

Htun and Weldon inject a valuable note of realism in their concluding comments addressed to gender justice activists: given that the contemporary dynamics of gender inequality worldwide are formed through the multiple logics of class, status, and doctrinal politics, it is not meaningful to expect large-scale solutions. Local, smaller-scale, incremental actions may instead offer more productive means toward global gender equality.

As a nonspecialist, I found the book's exposition consistently accessible, aided by the authors' lucid delivery. They describe their methodologies, rationales for choosing them, and limitations thereof in great detail, and in a manner I found comprehensible. Aside from the great value of its content, the volume would be an immensely useful tool for teaching research methods to advanced undergraduates and graduate students. Overall, *The Logics of Gender Justice* is a masterful achievement.

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Gender and Digital Culture: Between Irreconcilability and the Datalogical. By Helen Thornham. London and New York: Routledge, 2019. 174 pp. \$140 (hardcover).

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To work out our contemporary inhabitation of and as data, pick up Helen Thornham's *Gender and Digital Culture: Between Irreconcilability and the Datalogical*. There you can renew your awareness of double binds: for example, those that call out just *who* can walk away from them; that *hail* whether resistance is possible and futile both; and that *mobilize* when your personhood as content is fun and brutalized. You will start to notice then how all these depend upon — and have long depended on — the very caring of lived connection and political awareness that now shift and modulate as “datalogical.” Finally, also stir in the details shared in this

marvelous book regarding the conditions of research itself, affecting and effecting what knowledge projects *en-possibilize* when weighted by the impossible. The experience is a laborious one for all of us.

Thornham works very hard in her unusual book to invite into discussion readers from a range of agendas and knowledge communities. It is not her fault that describing, exemplifying, and showing what *the datalogical turn* is good for, beyond an academic situation of an originary set of theorists, is necessarily a rigorously transdisciplinary task. Indeed, this work constitutes an amalgam of social worlds that cannot settle together. In other words, readers of scholarship on this scale will always have to put up with being unsatisfied, to reach beyond their comfort zone of vocabulary and citations, and to handle both the abstract and concrete in *en-possible* ways. And, of course, that is the point and the reward.

Several portals into (or perhaps out of!) the tangled projects are displayed and shared for use in Thornham's book (and her various articles that anticipate it). A pivotal one is the media affect theory community from which the term *datalogical turn* derives. (See, for example, a recent collection of single and coauthored essays gathered around Patricia Clough's [2018] writing that makes a helpful companion to Thornham's projects and citations.) Recall through another portal the gender scholarship that may have been erased or forgotten in waves of debunking feminist critique: the heterogeneous groups of folks who have worked in the area of women and technology since the 1970s, among them cyberfeminist activists mobilizing a multiplicity of political performances of the *virtual*.

Thornham uses and extends sociological approaches (structure/agency), culturally and historically political (digital culture), and industrially designed (software, infrastructure, algorithm) to insist that we share her multitemporal witness across the gender assumptions and disciplines built into a *datalogical anthropocene*. That term and the *digital mundane* are among her activist agencies tracking across and upsetting many givens written into a something *virtual*. Her terms resist the virtual's separation from the real or the actual, yet she still calls out data-related gaps that position women throughout vulnerable, even brutal, predicaments: those double binds.

Three research sites or case studies fund Thornham's theorizing as well as empirically ground it. The UK's Digital by Default Agenda, supported by both coalition and conservative governments (2010–2015 and since), is the context for a practice of workshops and arts organizations in Leeds from which Thornham's first case study emerges. Participants were

all classed as NEET: 'Not in Education, Employment, or Training.' (The Wikipedia informs us that "A NEET or neet is a (not necessarily young) person who is 'Not in Education, Employment, or Training.' The acronym NEET was first used in the United Kingdom, but its use has spread to other countries and regions, including Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and the United States.") The NEET workshop experiences in Leeds ground Thornham's analyses of how data violence is produced through the *experience of being data*, and how the participants' political and critical sophistication and awareness is not sufficient to ameliorate this violence. Being a woman, female, gendered, is simultaneously a pivotal source of vulnerability and oddly the very means of erasing any knowledge of social identities within NEET databases.

The Defence, Uncertainty, Now Media project grounds what Thornham theorizes as practices of accountability and productions of new normativity in the United Kingdom's supposedly gender supportive reformed military. Use of the application Tinder on cell phones, and the texting of sexually explicit material among mates, appears at first to be potentially sex-positive in ostensibly gender-neutral infrastructures. And an individual's experience and intention might be so. However, across the structures of affect that the infrastructures generate, male and female actions are weighted and absorbed with uneven impacts, relatively unintended. Gender is rendered invisible while becoming emergently essential, normative.

A breastfeeding café at a Leeds Children's Center, supported by the local council and National Health Service, accompanying her maternity leave, grounds Thornham's analyses of attuned bodies gathering to self-track feeding metrics on the application Baby Feed. Pixelated bodies show up as fluid ounces, regulating just how mothers and babies are permitted to interact. Doing it is a self-imposed psychological mechanism, while the control fantasies of motherhood are intensified as "care."

Returning again and again to the double binds of a real-virtual opposition, whether mobilized by critique or through infrastructural demands, requires us, says Thornham, to understand whatever this thing digital is as *not* separated by space, screen, or process. Thornham also pays attention to how the very processes she is required to use to produce her analyses are themselves all knotted in double binds in which evidence is recursively created within systems that require it to be something already determined before collection.

Thornham's insights piled up and restated over the course of her book take on an affective power that the details themselves only hint at. And

this affective intensity is in its own way, an effect of the datalogical anthropocene that such research projects must inhabit. And still, they matter.

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Two outstanding transborder/transnational books illustrate the insights that gendered political-economic analysis from a sociologist and an anthropologist can provide to the narrower discipline of political science. Both analyses are based mainly in Oaxaca, a southern Mexican state situated between the states of Guerrero and Chiapas. (The latter state is the gateway from the Central American so-called violent triangle of countries from which people migrate to escape insecurity, poverty, and criminal gangs.) The substance of both books remains as timely today as when the field research was completed.

Wendy A. Vogt wrote *Lives in Transit* after learning and working primarily in one of two faith-based shelters (2008–09) that temporarily