

MPC MAJOR RESEARCH PAPER

“You Go, Girl:” How Facebook and Instagram Impacted the Post-Feminist Construction of
Electric Forest’s Women’s Program

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ABSTRACT

In February of 2016, Electric Forest — a four-day electronic music festival from June 23-26 in Rothbury, Michigan — announced a women’s only program called *Her Forest*. The initiative’s aim was to facilitate feelings of “connection, inspiration, and comfort” (Weiner, 2016) amongst the festival’s female guests. This MRP draws from past research on influence and postfeminism to consider how the Electric Forest brand, as well as its online followers, constructed and discussed Her Forest via Facebook and Instagram. A directed qualitative analysis was applied to 21 of Electric Forest’s Facebook and Instagram posts and 110 associated user comments. The analysis emphasized the powerful impact that social media applications have on the way in which corporate messages are expressed, received, reshaped, supported, and challenged.

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INTRODUCTION

Introduced in 2011, Electric Forest is a four-day electronic music festival that is held annually in Rothbury, Michigan. A joint effort between Madison House Presents and Insomniac Events, the festival strives to create a unique temporary community through initiatives that enable guests to shape the festival experience. These initiatives are referred to as the Plug In Program, which includes The Electric Forces Build Crew (a program that creates employment opportunities for war veterans at the festival); Luminarias (a memorial that honours the deceased loved ones of festival goers); and the Monarch Program (an annual competition in which one guest is crowned “Queen” or “King of the Forest”).

In 2015, Her Forest was added to the Plug In Program. On the Electric Forest website, the project is described as:

a new initiative that considers and builds upon the experience of women at Electric Forest. With a focus on Connection, Inspiration and Comfort, Her Forest is a collaboration between women. All Her Forest projects are intended to create the most supportive and empowering environment possible (Electric Forest, 2016).

The inaugural edition of Her Forest consisted only of a panel discussing women’s issues in music and a survey on how the festival experience could be improved for female guests. Leading up to Electric Forest, there was little discussion of Her Forest on social media (other than a couple posts stating that the project was still in its development stage). In 2016, however, the program expanded its efforts both online and offline by frequently publishing social media content and introducing four new offerings: “Women’s Group Camp” (a camp site exclusively for women), “Women’s Circle” (an exercise to help women better connect), “Forest Women Leaders Meet and Greet” (an opportunity for female festival goers to meet the women who organize the festival) and “Women: Game Changers in Creativity Panel” (a live discussion between female leaders in

creative industries). Leading up to the 2016 festival, Electric Forest primarily communicated about the initiative via their Facebook and Instagram channels. Through these platforms, they gradually announced the new additions to the program; shared links to media publications that discussed the initiative; and introduced their social media followers to key individuals involved in the program, such as the Women's Group Camp leader, Edith Johnson.

In the last year, VICE Media has published several stories that highlight the increasing number of women reporting cases of sexual harassment at music festivals worldwide. This includes "What the 'Eat Sleep Rape Repeat' Shirt Says About Rape Culture at Music Festivals" (Lhooq, 2015); "There's a Rape Problem at Music Festivals and Nobody Seems to Care" (Lloyd, 2015); and "Can Female-Only Campgrounds Stop Sexual Harassment at Music Festivals" (Weiner, 2016). The latter includes an interview with Carrie Lombardi, Electric Forest's Director of Communications. In the story, Lombardi asserts that Her Forest "was born not from any concerns about safety as much as wanting to nurture opportunities for connection and inspiration" (Weiner, 2016). Despite her claim, Her Forest has been repeatedly labelled a "safe space" by both fans of the festival and media publications alike.

This paper not only analyzes how Electric Forest used Facebook and Instagram to communicate Her Forest to its community, but also considers how Electric Forest's Facebook and Instagram followers shaped the discussion of the program as the company continued to promote the initiative. In order to evaluate this topic, I analyzed ten social media posts about Her Forest, which were published to the brand's Facebook and Instagram pages. I explored this content using theoretical frameworks on influence and post-feminism. Through these concepts, I could identify the persuasive tactics that the brand was using to promote Her Forest, as well as the way in which the company was constructing the female experience at their festival. To better understand the

way in which the brand's Facebook and Instagram followers perceived and discussed the initiative, I also examined the first ten user comments to appear beneath each of the brand's posts about Her Forest. By considering these messages through the same post-feminist lens that was used to analyze Electric Forest's social media posts, I could also identify the ways in which the festival's online followers perceived the brand's messaging about Her Forest.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

This MRP combines research from several distinct disciplines, which have been grouped into four categories. First, *Social Media and User-Brand Relations* will consider how social media applications, particularly Facebook and Instagram, have evolved the communication practices between brands and consumers. Next, *Social Media and Robert Cialdini's Six Principles of Influence* will explore how a classic persuasion theory has been reshaped and applied to digital communication practices in recent years. *Post-feminism in Popular Culture* will explain how post-feminist ideologies and archetypes are constructed in mass media texts. Finally, *Music Festivals and the Female Festival Experience* will not only describe past academic research on music festivals, but also how the concepts have been explored in relation to the female experience.

Social Media and User-Brand Relations

Social media have changed the way in which brands converse with its supporters, creating new opportunities for two-way communication between the brand and its consumers. According to Ho and Wang (2015), "social networks afford companies the possibility of mapping social connections to expand relationships and spread information" (p.3). Facebook and Instagram are two of the most commonly used social applications for facilitating brand-user interactions. Of all the social media platforms Facebook, "is the most popular and claims to have attracted over 751

million active monthly users (as of March 2013) since starting in February 2004” (Ho & Wang, 2015, p. 3). Additionally, more than half of all Internet users ages 18-29 are currently on Instagram (Duggan, Ellison, Lampe, Lanhart, & Madden, 2015) .

Due to the prevalence of Facebook, Instagram, and other social media applications, brands have begun to focus their efforts on facilitating *customer engagement* — “a psychological state reflecting customers’ interactive, co-creative experiences with a firm, which highlights the active role of the consumer” (De Vries & Carlson, 2014, p. 496). The possibilities for *customer engagement* are particularly heightened on Facebook and Instagram. On both applications, brands can create company pages or profiles that permit users to interact not only with the brand, but also with other users about the brand. Consequently, on Facebook and Instagram, users have the power to shape corporate messaging by conversing with and about the company on their social media pages.

Customer engagement on social media can be both beneficial and dangerous. On one hand, the increased capacity for brand-user interactions can provide a company with new insights on how consumers are perceiving the brand and its messaging (Hudson & Hudson, 2013). Yet, *consumer engagement* also permits users to speak negatively and publicly to and about the brand. Ramsay (2010) writes that a brand’s followers “increasingly have the power to make their voice heard... they can play their part in making or breaking a brand through word of mouth” (p. 257).

For music festival brands, effective *customer engagement* is particularly important when consumers are at the *evaluation stage* — the point at which “consumers add or subtract brands as they consider what they want” (Hudson & Hudson, 2013, p. 210). In a study on how music festival brands engage with consumers through social media, it was discovered that prospective festival goers are regularly turning to user-generated content like social media comments to learn

more about a festival (Hudson & Hudson, 2013). Social media also helps to foster an intimate connection between the festival and the brand, which has a profound influence on consumer behaviour (Hudson, Roth, Madden & Hudson, 2015). In a case study that explored the effects of social media on the emotions of music festival attendees, it was found that “interacting with the brand using social media had a direct effect on emotional attachment to the festival” (74, Hudson et al., 2015).

Social Media and Robert Cialdini's Six Principles of Influence

Cialdini's (1984) *six principles of influence* describe the factors that cause people to comply with requests: “reciprocity, consistency, social proof, liking, authority, and scarcity” (Rothschild, 2014, p. 254). Originally, the principles were applied to face-to-face interactions, such as when a salesperson convinces a customer to buy his or her product (Cialdini, 1984). Yet, in recent years, scholars have considered how the tactics appear in online contexts.

The *principle of authority* argues that humans are trained to trust and obey those in positions of power, “because they are perceived as experts” (Guadagno & Cialdini, 2005, p.104). Furthermore, Rothschild (2014) writes that people are “willing to suspend rational and reasonable judgment when faced with a request by an authoritative figure” (p. 266). In 2001, Gugen and Jacob considered the extent to which an individual's status affects online compliance. In their study, students were sent an online request to participate in a survey from either a professor or a fellow classmate. Almost all of the students responded to the request from the teacher, while only 65% responded to the peer. Consequently, it was proven that “status does appear to serve as a meaningful social category in cyberspace and can translate into higher compliance” (Guadagno & Cialdini, 2005, 106).

Additionally, the *principle of consistency* argues that individuals appreciate when an organization demonstrates characteristics such as “logic, rationality, stability, and honesty” (Rothschild, 2014). According to Rothschild (2014), *consistency* is a response to “our nearly obsessive desire to be (and to appear) consistent with what we have already done” (p. 259). He states that, “once we have made up our minds — taken a stand, made a commitment to some issue — we don’t have to think hard about it again when bombarded by another or similar request” (p. 260). When the effect of the *principle of consistency* was first demonstrated in online contexts, it was described as a *foot-in-the-door* technique. The term describes an individual’s willingness to comply to a large request, having previously complied with smaller requests from the same agent. For instance, in a study that considered the extent to which users engage with a particular website, it was proven that those who participated in a short survey before exploring the rest of the site spent more time exploring the other aspects of the site than those who did not complete the questionnaire (Gugen & Jacob, 2001). As of 2005, *authority* and *consistency* were the only two principles to be applied to digital communication practices (Guadagno & Cialdini, 2005).

Two more of Cialdini’s principles were applied to digital spaces in 2013 — *liking* and *social proof* (Guadagno, Muscanell, Rice & Roberts). *Liking* argues that audiences are more likely to comply to a request from an organization or individual that they are fond of. Those who are physically attractive, similar to the audience, complementary, or familiar are the most influential (Rothschild, 2014). The effectiveness of these four characteristics is dependent on what the influencer is trying to achieve. For instance, Rothschild (2014) states that “attractive people are more persuasive both in terms of getting what they request and changing others’ attitudes” (p. 264); while friendly-looking similar others help an influencer to “establish credibility, build trust, and promote engagement” (Rothschild, 2014, p. 265). To contrast, *social*

proof proposes that people are prone to peer pressure and will copy the action of similar others when they are uncertain of how to behave (Rothschild, 2014). Furthermore, an individual is more likely to assume that a behaviour is appropriate when he or she sees many others behaving in the same fashion (Rothschild, 2014). While Guadagno et al. argued that *social proof*, but not *liking*, was an effective mode of influence in online communication, Rothschild later challenged this stance, applying all six of the principles to a novelist who used his public social media page to influence followers to buy his book.

To illustrate, *consistency* was identified when the author asked his audience to make “voluntary commitments,” such as “write a brief book review on Amazon,” or “help spread the word about the book in any way” (Rothschild, 2014, p. 261). *Authority* appeared when expertise or superiority was explicitly stated or made obvious (ex. an “about me” section listing professional and/or academic achievements) (Rothschild, 2014). *Social proof* was exemplified when the author publicly acknowledged users who had already “liked” or supported the page (Rothschild, 2014, p. 262). *Liking* was associated with the author’s featured photos, in which he was well-groomed and smiling (Rothschild, 2014).

The principles of *reciprocity* and *scarcity* were also considered in Rothschild’s study. Rothschild connects *reciprocity* to gift giving, which he says is an effective mode of persuasion because people feel in-debt, and consequently, obligated to return a favour. Cialdini considers these offerings to be a way in which influencers can comfortably ask audiences to do something in return at a later time (Rothschild, 2014). In Rothschild’s work, *reciprocity* appeared in the form of an giveaway: users received a free e-book when they subscribed to the fan page (Rothschild, 2014). In comparison, of *scarcity*, Rothschild argues that individuals are more concerned with the thought of missing out on an experience than they are with how an experience might benefit them

(Rothschild, 2014). On the novelist's fan page, messages that expressed a limitation on something (ex. "time is running out!") were indicative of the *principle of scarcity* (Rothschild, 2014).

In Rothschild's work, the *principles of influence* are identified in both the visual and textual aspects of digital communication. For instance, he explains that when the subject of an image is wearing a certain uniform (ex. a suit and tie), the *principle of authority* appears as image, but when a person's position of power is described in words (ex. "CEO"), it appears as text.

To expand on the work of Rothschild, this MRP will similarly apply all six of Cialdini's *principles of influence* to both the visual and textual aspects of Electric Forest's Facebook and Instagram messages. This will help to determine the way in which the brand attempted to convince its followers to support and participate in the Her Forest experience.

Post-feminism in Popular Culture

Angela McRobbie (2004) defines *post-feminism* as "an active process by which feminist gains of the 1970's and 80's come to be undermined" (p. 25). *Post-feminism* is associated with freedom and choice, while *feminism* is linked to ideas of women being restricted by their obligations to the work force. In addition, *post-feminism* is closely related to youthfulness and female sociality, while feminism is tied to ideas of individualism and maturity (Winch, 2013). According to Projansky (2007), this explains why there is a "cultural obsession with girlhood" in recent years. She states that the fixation is "a response to post-feminism, a kind of 'backlash' against the particular 1980's post-feminist woman who is unhappy with how career has displaced family or who has returned to a rather boring neo-traditionalism" (p. 894). This explains why, in recent years, phrases like "girl power" and "you go girl" appear in commercial messages that are tailored to adult women (Projansky, 2007).

There is ample research on how *post-femininity* is represented in mass media. Tasker and Negra (2007) use the 2004 children's romantic-comedy *13 Going on 30* to identify the way in which post-feminist characters are distinguished from feminist characters in popular culture. In the film, Jenna, the protagonist, and Lucy, the antagonist, are depicted as childhood best friends who are now in their thirties and working for the same women's magazine. When they both pitch a new direction for the magazine to their colleagues, Jenna is applauded for the youthful tone of her presentation, which is primarily coloured pink and celebrates the ritual of high school graduation. Meanwhile, Lucy's concept, which is titled "fashion suicide" and features images of sickly-looking women in all-black clothing, is rejected by her co-workers (Tasker & Negra, 2007). Consequently, Tasker and Negra explain that "the post-feminist heroine is vital, youthful, and playful while her opposite number, the 'bad' female professional, is repressive, deceptive and deadly" (Tasker & Negra, 2007, p. 9).

Moving on, girlfriend culture is another theme that is commonly explored in contemporary texts with post-feminist characters. Winch (2013) states that in popular texts, friendships are often constructed as "complex, knotty, and ambivalent," (p. 5). Girlfriends tend to unite over a desire to compete with, or compare themselves to, one another (with an emphasis on the critique of each other's bodies). Winch draws from the 2004 teen comedy *Mean Girls* to emphasize the aggressive, superficial, and inauthentic nature of post-feminist female sociality. The film depicts a teenaged female friend group who are fixated on their collective appearance. They regulate the way they look as a group by designating certain wardrobe choices to specific days of the week (eg. wearing pink clothes on Wednesdays). Furthermore, when there is conflict, one girl sabotages another by tricking her into eating food that causes weight gain. Thus, *Mean Girls* is an example

of how “girlfriend media both reproduce these social pleasures of belonging to an intimate group, while also holding up the female body for analysis and scrutiny” (Winch, 2013, p. 9).

Moreover, post-feminist scholars often relate modern girls to one of two character types: *can-do* and *at-risk*. The labels were originally coined by Harris who believes that modern girls are frequently considered to be either:

endangered by the world around them (including the proliferation of choices in part provided by feminism and postfeminism) and their personal choices within this context or they are able to take control of this new and rapidly changing environment and eschew unhealthy desires and impulses in order to become idealized citizen subjects. (Projansky, 2007, p. 47)

According to Harris (2004), in the contemporary age, women and girls tend to be associated with either success or failure. *Can-do girls* are defined as happy, confident, motivated, and capable adolescents who are responsible for the success they have achieved in their short lifetimes, while *at-risk girls* are described as victims of poor socioeconomic conditions. *Can-do* girls are often characterized by their ability to succeed in either school or the workforce, adapt to a “glamorous consumer lifestyle,” and delay motherhood until later in life, (Harris, 2004). Yet, *at-risk* girls are connected to “juvenile delinquency, nihilism, and anti-social attitudes” (Harris, 2004, p. 24).

In 2007, Projansky applied the *can-do* and *at-risk* labels to *Time* and *Newsweek* magazine covers that featured young women and girls. Covers in which girls posed passively and looked directly into the camera were identified as *at-risk*, while images of girls making positive societal contributions, such as teaching science to other children, were considered *can-do*. Furthermore, magazine covers that depicted an *at-risk* girl were associated with stories of hardships that discussed issues like anorexia or poverty. Yet, *can-do* magazine covers featured stories about

successful and triumphant young women, such as accomplished or emerging female athletes (Projansky, 2007).

Projansky argues that while the magazine covers with *at-risk girls* evoked emotive audience responses, the *can-do* covers did not. She claims that images of *at-risk* girls “challenge the viewer to take [the subjects] seriously, take action, or reflect on his or her own responsibility for them or the social issues they represent” (Projansky, 2007, p. 54). Furthermore, the disadvantaged girls can cause feelings of anxiety amongst the viewing audience (Projansky, 2007). In comparison, the author states that a *can-do* girl “does not seem to ask anything of the viewer. Instead, it can be read to function as a promise that everything is going well in these girl’s lives” (Projansky, 2007, p. 58).

While many scholars have considered how post-feminism is represented in traditional popular culture, such as print media, film, and television, few have applied these concepts to digital forms of mass communication. The exception is Dobson (2015), who explores how the prevalence of social media technologies are contributing to more sexualized constructions of young women and girls. She argues that on social media (which permits users to present themselves in a way that may stray from their authentic self), many young women and girls are electing to present provocative representations of self, such as through “selfies” (Dobson, 2015). This phenomenon has led to the “sexualization of culture,” in which women and girls are normalizing extreme female sexuality through their user-generated content and self-presentation (Dobson, 2015).

While Dobson’s work considers how female social media users are contributing to sexualized constructions of modern woman and girlhood, this MRP draws from the post-feminist concepts applied to traditional mass media texts (ex. Winch and Projansky) to explore how a

brand and its users used Facebook and Instagram to create non-sexualized constructions of post-feminism.

Music Festivals and the Female Experience

There is a significant amount of scholarly work on the music festival experience. Paleo, Wijnberg and Nachoem (2006) define “music festivals” as “an organization whose activity results in an event, consisting of two or more live music performances, presented in such a way that it can be identified and valued as a whole by audiences of aural goods” (p. 53). With more than 100 musical acts performing in an enclosed, uniquely decorated venue over the course of one weekend, Electric Forest exemplifies this concept. Paleo, Winberg and Nachoem (2006) developed a classification system to help identify defining aspects of a music festival. For instance, *range* refers to the diversity of a music festival’s guests (ex. socioeconomic backgrounds, ethnicity, gender). Electric Forest is indicative of a *narrow-range* festival (Paleo et al., 2006). The event primarily attracts a balance of male and female North American twentysomethings who are typically white and in driving distance from the venue. Music festivals are also distinguished by their *degrees of innovativeness* — whether a festival is choosing to present art and culture that is already well-established in the media, or new musical experiences that have yet to attract much attention (Paleo, et al., 2006). Electric Forest has a high degree of innovativeness. Each year, its musical lineup is a unique combination of jam bands and electronic music acts. Few of the artists are associated with mainstream culture, and many are emerging talent that play niche styles of music. Furthermore, the festival strives to create an anomalous, temporary community through curated art installations, and other non-musical programming (i.e. the Plug- In program).

Previous research has typically connected music festivals to ideas on commercialization or community. For instance, Cummings (2011) examined how concert attendees perceive corporate-sponsored music festivals in a way that strays from perceptions of independently run events. Meanwhile, Wilks (2010) explores the ways in which music festivals increase the social capital between the guests in attendance. For example, she argues that when music festivals attract patrons from a variety of demographics, it can increase cross-cultural empathy (Wilks, 2010).

Fewer studies have explored the festival experience through a post-feminist or feminist lens. In 2011, Browne considered how the now defunct Michigan Womyn's music festival functioned as a temporary *lesbian separatist* space exclusively for female-born homosexual women. According to Browne, the festival embodied this concept through both its exclusion of straight and transgender men, as well as advocacy for lesbianism and feminism (2011). While Browne's research on *separatism* focuses on the female experience during the physical event, this MRP will apply her work to the way in which Electric Forest's women's initiative was discussed on Facebook and Instagram.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To not only expand on the past research surrounding digital forms of brand-consumer communication, influence, post-feminism, and the female music festival experience, but also apply these concepts to the social media constructions of Electric Forest's Her Forest program, the following questions were considered:

RQ1: In what ways did Electric Forest influence its community to support and participate in the Her Forest experience?

RQ2: What does Electric Forest's messaging suggest about the female experience at the festival?

RQ3. In what ways did Electric Forest’s Facebook and Instagram users shape the discussion of Her Forest?

METHODS

This portion of the MRP will describe the creation and implementation of the process that was developed to examine the brand-user interactions on Electric Forest’s Facebook and Instagram pages.

Qualitative Content Analysis

A *directed qualitative content analysis* was conducted to examine content that Electric Forest, as well as its followers, shared on the brand’s Facebook and Instagram pages. Hsieh and Shannon (2005) note that, “the goal of a directed approach to content analysis is to validate or extend conceptually a theoretical framework or theory” (p. 1281). Through this mode of analysis, pre-existing theories and research were used to shape my coding scheme. This allowed me to better connect three distinct disciplines that have already been researched extensively — *social media* (De Vries and Carlson, 2014), *principles of influence* (Rothschild, 2014) and *post-feminism* (Projansky, 2007) — when exploring not only the brand’s, but also the users’ Facebook and Instagram discussions.

To contrast, a *conventional content analysis* is “usually appropriate when existing theory or research literature on a phenomenon is limited” (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005, p. 1275). This analysis, which strictly implements an emergent coding system, would have been less effective than the selected *directed content analysis*. Through pre-existing scholarly work on my areas of research, the themes and cues that would best guide the analysis were identified in advance.

Data Collection

Although the Electric Forest brand shares social media content across five platforms — Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, and YouTube — only content from Facebook and Instagram were considered for this study. This is because the *comments* feature on these platforms provide a space in which multiple community members can speak directly to one another beneath a post that was issued by the brand. In this scenario, the brand not only engages directly with its brand community, but also leads the conversation with their initial posts. There is also a *comments* section on the brand's YouTube channel, but the platform lacked any content relating to the Her Forest program at the time of this study. I only considered platforms that shared content about Her Forest, since the program is the main focus of my MRP. Furthermore, Hsu, Wang, Chih, and Lin (2015) explain that the fan pages on Instagram and Facebook are “initiated by brands, firms or individuals to release news, interact with fans, and gather their fans together” (p. 283). When the festival communicates through these pages, they are speaking directly to the Electric Forest community. I chose to collect the brand-user interactions that took place on the official Electric Forest Facebook and Instagram pages not only because of their popularity amongst young adults (Duggan et al., 2015), but also because they are a familiar and useful gathering spot for the members of the festival's followers.

Between July 9, 2015, (when Her Forest was first announced), and March 16, 2016 (when the final Her Forest initiative for the 2016 edition of the festival was revealed), Electric Forest published 11 posts about the project to their Facebook and Instagram pages. Only two out of the 11 Her Forest-related posts I examined discuss the 2015 edition of the program. Although this MRP primarily explores the 2016 edition of Her Forest, these posts were important to include in the study as they still contributed to the way in which Her Forest was constructed online. I

gathered all 11 posts about Her Forest by taking screenshots of the content, which I stored in a folder on my computer. In a journal, I first recorded basic, contextual information about the post, such as the date it was published and a brief description of the textual message. By noting the date, I was able to consider how the brand's messaging evolved as the company moved forward in their efforts to communicate the project. I did not report the images attached to each post at this stage. The journal I created to record the contextual information is depicted in Table A1 in Appendix 1.

Next, in a separate journal, I documented basic information about the images associated with each of the Her Forest posts. The visual and textual messages were explored separately, since the images did not necessarily match what was being discussed in the text (ex. a discussion of the Women's Group Camp did not include an image of females camping, but rather an image of two women holding hands and dancing, FBHF021816). The descriptions of the images are presented in Table A2 in Appendix 2.

To determine whether the brand changed the way that it typically communicates with its followers when promoting Her Forest, I also gathered and coded 10 Facebook and Instagram posts that were unrelated to the program. The posts, which I refer to as "non-Her Forest posts," were collected in the same way as the Her Forest content. I took screenshots of the content and then stored the images on my computer. I collected posts that were published between June 29, 2015 (when the 2016 edition of the festival was first announced) and March 16, 2016 (when the final facet of the Her Forest program, the Women's Circle, was revealed). The 10 posts that I collected were picked at random, but I did not pick posts that discussed a particular topic more than once (ex. the artist line-up or the Electric Forces program). This helped to ensure that the diverse range of messages that Electric Forest shared on its Facebook and Instagram pages were

well-represented in my study. Again, I recorded and labelled the textual information of the post separately from the associated images or videos. The way in which I gathered and documented the textual information of the non-Her Forest posts is depicted in Table A3 in Appendix 3.

Like the Her Forest posts, the videos and photos associated with each non-Her Forest Facebook and Instagram post were recorded in a separate journal. When documenting videos, I recorded each scene separately since the videos were typically montage-style, thus communicating different messages, themes, and stories. Table A4 in “Appendix 4” depicts the journal used to describe the non-Her Forest images.

In order to better understand how user comments were shaping the Her Forest discussion, I also took screenshots of the first 10 user responses to appear beneath the brand’s original Facebook and Instagram posts about Her Forest. I recorded contextual information about each comment, such as the date and a brief description of what was being discussed. Comments lacking any sort of textual message (i.e. if it was just an emoji, or if the user simply tagged a friend) were not included. Similarly, I did not include posts that were spam or unrelated to the program (eg. a post selling tickets to the festival).

Since this MRP is mainly concerned with the follower’s perception of Her Forest, I did not gather user comments that appeared below the posts about other facets of the festival. In total, I collected 110 user comments. On Instagram, comments appear in chronological order and the oldest comment appears at the top. On Facebook, however, users have the option of organizing the comments section by either relevancy (i.e. the posts with the most user engagement are shown first) or date. I elected to collect these comments according to relevancy since this is Facebook’s default setting; as such, users are more likely to observe the messages in this order. An example

of the journal I used to record the contextual information on the user comments is depicted in Table A5 in “Appendix 5.”

DATA ANALYSIS

This section of the MRP will describe the three-part analysis that was guided by the aforementioned research questions.

Phase 1: Identifying the Principles of Influence

During Phase 1 of the data analysis, I used Cialdini’s *six principles of influence* as the theoretical framework for identifying the persuasive techniques that appeared in the festival’s promotion of Her Forest. To determine what these principles looked like, I borrowed from the cues created by Rothschild (2014) in his study on influence in online contexts. Like Rothschild, I simultaneously analyzed both image and text. More than one principle of influence could be associated with a single post, since several topics were often addressed in a single message. For instance, in a Facebook post, the brand communicated many of the 2016 updates to Her Forest while implementing multiple *principles of influence* (FBHF031616). I added up the total number of times that Cialdini’s principles appeared in both the images and text and used the sum to help determine the percentage of times that each principle was identified. The codebook I developed to analyze the data through the lens of Cialdini’s *principles of influence* can be found in Table A6 in “Appendix 6.”

Specific cues in both the images and text helped to identify the appearance of each principle. Firstly, *the principle of reciprocity* (PR) was identified in messages that positioned an aspect of the festival as a gift or a benefit. In the textual messages, the code appeared when the program’s activities were described as an “offering” or a “chance” (ex. “Forest HQ is proud to present the first offering for the 2016 #HerForest program: The Women's Group Camp!”

FBNHF021216). In the visual messages, PR was associated with objects or actions that were framed as presents. This included depictions of an envelope with the 2016 artist line-up inside (FBNHF021216) and healthy food options for guests to consume at the festival (FBNHF040816)



Figure 1: Artist line-up framed as gift; identified as PR (FBNHF021216)

The *principle of consistency* (PC) was identified in Facebook or Instagram posts that encouraged the viewing audience to make some sort of commitment to the company or the festival. This principle was only identified in textual messages and appeared in two ways: requests for Electric Forest’s Facebook or Instagram followers to make a contribution to the festival experience (ex. “please help us to reveal this year’s line-up with the hashtag #eflineupreveal,” FBNHF020416); or calls-to-action that encouraged the followers to further engage with the brand and its digital content (ex. “learn more in the Plug In Program section of ElectricForestFestival.com!” FBNHF071415).

Messages were categorized as *principle of social proof* (PSP) when they communicated the behaviours or beliefs of Electric Forest affiliates who resonate with the viewing audience (eg. past festival goers or media publications who have covered the festival). Images were coded as PSP when they depicted festival goers partaking in appealing festival activities. The subjects in the photo appear to be representative of the typical demographic of people who come to Electric

Forest: primarily white, young adults dressed in whimsical festival attire. Textual messages were identified as PSP when the message described an Electric Forest affiliate's attitude towards the brand or behaviour at the festival (eg. a quote from a THUMP article that emphasizes how Her Forest enhances feelings of community, FBHF021816).

Moving on, *the principle of liking* (PL) was identified in visual or textual messages that either referenced an appealing person or flattered the audiences. Textual messages were coded as PL when there was mention of a well-known organization or individual (eg. "Thank you to American Music & Sound," FBHF061815), or an expression of appreciation for the audience (eg. "thank you for all the enthusiasm and support as Her Forest expands," INHF031616-3). Similarly, images were coded as PL when they depicted a "likeable" person (i.e. someone who is attractive, similar, familiar, or complementary, Rothschild, 2014). This included images of a well-known DJ or a conventionally beautiful woman. Some images, particularly those of festival goers, were reflective of both PSP and PL (ex. the subject was attractive, but also partaking in an activity that would appeal to the viewing audience). When this happened, the subject's action, and not their identity, took precedence and these images were coded as PSP.

Facebook and Instagram posts were coded as the *principle of authority* (PA) when there was a depiction or mention of a person in a position of power at the festival. In the textual messages, PA was identified when an influential person or organization was either described in the message (eg. "Lisa Holland, Plug In Program Director," FBNHF071415) or identified as the author of the post (eg. "HQ invites you to Plug In," FBNHF071415). Visual messages were coded as PA when the subject in the image was presented as powerful or authoritative (eg. a man dressed in army clothes at the festival, which implies he is a war veteran with the Electric Forces Build Crew, INNHF11115).

Finally, *the principle of scarcity* (PS) was only identified in textual messages describing a limitation to a particular aspect of the festival, such as a certain amount of time left to complete a task (eg. “applications close on Monday at midnight” INNHF031916) or a restriction on the amount of people who could participate in a given activity.

Phases 2 and 3: Constructing the Female Festival Experience

During phases 2 and 3 of the analysis, I considered what both Electric Forest and its online followers were suggesting about the female festival experience through the Facebook and Instagram posts, as well as the associated user comments. Using past research on constructions of post-feminist girls in traditional mass media texts as a reference, I determined four themes to look for in the textual messages of the brand’s Facebook and Instagram posts; the associated images; and the user comments that appeared beneath them: The codes — AT-RISK, CAN-DO, SISTERHOOD and YOUTHFULNESS — are defined in Table A7 in “Appendix 7.” The way in which these themes appeared in the data is described below.

CAN-DO: Any data that presented women at the festival as a capable, thriving, and impactful population were coded as CAN-DO. The textual components of the Facebook and Instagram messages were labelled as CAN-DO when they included the use of motivational language (ex. “inspire” or “important”); descriptions of women in influential roles at the festival, (ex. “women who work behind the scenes,” FBHF031616); or a way in which female festival goers could positively impact the Electric Forest experience (eg. “what Her Forest becomes will ultimately be determined by the community itself,” FBHF021816). Similarly, images were labelled as CAN-DO when they depicted women in important roles at the festival (ex. “Lia Holland, Plug-in Program Director,” FBNHF071415), or women participating in activities that have positive implications on the festival experience (eg. an on-stage performance). Lastly, user

comments were coded as CAN-DO when the discussion was about how females can make meaningful contributions, or take on influential roles, at the festival. User messages that contained liberating words such as “power,” “strength,” and “success” were also coded as CAN-DO.

AT-RISK: Any data that addressed how music festivals can compromise a woman’s level of comfort were coded as AT-RISK. In the text of the Her Forest posts, AT-RISK was coded when the message made reference to how the festival experience might jeopardize a woman’s comfort (e.g. “The Women’s Group Camp is a space intended for women who are camping alone,” FBHF021216); or the word “safe space” was used in the description. Moreover, images were coded as AT-RISK when they featured women in a passive pose, staring directly into the camera. Although many of the women in these images were smiling, they were still counted as AT-RISK since the woman or women’s passive position was central to the image.

Although most images that featured more than one woman were coded as SISTERHOOD, one image of two women (INHF31616-2) was coded as AT-RISK. This was because of both the subjects’ passive positioning and their lack of interaction. In this photo, the women do not touch or acknowledge each other and hide timidly behind a tree. Finally, like the Her Forest text, the theme of AT-RISK was identified in user messages containing language such as “safety,” “security,” “safe space,” or “comfort.” Other user comments that were coded as AT-RISK included personal stories that described how a woman’s comfort was jeopardized at a past music festival, or concerns about the reported increase of sexual assault against women at these events.

YOUTHFULNESS: This code was included to account for any data relating to Projansky’s assertion that grown-up post-feminist women can be characterized by the way in which they appropriate girl culture. Both the textual Her Forest posts and the user comments were coded as YOUTHFULNESS when the post implied that the festival experience can facilitate feelings of

girlhood or playfulness for female guests. I looked for specific keywords that are often used to describe these carefree child-like experiences, such as “fun,” “play,” “explore,” and “entertain.” In the Her Forest images, the theme of YOUTHFULNESS was identified in depictions of a woman or women engaging in an activity that seemed playful and/or girlish. Women in these photos were typically laughing, making silly poses (eg. sticking their tongues out), or playing with some sort of toy (eg. blowing bubbles). Yet, not all images of women playing or having fun were coded as YOUTHFULNESS. For instance, when a woman was smiling or laughing while making some sort of contribution to the festival community (eg. playing an instrument or creating art for the festival), this was coded as CAN-DO and not YOUTHFULNESS. Additionally, some images depicted more than one woman — but no men — partaking in a playful activity at the festival. These instances were coded as SISTERHOOD, since the female subjects were collectively engaging in the activity.

SISTERHOOD: Any data that demonstrated some aspect of female sociality — another distinguishing factor of post-feminism (Winch, 2013) — were categorized as SISTERHOOD. In both the textual Facebook and Instagram posts, as well as user comments, the code appeared in messages containing words such as “connect,” “sisterhood,” “sharing,” “community” and “support.” A user message that described Her Forest as a “sorority” was also coded as such. Likewise, images that depicted women collectively dancing or exploring the festival grounds were coded as SISTERHOOD.

Phase 2: Electric Forest’s Construction of the Female Festival Experience

In Phase 2 of the analysis, I applied the post-feminist themes to both the Her Forest and non-Her Forest posts. Textual and visual messages were considered separately, since the photos did not necessarily reflect what was being said in the message (eg. an image about the Women’s

circle featured an image of a laughing woman with little context, INHF0316164). The textual messages of the Her Forest posts were compared to the textual messages of the non-Her Forest posts. Several messages incorporated more than one theme within a single post. The themes emerged a total of 15 times in the Her Forest posts and 0 times in the non-Her Forest posts. The number of times that each theme appeared in the textual component of the posts is broken down in Table 1.

Table 1: Postfeminist Themes in Electric Forest's Textual Messages

Theme	Her Forest n=15	Non-Her Forest n=0
CAN-DO	26% (4)	0% (0)
AT-RISK	20% (3)	0% (0)
YOUTHFULNESS	13.3% (2)	0% (0)
SISTERHOOD	40% (6)	0% (0)

After analyzing the text, I then considered how the four post-feminist themes could be applied to the photos and videos that appeared in the Facebook and Instagram posts. I again compared the visual representations of women in the Her Forest posts to the visual representations of women in the non-Her Forest posts. Since some content included several distinct portrayals of women (eg. a collage of three separate photos, or a video with multiple unrelated scenes), some posts were coded multiple times.

Through my analysis, I identified 11 representations of women in the Her Forest posts, and 21 representations of women in the non-Her Forest posts. The number of times that each code appeared in the images is broken down in Table 2.

Table 2: Postfeminist Themes in Electric Forest’s Visual Messages

Theme	Her Forest n=11	Non-Her Forest n=21
CAN-DO	9% (1)	47.6% (10)
AT-RISK	54.5% (6)	9.5% (2)
YOUTHFULNESS	9% (1)	23.8% (5)
SISTERHOOD	27% (3)	19% (4)

Phase 3: User Constructions of Female Festival Experience

In Phase 3 of the analysis, I considered how the user responses to Electric Forest’s Facebook and Instagram posts contributed to the discussion of Her Forest and the construction of the female festival experience. To determine the general attitudes that the users felt towards each of the Her Forest posts, I first conducted a general sentiment analysis on each of the message threads. All 110 messages were categorized as either positive, negative or neutral. The total amount of messages that exemplified each tone appeared is depicted in Table 3.

Table 3: General Sentiment Analysis of User Comments

Post ID	Positive n=110	Negative n=110	Neutral n=110
Total	79	7	25

Two additional themes that did not appear in Electric Forest’s messaging were applied to the user comments: SEPARATISM and REACTION. A description of the two themes, as well as the number of times they appeared in the user comments, is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: New Themes that Emerged in User Comments

Theme	Description	Example	# of Times Appeared n=110
SEPARATISM	The message suggests that the festival facilitates an experience that does not include men.	“One day every forest will be ‘her forest’ and we won't need the separation.” (FBHF021216)	11.8% (13)
REACTION	The message expresses an attitude towards Her Forest that does not relate to post-feminism.	“that's so cool” (INHF021216)	43.6% (48)

To help me determine the way in which SEPARATISM appeared in the text, I relied on Browne's (2011) work on separatism at the Michigan Womyn's music festival. Throughout the user comments, the theme was identified in messages that defined Her Forest by its exclusion of men. These messages were often part of an argument between two or more users, who used the comments section to challenge each other's opinions on whether separatism should exist at the festival. Commenters in support of the separatism often agreed that there was a true need for this sort of initiative at the festival, while those who rejected the initiative regularly felt it was unfair to have a gender-specific option for only women and not men. Other protestors expressed the belief that facilitating a gender divide was harmful to the festival's typically inclusive nature. Comments that mocked the initiative by implementing the hashtag #HisForest into their message, or joked that men might come dressed as women in order to participate were also coded as SEPARATISM.

A second new theme was also applied to the user comments to account for responses that did not necessarily reflect an aspect of post-feminism, but still expressed an attitude towards Her Forest: REACTION. These messages contained the previously discussed positive, negative, or

neutral tones towards the initiative, but provided little or no explanation for the tone. For instance, one user who was in favour of the message simply wrote “that’s so cool” (INHF021216).

Since the comments were significantly shorter than the brand’s Facebook and Instagram posts, each message was coded as only one theme. When the comment related to more than one theme, only the most prominent code was recorded.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This portion of my MRP connects the results of the data to the three aforementioned research questions. It first presents the frequency in which the themes associated with each research question appeared in the data and then compares the results to previous academic discussions on influence, post-feminism, and social media. This section will also compare the construction of the Her Forest messaging to the non-Her Forest messaging. Finally, it will discuss the way in which the company’s Facebook and Instagram followers contributed to the conversation.

RQ1: *In what ways did Electric Forest influence its community to support and participate in the Her Forest experience?*

All Instagram and Facebook posts were analyzed according to the principles of influence proposed by Cialdini (Rothschild, 2014). Table 5 provides a summary of the codes.

Table 5: Principles of Influence in Her Forest and Non-Her Forest Messaging

Principle of Influence	Her Forest			Non-Her Forest		
	Images n=10	Text n=20	Total n=30	Images n=44	Text n=29	Total n=73
Principle of Reciprocity (PR)	0% (0)	25% (5)	16.7% (5)	6.8% (3)	20.7% (6)	12.3% (9)
Principle of Consistency (PC)	0% (0)	12% (3)	10% (3)	0% (0)	34.5% (10)	13.7% (10)
Principle of Social Proof (PSP)	30% (3)	8% (2)	16.7% (5)	47.7% (21)	6.9% (2)	31.5% (23)
Principle of Liking (PL)	70% (7)	25% (5)	40% (12)	29.5% (13)	13.8% (4)	23.3% (17)
Principle of Authority (PA)	0% (0)	25% (5)	16.7% (5)	15.9% (7)	13.8% (4)	15.1% (11)
Principle of Scarcity (PS)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0	10.3% (3)	4.1% (3)

Although all six of Cialdini's *principles of influence* appear in the festival's messaging, some of the principles were identified more often than others, and not all appeared in the promotion of Her Forest. The *principles of influence* appeared more than twice as often in the non-Her Forest posts than they did in the Her Forests posts. The analysis suggests that the approach Electric Forest took to persuade its online followers to support and partake in the Her Forest experience is different than the approach they took to encourage its audience to engage in other facets of the festival. The analysis also found that the *principles of influence* appeared primarily as images in the Facebook and Instagram posts about Her Forest, but primarily as text in the non-Her Forest posts. The following section will identify the main ways in which the Her Forest posts were promoted differently than the non-Her Forest posts.

Images of People as a Promotional Tool

One of the most significant differences between Electric Forest's promotion of Her Forest and their promotion of other facets of the festival is the way in which people were depicted in the images associated with the Facebook and Instagram posts. Many images of people were included in both the Her Forest and non-Her Forest posts. Yet, every image that appeared in the Her Forest posts depicted one or more female attendees, while the non-Her Forest posts featured a more diverse representation of people involved with the festival. This included performing artists and the festival's organizers. In the images throughout the Her Forest posts, PL was the most commonly identified *principle of influence* at 70% or 7, but in the images throughout the non-Her Forest posts, PSP was most prevalent at 47.7% or 21. In both cases, these principles were solely identified in images of people.

In the Her Forest images, PL most commonly appeared in depictions of physically attractive women smiling for the camera. These images appeared in messages that discussed every facet of the Her Forest initiative other than the Woman's Group Camp. Rothschild claims that attractiveness is most influential in situations that require an agent to change their audiences' already established opinion about something (2014). Since Her Forest is a newly introduced concept that would segregate the festival by gender for the first time ever, the images of beautiful women was a useful way of convincing longtime followers of Electric Forest to support this change in the festival's structure.

In the non-Her Forest images, PL was the second most identified *principle of liking* at 13.8% or 4. Like the Her Forest images, the code appeared in posts introducing concepts that were new to the 2016 edition of the festival, such as the launch of a shuttle bus that transports people from major cities to the festival (INFHF042216). Yet, in these posts, conventionally

beautiful women were no longer the focus. Instead, the images depicted widely recognized musicians and typical festival goers posing and smiling for the camera. According to Rothschild (2014), images of subjects who are familiar or similar to the viewing audience, can help an influencer earn the audience's trust. Thus, like the attractive subjects of the Her Forest images, the images of smiling people in the non-Her Forest posts are an effective way of convincing audiences that the new initiatives will be positive experiences that enhance, rather than take away from, the festival's already established ethos.

In comparison, the consistent depictions of PSP in the non-Her Forest posts typically included groups of young festival goers partaking in appealing festival activities. Unlike Her Forest, the regular festival is open to everyone — guests do not have to participate in nor support the women's initiative if they wish to participate in Electric Forest. While the non-Her Forest posts may resonate with Facebook and Instagram users who have already committed to Electric Forest, these posts also persuade users who have not been to the festival to participate in the experience. Rothschild (2014) argues that PSP is a particularly powerful tool for influencing those who are unfamiliar with how to behave in a certain scenario. He believes it's even more effective when many people are shown behaving in a certain way. Thus, the consistent depictions of PSP in the non-Her Forest posts help to convince virgin festival goers to come to the event by showing them the like-minded others who have already been to, and enjoyed, Electric Forest.

The Lack of "Scarcity" and "Consistency" in Textual Her Forest Messaging

Another main difference between the Her Forest and non-Her Forest posts is the decreased appearance of the *principle of consistency* in the Her Forest Facebook and Instagram posts. At 3/30 or 10%, the *principle of consistency* (PC) did not appear regularly in the Her Forest posts.

Yet, at 10/29 or 34.5%, this principle was the most commonly identified principle in the textual messages of the non-Her Forest posts.

With PC appearing so frequently in the non-Her Forest posts, prospective festival goers were consistently encouraged to make small commitments to the already established Electric Forest. This would ultimately help influence them to make a larger one in the future: attending the 2016 edition of the festival. On the contrary, since Her Forest is a newly introduced concept, the lack of PC in the Her Forest Facebook and Instagram posts suggests that users were not yet being asked to contribute much to the unfamiliar experience. Indeed, the Her Forest posts asked users to make only a few contributions to the program. PC appeared only in two posts looking for small suggestions to improve the general Her Forest concept, and one post that asked female users to sign-up for the Women's Group Camp.

Moving on, the *principle of scarcity* (PS) made up for 4.1% or 3 of the *principles of influence* that appeared in the non-Her Forest posts, but it was never identified in the Her Forest messaging. In the non-Her Forest posts, PS was associated with discussions of initiatives that were only available for a certain amount of time or could only include a certain amount of people (eg. “applications close on Monday at midnight,” INNHF031916). By emphasizing the need to act fast, these instances of PS not only help to construct Electric Forest as a rare and valuable experience, but also urge users to immediately respond to the festival's request (Rothschild, 2014). To contrast, the absence of PS in the Her Forest posts helps to position the program as inclusive and accessible to the entire target audience — women are welcome to participate without any time restraints or pressure.

Promotion of Ideas vs. Encouraging Action

The only *principles of influence* that appeared a similar amount of times throughout both the Her Forest and non-Her Forest posts were *the principle of reciprocity* (PR) and *the principle of authority* (PA). PR appeared in 16.7% or 5 of the total Her Forest codes and 12.3% or 9 of the codes in the non-Her Forest posts. Similarly, PA was identified in 16.7% or 5 of the total Her Forest codes and 15.1% or 11 of the total non-Her Forest codes. In the non-Her Forest posts, both PR and PA helped to encourage users to take direct action. However, in the Her Forest posts, they influenced ideas.

In the non-Her Forest posts, the two codes almost always appeared together, particularly in posts that encouraged users to either purchase, or enter a contest to win, a festival wristband. PR is an effective tool for inspiring action because “if people are offered a gift, a favour, an invitation, or the like, they will feel obliged to repay the gesture” (Rothschild, 2014, p. 256). Meanwhile, since people are more likely to say yes to requests that come from authority figures, PA is particularly useful when convincing audiences to comply with a large, potentially irrational request, such as buying expensive tickets to a music festival (Rothschild, 2014). As a result, the combined appearance of these principles helped to construct the act of entering contests or buying tickets as a way in which the user can immediately respond to either a favour or an authority figure.

In the Her Forest posts, the two principles were also prevalent, often appearing in the same posts. Yet, their appearances did not direct an immediate response from the users (like they consistently did in the non-Her Forest posts). Rather than influence users to buy tickets or enter contests, the principles helped inspire users to learn more about — and ultimately accept — the women’s initiative. For example, in one Facebook post, both PA and PR are expressed in a

message that first identifies “Forest HQ” as the author, and then refers to the Women’s Group Camp as an “offering” that promotes feelings of community between women (FBHF021216). In this case, PA influences users to think in the same way as the influential author of the message, while PR persuades users to consider accepting the program by illustrating how it may benefit them in the future. Unlike the non-Her Forest instances of these principles, there is no immediate action, monetary spending, or release of personal information required from the user.

RQ2: *What does Electric Forest’s messaging suggest about the female experience at the festival?*

When considering what both the Her Forest and non-Her Forest posts insinuated about the female festival experience, the following themes relating to Projansky, McRobbie, Browne and Winch’s ideas on post-feminism were identified in Electric Forest’s Facebook and Instagram posts. The frequency at which each theme appeared as both video and text is depicted in Table 6.

Table 6: Post-feminist Themes in Electric Forest’s Facebook and Instagram Posts

Theme	Her Forest			Non-Her Forest		
	Text	Image	Total n=26	Text	Image	Total n=21
CAN-DO	15.3% (4)	(0)	15.4% (4)	0% (0)	47.6% (10)	47.6% (10)
AT-RISK	11.5% (3)	23% (6)	34.6% (9)	0% (0)	9.5% (2)	9.5% (2)
YOUTHFULNESS	7.6% (2)	7.6% (2)	15.4% (4)	0% (0)	23.8% (5)	23.8% (5)
SISTERHOOD	23% (6)	11.5% (3)	34.6% (9)	0% (0)	19% (4)	19% (4)

The analysis of the data (see Table 3.2) suggests that — whether intentionally or not — Her Forest was constructed as a female experience that is distinguishable from the female

experience at the regular festival. Even though gender — specifically the female gender — was only addressed in the textual messages pertaining to Her Forest, an analysis of the visual messages suggests that the images in the non-Her Forest posts depict the female festival experience in a way that strays from what is presented in the Her Forest images.

Constructing the At-Risk Female Archetype in Her Forest Images

_____The analysis suggests that women were constructed as post-feminist in both the Her Forest and non-Her Post images. Yet, the Her Forest images primarily reflect the *at-risk* archetype, while the non-Her Forest images more closely relate to the *can-do* representation of women.

At 23% or 6, AT-RISK was the most common theme to appear in the Her Forest images, and the least common theme to appear in the non-Her Forest images of women at 9.5% or 2. To contrast, CAN-DO was the most commonly identified theme in the non-Her Forest images at 47.6% or 10, but it never appeared in the Her Forest images.

Depictions of *at-risk* girls tend to motivate audiences to take responsibility for the issue that the message communicates (Projansky, 2014). Through the many instances of AT-RISK and few instances of CAN-DO, the female subjects in the Her Forest images help to guilt the audience into supporting, or participating in, the cause. Furthermore, through the plentitude of AT-RISK images, Her Forest is constructed as an initiative that demands more concern than the regular festival (despite the festival's claim that Her Forest is not a security measure). The seriousness of Her Forest is further emphasized through the lack of images exhibiting YOUTHFULNESS (7.6% or 2), which was the second most commonly identified theme in the non-Her Forest images at 23.8% or 5.

Constructing the Can-Do Female Archetype in Non-Her Forest Images

While *at-risk* representations of girls challenge audiences to take action, depictions of *can-do* girls help to reassure viewers that the subject is doing well, and no assistance is required (Projansky, 2014). Consequently, in the non-Her Forest images, the many instances of CAN-DO and few instances of AT-RISK help to construct the female festival experience at Electric Forest as one that is free of problems and concerns, particularly those of the *at-risk* women who participate in Her Forest.

Unlike the *can-do* magazine covers described in Projansky's work, the depictions of female success and empowerment in the non-Her Forest images are strictly a consequence of the subject's participation in the Electric Forest experience. Women are often shown making positive contributions to the temporary music festival (eg. performing onstage or taking on a leadership role in the Plug-In program), but they are never portrayed as successful or accomplished in their lives outside of Electric Forest. Thus, the *CAN-DO* images in the non-Her Forest posts suggest that the festival evokes a unique sense of female empowerment that is distinguishable from any success that a female festival goer has achieved in the outside world.

The Implementation of Sisterhood in Her Forest Messages

Even though images of post-feminist women were depicted in both the Her Forest and non-Her Forest posts, the analysis suggests that Her Forest was constructed as an experience that is more inclusive to women than the regular festival. This is particularly evident through the frequency at which SISTERHOOD appeared in the Her Forest posts compared to the non-Her Forest posts. At 34.6% or 9, SISTERHOOD was the most prominent theme in the Her Forest posts. However, in the posts about other facets of the festival, this theme appeared irregularly at 19% or 4. Since *postfeminism* is closely tied to female sociality, while *feminism* is characterized

by individualism (Winch, 2013), by repeatedly sharing messages that reflect the theme of SISTERHOOD, Her Forest distinguishes itself as a postfeminist program that strictly facilitates shared female experiences. On the contrary, in the non-Her Forest posts, women were primarily depicted in groups of both men and women, or by themselves. The lack of SISTERHOOD in these posts are reflective of an individualist culture that is more in-line with traditional feminism, or a culture that is not determined by gender. Like some of the non-Her Forest images, the Her Forest images that were not coded as SISTERHOOD were also depictions of individual women. Yet, in these posts, the theme of SISTERHOOD was still enforced through the textual component of these messages.

RQ3: In what ways did Electric Forest's Facebook and Instagram users shape the discussion of Her Forest?

The general sentiment analysis suggests that users almost always spoke positively about the Her Forest program. Most of the negative responses appeared beneath posts that discussed the Women's Group Camp. The post that received the greatest amount of positive responses was one which discussed the Women's Circle. The general sentiment analysis is broken down by post in Table A8, "Appendix 8."

The user comments were also analyzed according to the same post-feminist themes that emerged in Electric Forest's Facebook and Instagram posts. The way in which the themes were distributed throughout the posts is depicted in Table A9, "Appendix 9."

The analysis, as reported in Table A9, suggests that although there were some similarities in the way that Electric Forest and their Facebook and Instagram followers discussed the Her Forest initiative, some user comments constructed the Her Forest experience in a way that strayed from what the festival had previously communicated. Users also tended to discuss the Her Forest

experience through a postfeminist lens that had not been addressed in Electric Forest's posts, or left comments about the project that did not address any postfeminist themes at all.

Emergence of Separatism in User Comments

Even though the theme of SEPARATISM did not appear as image nor text in the posts issued by Electric Forest, it was the second most prevalent post-feminist theme, appearing in 11.8% or 13 of the user comments. Yet, SEPARATISM never came up in either Her Forest nor Electric Forest's posted texts or images. They described the event as something that is strictly for women (eg. "an expanded gathering of women"), rather than constructing it as a program that is separate from the "politics, institution and culture of men" (Browne, 2011, p. 248). Indeed, in the Facebook and Instagram posts, Her Forest was not presented as a *separatist space* akin to the Michigan Womyn's Festival, which was not only defined by its exclusion of straight and transgender men, but as also its celebration of lesbian culture (Browne, 2011). As discussed in the response to the previous research question, the Her Forest posts primarily constructed the event through themes of AT-RISK and SISTERHOOD. Yet, social media users redirected the discussions of Her Forest on Facebook and Instagram. Many chose to voice their displeasure over the fact that Electric Forest, an inclusive music festival, would host an event that was divisive between the genders. Whether it was warranted by Electric Forest or not, users shaped the discussion from centering on certain themes like SISTERHOOD to protesting or disputing the initiative through the theme of SEPARATISM.

Continued Prevalence of Sisterhood

Like Electric Forest's Facebook and Instagram posts about Her Forest, at 34.6% or 9, SISTERHOOD was the most commonly identified post-feminist theme in the associated user comments. With SISTERHOOD appearing so frequently throughout not only the Facebook and

Instagram posts, but also the associated comments, the analysis suggests that the most defining aspect of Her Forest is its capacity to facilitate shared female experiences.

The continued prevalence of SISTERHOOD in the user responses also suggests that the commenters considered the Her Forest experience to be progressive, since this sense of female togetherness is closely tied to post-feminism (unlike feminism, which is tied to individualism) (McRobbie, 2004). Nonetheless, the way in which the users discussed SISTERHOOD is contradictory to Winch's (2013) characterization of post-feminist female friendships in which women tend to connect by comparing themselves (and their bodies) to one another. In the user comments, Her Forest is consistently discussed as a space that fosters female friendships. Nevertheless, there is no mention of body shaming or any other forms of female critique when the users describe the feelings of closeness that they anticipate the event will foster. Rather, they claim it is the experience of attending the program and participating in the activities that causes them to connect. For instance, in one message, a user says, "if anyone has signed up for this [Her Forest], get in touch with me! (FBHF021216)." Thus, through the the user comments, Her Forest is constructed as a unique initiative in which female friendships are shaped by shared experience instead of competition.

Repurposing the At-Risk Archetype

Through both the lack of CAN-DO, and the regular appearance of AT-RISK, the analysis suggests that, like the original posts, the users considered the women participating in Her Forest to be more reflective of an *at-risk* girl than a *can-do* girl. At 10.9% or 12, AT-RISK appeared double the amount of times as CAN-DO at 5.4% or 6. While instances of AT-RISK appeared regularly in Her Forest posts that discussed all aspects of the program, in the user comments, AT-RISK primarily appeared in posts that discussed the Women's Group Camp. Through the code of

AT-RISK, the Facebook and Instagram posts constructed Her Forest as an experience that is more serious than the other aspects of the festival. Now, in the user comments, the code of AT-RISK constructs the Women's Group Camp as an aspect of Her Forest that is more serious than the other facets of the initiative.

The users' more serious perception of the Women's Group Camp, which is associated with the *at-risk girl*, is juxtaposed through the instances in which YOUTHFULNESS appeared in the comments. At 10.9% or 12, YOUTHFULNESS was identified the same amount of times as AT-RISK. Yet, AT-RISK was heavily connected to the Women's Group Camp, while YOUTHFULNESS never appeared in the message threads that discussed this particular aspect of the program. The sentiment analysis in Table 3.3 also revealed that messages about the group camp tended to contain the most negative user feedback. As a result, the analysis suggests that the seriousness of the Women's Group Camp was less appealing to the user's than the other aspects of the program, which were considered to be more spirited and playful. This supports Projansky's (2007) belief that modern women are increasingly attracted to the ideas of freedom and playfulness that are typically associated with girlhood.

CONCLUSION

Using Electric Forest's Her Forest initiative as a case study, this MRP emphasizes the powerful impact that digital communication technologies, particularly Facebook and Instagram, have on the way in which corporate messages are expressed, received, reshaped, supported, and challenged. The results of this research show the great extent to which a company's messages evolve over a roughly one-year period. Due to the increased opportunities for brand-consumer, consumer-brand, and consumer-consumer communication that social media permits, the MRP suggests that this evolution is dependent not only on the brand, but also on the consumer.

This paper first demonstrated how all six of Robert Cialdini's *principles of influence* can be applied to digital contexts. Through a comparison of the way in which the principles appeared in the Her Forest posts versus the non-Her Forest posts, the MRP revealed how a well-known music brand with a dedicated following changed the style of their messaging when introducing a new, potentially controversial, concept to their online followers. The difference in the messaging underscores the way in which social media applications enable companies to mold their messaging when promoting niche/and or new aspects of an overall brand. Positive reactions from general Electric Forest consumers to the new women's initiative prove the success of this particular campaign.

Through an analysis of how post-feminist and feminist themes appeared not only in Electric Forest's Facebook and Instagram posts, but also the associated user comments, this MRP also shows a consistent connection between the contemporary female experience at music festivals and post-feminism. Furthermore, the way in which the users brought up additional post-feminist themes that had not been expressed by the festival also suggests that the social media constructions of a particular idea or experience are never static. On Facebook and Instagram, users have the unique ability to publicly reshape a company's message or concept.

Due to the scope of this MRP, only the brand-consumer communication leading up to the event could be considered. To determine the extent to which the online constructions of Her Forest impacted the experience at the actual event, future studies could compare the online discussions leading up to the event with the online discussions that occurred when the festival was over.

Nevertheless, in the discussions leading up to the event, Her Forest — a concept that would change the overall structure of the already established Electric Forest festival — was

widely celebrated. This case study helps to distinguish both the Electric Forest brand, as well as its followers, as a progressive and contemporary group that uses social media applications to promote change and collectively address important societal issues.

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Appendix 1

Table A1: Description of Her Forest Posts

ID¹	Date	Description	Links
INHF031616-4	03/16/2016	Her Forest will host its first-ever Women's Circle during the 2016 season.	N/A
INHF031616-3	03/16/2016	The brand thanks its followers for the support they have shown Her Forest and reminds them to keep watching out for more announcements.	N/A
INHF031616-2	03/16/2016	An explanation of the Her Forest panel, which started in 2015 and will be returning in 2016.	N/A
INHF031616	03/16/2016	An explanation of the overall Her Forest program.	N/A
FBHF031616	03/16/2016	An announcement about two new aspects of Her Forest: the Women's Circle and Women: Game Changers in Creativity Panel.	N/A
FBHF030216	03/02/2016	An announcement that female guests can still sign-up to participate in the Her Forest experience.	Link to an article from Dancing Astronaut about Her Forest.
FBHF021816	02/18/2016	Registration for the Women's Group Camp is now open.	Link to an article from THUMP about Her Forest.
INHF021216	02/12/2016	The Women's Group Camp is revealed as the first "offering" for 2016.	Link to Electric Forest Website.
FBHF021216	02/12/2016	Same as INHF021216.	Link to Electric Forest Website
FBHF061815	06/18/2015	Electric Forest has a new idea for a women's program and wants its Facebook users to help it "unfold."	Link to the "in development" Her Forest page on the Electric Forest website
FBHF070915	07/09/2015	The brand anticipates that Her Forest will "blossom" in 2016.	A sign-up page to receive updates on the project.

Data Key: IN=Instagram post; FB = Facebook Post; NHF=Non-Her Forest. HF=Her Forest post; followed by Date posted

Appendix 2

Table A2: Description of Her Forest Images

Associated Facebook or Instagram Post	Description
INHF31616-4	An attractive young woman looks down and smiles while at the festival.
INHF31616-3	An attractive young woman wearing a tie-dye poncho flashes a peace sign to the camera while at the festival.
INHF31616-2	Two young women peek from behind a tree trunk while at the festival.
INHF31616	A young woman holds a giant flower and poses for the camera while at the festival.
FBHF031616	Same photo as INHF31616-3.
FBHF031616	Same photo as INHF31616-2.
FBHF031616	Same photo as INHF31616.
FBHF030216	Two women dancing and holding hands while at the festival.
FBHF021816	Same photo as FBHF030216.
INHF021216	Same photo as FBHF030216.
FBHF070915	A young woman smiling and clapping at the festival.

Appendix 3

Table A3: Description of Non-Her Forest Posts

ID¹	Date	Platform	Description	Links to External Page
INFHF0 42216	04/22/2016	Instagram	Shuttle buses from nearby major cities will pick up and drop off guests as part of a new green initiative.	Sign-up page on the Electric Forest website.
FBNHF0 40816	04/08/2016	Facebook	Introduction to this year's "Queen Monarch," whose mission is to make Electric Forest more health-conscious.	Electric Forest website
INNHF0 40616	04/06/2016	Instagram	Invitation for visual artists to apply to create live art at the festival; description of Electric Forest's "Music in Schools" foundation.	Electric Forest website
INNHF0 31916	03/19/2016	Instagram	Invitation for Electric Forest attendees to apply to be "Monarch King or Queen."	"Plug- In" page on Electric Forest Website
FBNHF0 20416	02/04/2016	Facebook	A request for the brand's followers to help showcase the festival's performers by creating themed playlists that can be shared on social media.	N/A
FBNHF0 21216	02/12/2016	Facebook	The 2016 artist line-up will be mailed to ticketholders so that they can help with the online announcements.	N/A
FBNHF0 21515	02/15/2015	Facebook	Tickets are now on-sale.	Link to ticket page of Electric Forest website
INNHF1 20815	12/08/2015	Instagram	Tickets will be on-sale soon.	Electric Forest Website
INNHF1 11115	11/11/2015	Instagram	An acknowledgement of veterans (particularly the ones that work for Electric Forest) in honour of Remembrance Day.	Electric Forest website
FBNHF0 71415	07/14/2015	Facebook	Describes multiple facets of the Plug-In Program,	"Plug-In Page" on Electric Forest Website

¹ Data Key: IN=Instagram post; FB = Facebook Post; NHF=Non-Her Forest. HF=Her Forest post; followed by Date posted

Appendix 4

Table A4: Description of Non-Her Forest Images

Associated Facebook or Instagram Post	Description
INFHF042216	A group of men and women dressed in festival attire on a school bus.
FBNHF040816	The Queen Monarch speaking directly to the camera while holding various healthy food options.
INNHF040616	A woman painting on an easel at the festival.
INNHF031916	A group of men and women who pose for the camera while at the festival.
FBNHF020416	A group of men and women blowing bubbles at the festival.
FBNHF021216	An envelope with the #EF2016 reveal hashtag.
FBNHF021515	Slow-motion clip of a crowd watching a performance at the festival.
INNHF120815	A male member of the Electric Forces team speaking directly to the camera.
INNHF120815	A hot air balloon rising into the sky.
ININHF120815	A well-known male DJ performing at the festival.
INNHF120815	A male singer performing on stage at the festival.
INNHF120815	A shot of the crowd dancing at the festival.
INNHF120815	A woman looking directly at the camera as she twirls a baton at the festival.
INNHF120815	A woman dancing with a hula hoop at the festival.
INNHF120815	A male rapping onstage at the festival.
INNHF120815	A woman twirling a hula hoop at the festival.
INNHF120815	A woman staring directly into the camera while at the festival.
INNHF120815	A woman smiling directly camera while at the festival.
INNHF120815	A man at the festival smiling directly at the camera.
INNHF120815	A woman singing onstage at the festival.
INNHF120815	A man playing acoustic guitar at the festival.
INNHF120815	A man playing saxophone onstage at the festival.

Associated Facebook or Instagram Post	Description
INNHF111115	A male member of the Electric Forces team speaking directly to the camera.
INNHF111115	A group of men and women from the Electric Forces team walking around the festival.
FBNHF071415	An aerial shot of the Electric Forest grounds.
FBNHF071415	A jumping crowd at the festival.
FBNHF071415	A well-known DJ group performing on stage at the festival.
FBNHF071415	A woman reading a book at the festival with actors dressed in costumes behind her.
FBNHF071415	The female director of the Plug-In program speaking to the camera.
FBNHF071415	Male members of the Electric Forces crew attending a meeting.
FBNHF071415	A group of men and women painting together at the festival.
FBNHF071415	A sign that says “Electric Forest Ultimate Camp 2015”
FBNHF071415	A group of people lined-up at the festival.
FBNHF071415	A woman meeting a well-known DJ at the festival.
FBNHF071415	A group of men and women on a hot air balloon ride.
FBNHF071415	A group of men and women posing for a photo at the festival.
FBNHF071415	A group of men riding on a golf cart at the festival.
FBNHF071415	A group of men and women dancing at the festival
FBNHF071415	Two women looking at the festival’s artwork.
FBNHF071415	Women dancing with hula hoops at the festival.
FBNHF071415	Women dancing at the festival.
FBNHF071415	Women dressed in Victorian costumes performing in-character at the festival.
FBNHF071415	A man dressed in a costume blowing a horn at the festival.
FBNHF071415	A woman dancing at the festival.
FBNHF071415	Two women holding hands and dancing together at the festival.

Appendix 5

Table A5: User Comments Beneath Electric Forest Post FBHF021216

Date	Description
02/12/2016	Thinks the Women's Group Camp is a great idea. If she did not already have a group of people to camp with, she would participate.
02/12/2016	Says he has never considered the festival to be dangerous, but applauds Electric Forest for finding new ways of helping people.
02/12/2016	Expresses appreciation for the previous comment.
02/12/2016	Thinks the initiative is great.
02/12/2016	Hopes that one day, the festival's men and women will not need to be separated.
02/12/2016	Tags another user and says there cannot be a men's campground because there are too many straight homophobic men.
02/12/2016	Thinks men might try and sneak in because those who identify as a woman are invited to join the campsite.
02/12/2016	Thinks the belief that a man will try to sneak into the campground (as described in the previous comment) is ridiculous.
02/12/2016	Asks a user to elaborate on a previous statement.

Appendix 6

Table A6: Coding Scheme for Cialdini's Six Principles of Influence

Principle of Influence	Definition	Example	Her Forest Posts n=31	Non-Her Forest Posts n=66
Principle of Reciprocity (PR)	"Give a little to get something in return" (Rothschild, 2014, p. 258).	"Those who take Official Electric Forest shuttles will receive camping in the GA tent only campground, which is located on prime real estate next to the festival entrance" (INFHF042216).	5	9
Principle of Consistency (PC)	"...small requests, using a variety of tactics, can lead people to comply with other requests so that they feel like they are being consistent" (Rothschild, 2014, p. 260).	"HQ has an idea for a new Plug-In Program and we are looking for members of the Forest Family who would like to help it unfold" (FBHF061815).	5	4
Principle of Social Proof (PSP)	"When people are in conditions that are uncertain, they tend to look to the ways others are behaving to decide for themselves how they should act...make it obvious what others are doing and sharing" (Rothschild, 2014, p. 251).	The image depicts festival goers taking a school bus to Electric Forest (NHF1).	4	22
Principle of Liking (PL)	"..people will tend to say yes more often to those people whom they know and like" (Rothschild, 2014, p. 264).	The image depicts a well-known DJ (NHF10).	12	17
Principle of Authority	"People tend to be influenced by both legitimate and perceived	"Lia Holland, Plug In Program Director" (FBNHF071415).	5	11

Principle of Influence	Definition	Example	Her Forest Posts n=31	Non-Her Forest Posts n=66
(PA)	authority” (Rothschild, 2014, p. 251).			
Principle of Scarcity (PS)	“Opportunities seem to be more valuable to us when they are less available. It could be a product, a service, or even trading cards or collectible coins. As a rule, if it’s rare, or becoming rare, it’s more valuable. As a result, if the item is of value to us, it will trigger an emotional automatic response to obtain it” (Rothschild, 2014, p. 269).	“Keep an eye on your mailbox to see if you receive an invitation to help reveal the 2016 initial lineup” (FBNHF021216).	0	3

Appendix 7

Table A7: Coding Scheme for Post-Feminist Themes

Theme	Description	Example - Textual Components of Electric Forest's Facebook and Instagram Posts	Example - Visual Components of Electric Forest's Facebook and Instagram Posts	Example - User Comments
CAN-DO	The message suggests that specifically women can feel empowered at, or positively contribute to, the festival experience.	"Her Forest Panel returns, this time featuring an expanded gathering of women who work behind the scenes at Electric Forest" (FBHF031616).	The woman is depicted in a leadership role, she is identified as "Director of the Plug-In Program" (FBNHF071415).	"Girl power!" (INHF031616-4).
AT-RISK	The message suggests that specifically a woman's comfort level, or overall well-being, may be jeopardized at the festival.	"The Women's Group Camp is a space intended for women who are camping alone" (FBHF021216).	Two women peek out from behind a tree and look straight at the camera. There is no action (FBHF031616).	"I am so glad that this exists. I've never been to Electric Forest before and I was a little nervous about going alone, but I feel a bit better knowing that I will get to be a part of a group of women in the same situation as me" (FBHF021216).
YOUTHFULNESS	The message suggests that specifically women can participate in playful or girlish activities at the festival.	"This circle will connect and inspire Forest women with fun" (INHF0316164).	A woman is laughing at something that is not in the shot (INHF0316164).	"This would be so much fun!" (FBHF031616).
SISTERHOOD	The message suggests that specifically women can connect and bond with one another at the festival.	"The panel will conclude with a meet-and-greet — the opportunity to meet even more women!" (FBHF031616).	Two women hold hands as they dance at the festival (FBHF0302016).	"Kiki Federico mucho love to you mama! Can't wait to see how this blossoms and be a piece of it!" (FBHF070915).

Appendix 8

Table A8: General Sentiment Analysis of User Comments By Facebook and Instagram Post

Post ID	POSITIVE n=110	NEGATIVE n=110	NEUTRAL n=110
INHf031616-4	10	0	0
INHf031616-3	7	1	2
INHf031616-2	7	0	3
INHf031616	3	0	7
FBHF031616	9	0	1
FBHF03022016	6	4	0
FBHF021816	6	1	3
INHf021216	9	0	1
FBHF021216	7	2	1
FBHF070915	8	0	2
FBHF061815	7	1	2
Total	79	7	25

Appendix 9

Table A9: Post-Feminist Themes in User Comments

Post ID	CAN-DO n=110	AT-RISK n=110	SISTERHOOD n=110	YOUTHFUL NESS n=110	SEPARATISM n=110	REACTION n=110
INHF031616-4	1	0	2	2	0	5
INHF031616-3	0	0	0	3	1	6
INHF031616-2	1	0	3	1	0	5
INHF031616	0	0	5	1	0	4
FBHF031616	0	0	2	2	1	5
FBHF03022016	0	3	0	0	5	2
FBHF021816	0	5	3	0	0	2
INHF021216	0	0	0	1	0	9
FBHF021216	0	3	2	0	3	2
FBHF070915	0	0	1	2	2	5
FBHF061815	4	1	1	0	1	3
Total	5.4% (6)	10.9% (12)	17.2% (19)	10.9% (12)	11.8% (13)	43.6% (48)