

Spotlight

Faculty Researcher Profiles

Faculty of Arts - Journalism and Communication

Making Selfies/Making Self Research Project

Snapshot

Katie Warfield is a KPU faculty member in the department of Journalism and Communication at the Surrey Campus. She is the lead researcher of the Making Selfies/ Making Self Research Project, and is a leading Canadian authority on selfies and on-line self-portraiture. Katie is also one of a select number of selfie researchers, around the world who has received ethics approval for research on selfies.

Key Research

Katie Warfield's Making Selfies/ Making Self research focuses on the rising popularity of the "selfie" that is usually broadcast through social media.

Katie's current research is exploring the selfie phenomenon with a combination of feminist, post-structural, and phenomenological theories and methods. She is interested in how selfies are being read as "texts" rather than as a process of self-exploration and a process of constructing one's parallel online and offline identities. Her present focus is on young women and selfies but this fall she hopes to explore different demographic groups including young men, moms, LGBTQ people, and Muslim youth. More broadly Katie is interested in visual culture as it applies to the digital age. With the growing use of visuals online, she advocates that we all need a firm grasp on visual literacy skills to make sense of online visual culture, and to be informed producers of visual culture and communication.

Katie Warfield



In order to accomplish her research,

- Quantitative survey: Katie set-up a public survey online for young women between the ages of 19-30 about the experience of taking selfies.
- She then held one-on-one interviews incorporating photo-voice and photo elicitation exercises where girls narrated what they experienced during the selfie process.
- Later on, Katie alongside Vivienne McMaster held selfie workshops for girls to explore the selfie process, while participating in designed selfie activities around the Surrey campus.

Impact of Research

Katie Warfield is not only challenging the public perception of selfies as a frequent expert contact for radio and news articles, but she is also publishing academic articles in the field of visual digital culture, and she is the first Canadian academic to receive ethics approval from her host university to study selfies.

What's Next?

Katie Warfield's future research plans include:

- In the 6th edition of *Feminist Issues: Race Class & Sexuality*, Katie plans to co-author a chapter on Social Media, girls and selfies alongside Dr. Fiona Whittington-Walsh.
- In Berlin Katie will present at The Image Conference, Oct 2014 (Berlin)
- Her work has been invited as a case study on ethics and methods at the AolR15, Oct 2014 (Bangkok).

Check out Katie Online:

- www.makingselfiesmakingself.com
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aOVIJwy3nVo>