Digital feminist anthropology's role before the onlife anti-feminist backlash

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One of the central challenges for feminist anthropology today is understanding how it can respond to the renewed consolidation of misogyny. This anti-feminist counterreaction is closely tied to the expansion of digital platforms as tools of both oppression and resistance. We aim to bring together scholars in feminist anthropology interested in understanding how patriarchal systems of power are reproduced in the onlife society.

The term *onlife*, introduced by Luciano Floridi, highlights how digital technologies permeate the social, political, economic, and cultural fabric of everyday life. The chauvinist response to the 2017 #MeToo movement spread misogynistic discourses from niche online spaces such as 4chan into mainstream platforms, expanding the reach of online misogyny. Since the early 2000s, online harassment has increased in frequency and intensity, with clearly gendered and racialized dimensions. Bailey's concept of "misogynoir," for instance, captures the intersectional vitriol directed at Black women in digital public spaces.

This type of oppression is pervasive. It includes blatant sexist discourse on fringe social media platforms, such as the Gamergate conspiracy, as well as various forms of tech-facilitated abuse: non-consensual image sharing, image-based sexual exploitation, deepfakes, doxxing, death and rape threats, cyberstalking, networked harassment, and zoombombing. Research shows that these forms of gendered othering disproportionately target women and gender-nonconforming users, particularly women of color, people with disabilities, women in public positions, and queer activists.

As the onlife framework suggests, these processes challenge the conventional distinction between online and offline realities. Digital violence does not remain confined to online spaces. Women and gender-nonconforming individuals face a continuum of attacks that put them at risk of physical, sexual, and even fatal violence. In intimate relationships, stalkerware, IoT devices are used to surveil individuals, violate restraining orders, and, in some cases, may lead to feminicide. Public figures are particularly vulnerable to hate speech, threats, doxxing, deepfakes, and networked harassment. Participation in manosphere communities has also been linked to extremist violence, including school shootings in the U.S. and Brazil.

These discriminatory processes are closely tied to broader social issues. Scholars such as Valeska Zanello and Emma Jane describe this escalation as an "epidemic" of online misogyny coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic and the "shadow pandemic" of domestic gender-based violence. These dynamics unfolded alongside accelerated digitalization and datafication across work, education, health, citizenship, and everyday life.

Despite state commitments to addressing gender-related violence through frameworks such as DEVAW, the Istanbul Convention, and the Belém do Pará Convention, institutional responses remain inadequate. Many countries have criminalized non-consensual image sharing and cyberstalking, but other forms of digital violence remain unregulated, and preventive policies or survivor-support systems are scarce.

Similarly, tech companies have shown selective sensitivity to these issues, often framing harm as a technological glitch rather than a symptom of the misogynistic cultures shaping technological development. The tech industry is historically dominated by privileged social groups, particularly Western, cisgender, middle-class men, who disproportionately influence governance and design decisions. Platform architectures and rules of conduct thus reflect and reinforce gender discrimination, as illustrated by the systematic silencing of feminist and queer actors on mainstream platforms through practices like shadow-banning and the stigmatization of sexual labor or feminine expression.

The growing popularity of the manosphere, a constellation of male-only communities unified by anti-feminist ideologies, intersects with the rise of far-right movements. In countries such as Italy, the U.S., Brazil, and Argentina, far-right parties have placed the fight against "gender ideology" at the center of their agendas. Meanwhile, as hate speech and tech-facilitated violence rise, major platforms have weakened their trust-and-safety operations, often in response to shifting political climates.

Against this backdrop, activists, scholars, artists, and journalists have developed a rich body of knowledge and resistance practices. Organizations such as Coding Rights, FemBloc, Donestech, Proyecto Una, and the Rede Transfeminista de Cuidados Digitales offer digital literacy workshops, publish research and educational materials, and expose online gender violence, surveillance, censorship, and structural inequalities. Journalists like Laura Bates and Patricia Campos Mello have investigated the discourses and dynamics of the manosphere, while data activists such as Patricia Salguero use mapping to make feminicide visible. As in earlier historical moments, individuals and collectives resist the current anti-rights wave marked by intertwined forms of misogyny, racism, homophobia, and nationalism.

What, then, can digital feminist anthropology contribute in this context? Following Haraway, feminist epistemology begins with a political and ethical commitment to producing knowledge in the service of social justice and "for bodies that have a chance to live." Feminist anthropology brings an ethnographic approach grounded in consent, participation, and co-creation, already evident in many of the initiatives described above. Complementing this tradition, critical data studies—and particularly data feminism—challenge dominant data practices by exposing power structures, making labor visible, and centering embodied experience. This perspective resonates strongly with digital feminist anthropology, which examines the practices, discourses, transformations, and lived experiences of an onlife society.

This panel asks: What does digital feminist anthropology entail today? How can it meaningfully engage with current gender discrimination and anti-feminist counterreactions at the core of contemporary digital cultures? What challenges and responsibilities do digital feminist

anthropologists face? What methodological innovations and future agendas emerge from this work?

We welcome abstracts in English and Spanish addressing one or more of the following themes from a feminist anthropological perspective:

• Feminist anthropology of digital practices, artifacts, communities, publics, vernaculars
• Online misogyny, online gender-based violence, hate speech
• Anti-feminism, the manosphere, masculinism, misogynistic communities
• Femtech, robotics, sex toys
• Online sex work, pornography, sexual platforms
• Mediated intimacies, dating apps, social media
• Algorithmic biases, discrimination, symbolic gender-related violence
• Biased content moderation targeting feminist and queer activists, creators of sexual or reproductive content, and sex workers
• Feminist ethnography of digital spaces; digital feminist ethnography
• Participatory feminist methodologies, feminist anthropological research-action