

## **ECREA GENDER AND COMMUNICATION SECTION YEAR REPORT 2016**

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### *1. Section organization*

In 2016, the former management team (Iolanda Tortajada, Frederik Dhaenens, Marco Scarcelli and Cilia Willem as vice-chair ad-interim) approached the end of its second term. In the build-up to the 6<sup>th</sup> ECC, we asked section members whether other teams or members were willing to stand as candidate for the new management team. Since no other team came around, the team formed around current vice-chairs Dr. Marco Scarcelli and Dr. Frederik Dhaenens. Frederik Dhaenens (Ghent University, Belgium) would run as chair of the section. It would be his third and final term in this management team. His work has focused on gender and sexuality in relation to the production and reception of popular film, television and music. Dr. Marco Scarcelli (University of Padova) and Dr. Despina Chronaki (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens; Cyprus University of Technology) would run as vice-chair. Dr. Marco Scarcelli has been vice-chair of the section since 2015. His research deals with youth studies, the connection between sexuality, gender and media, internet studies and digital literacy and he is interested in qualitative and participatory research. Dr. Despina Chronaki would be new to the team. Her current research focuses on gender dynamics, the politics of sexuality and the ethics of the sexual or gendered self.

We organized an election during the business meeting of 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016. We used a secret ballot at the meeting. Absent members had the opportunity to vote by email. The meeting decided unanimously that the proposed management team would become the new management team of the gender and communication section.

We further note that there has been an increase in membership (155 members) but stress that we were also informed during the 6<sup>th</sup> ECC that there may be more members than listed via the website.

### *2. The 6th European Communication Conference*

Frederik Dhaenens was appointed program chair of the gender and communication section. With the help of 19 international scholars/members of the section who kindly agreed to help reviewing the 77 received abstracts, we were able to put together a varied and strong program, which featured 8 slots with approximately half of the received abstracts. Due to a technical issue with the online submission platform, one panel proposal was never brought in for review. Thanks to a cooperative attitude of the local organization team, we were able to find an extra slot for the special panel on ‘Fostering gender equality in and through the media: Feminist approaches to collaborative work.’

### *3. Book proposal*

At the moment, an e-book is being prepared with chapters based on a selection of articles that were presented during the 2015 ECREA symposium “Media (in)visibility: Gender and sexual diversity in European popular media culture”. To prepare the book, the Department of Communication at the Rovira i Virgili University had received a grant to publish an e-book, which we welcomed with open hands. The University is home to both former section management members Iolanda Tortajada and Cilia Willem.

#### *4. Feminist Media Studies: Special Issue*

The section is also involved in the preparation of a special issue for Feminist Media Studies. The topic is ‘Gendered Ageing Bodies in Popular Media Culture’ and the issue will be edited by Iolanda Tortajada, Frederik Dhaenens and Cilia Willem. It explores the interconnections between gender, ageing bodies and popular (media) culture in global societies. Currently, full manuscripts have been submitted and are currently being reviewed by international scholars.

#### *5. Future Plans*

##### + Preparing the Joint ECREA Symposium ‘Sexualities and digital culture in Europe’

In cooperation with ECREA’s digital culture section, we are preparing a two-day symposium in Athens on sexual politics in and around the digital, which means a critical understanding of sexualities in European digital culture. Thereby, focusing on changes in sexual life-worlds, but also continuities; how are certain intimate sexualities valued, while others are stigmatized? How are diverse sexual life-worlds flourishing in the digital, or how are diverse sexual life-worlds protested, controlled, managed or strictly regulated? To answer such questions, this symposium is interested in contributions dealing with processes of power that are currently surrounding the digital and sexualities. Susanna Paasonen kindly agreed to be the keynote speaker. The conference will be held at the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens from 26<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> May. For more information, see: <http://gcecrea.wixsite.com/gendercommunication/symposium-2016-athens>

##### + Preparing an off-event on media, gender and intersectionality

We are also planning to hold a second off-event before the next ECC in 2018 in Lugano. We are thinking of organizing a symposium on media, gender and intersectionality, organized by the gender and communication section. Even though no date and location are fixed yet, we are exploring the possibilities to organize this event in Padova in February or March 2018.

##### + Improving the communication of the G&C Section

We are also thinking about improving the section’s communication. We are trying to compose a small team of members who will manage the internal and external communication of the section. Everyone who wants to take part in this project is very welcome. Some ideas could be to help manage the website and the Facebook page so they become more active. Another idea

concerns a recurring e-mail in which we report on interesting events, new publications, projects, etc.