

# EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF FEMINIST MEMES

## Department:

Communication Arts

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## DR. SHANA MACDONALD

Dr. MacDonald and her team “Feminist ThinkTank” are examining several archived collections of feminist media for a comparative analysis of feminist eras to map links between the varied and rich media practices of the time. They hope to combat flattened, anti-feminist tropes that often circulate in the on-going rewriting of feminist histories.

Using a data feminist framework, the project utilizes text and image analysis to (1) determine the prevalence of feminist keywords within a series of collections housed at the Internet Archives and (2) compare their frequency and usage across collections to (3) map which feminist terms are most repeated within web archival records of feminist movements in the last four decades.

The collections include historical scopes such as the Fales Library-Hew York Feminist Art Institute and Guerilla Girls collection, the Sallie Bingham Center for women’s history and culture collection, the Tamiment-Wager-Feminism and Women’s Movements collection, and the Schlesinger Library’s #MeToo Web Archives collection.

Datasets are coded, organised, and visualised to determine overlaps in content, media, and form to un/recover intersectional, queer, trans, and Indigenous feminist media practices to better contextualise these practices within the digital present. Rather than defining how eras of feminist activism differ, the project aims to categorize the ways that these eras overlap in their trajectories and shared solidarities to explore how they inform each other over time.

**Interesting fact:** This project was the first time many of the co-researchers learned how to code!



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