, 2014)—with its up-to-

dated material, transnational diversity, and intersectional approach. Throughout the chapters, as in the other two books mentioned, we see stereotypical gender segregation in many areas ranging from the film, music, and video game industries to politics and journalism. Mainly, the ideal woman continues to be White, attractive to men, and preoccupied with romantic interests.

However, despite its intersectional focus, the majority of the book is still allocated to Western contexts, underrepresenting geographies such as the Middle East. Only 20% of the book is dedicated to non-Western geographies. For instance, research on the experience and narratives of women wearing "the veil" within a mediatized world would have been a critical contribution to this otherwise well-thought-out volume. As various chapters of the book reveal, it is evident that more media work has become feminized recently. However, it is still important to ask why women and men internalize the traditional gender roles and accept these stereotypical practices in the media industry. In that sense, further research should be done on the motivations behind this attitude. In addition, blogs and vlogs are now important features of media making and prosumer culture. The majority of the book examines radio, TV, newspapers, magazines, and video games. Blogs, for instance, are somehow omitted. Given the centrality of blogs within the context of the Arab Spring, more research on blogs and gender needs to be conducted in relation to consumption, politics, identity, and empowerment. Gender representation in comics and cartoons would also be an important research area in terms of understanding gendered practices in different parts of the world. Finally, studies of masculinity and queer culture would also be indispensable additions, perhaps as part of a sequel that we as readers are expecting.

References

Dines G., & Humez J. M. (2014). *Gender, race, and class in media: A critical reader* (4th ed.). Los
        Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications.

Kearney M. C. (2011). *The gender and media reader.* New York, NY: Routledge*.*