

Original Research

Online Solidarity Against Anti-Feminist Backlash in the Video Game Industry: The Case of *Limbus Company*Boyoung Kim¹ and Ji Hoon Park²

¹ M.A., College of Media and Communication, Korea University

² Professor, College of Media and Communication, Korea University

Corresponding to
Ji Hoon Park

College of Media & Communication, Korea University, 145, Anam-ro, Seongbuk-gu, Seoul, Republic of Korea.
Email: winterof93@korea.ac.kr

Acknowledgment

This article is based on the master's thesis completed by the first author. This research was supported by the MSIT (Ministry of Science and ICT), Korea, under the ITRC (Information Technology Research Center) support program (IITP-2025-RS-2020-11201749) supervised by the IITP (Institute for Information & Communications Technology Planning & Evaluation).

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

Received

27 Feb 2025

Revised

22 Jul 2025

Accepted

15 Aug 2025

ABSTRACT

This study explores how South Korean gamers mobilized against anti-feminism in the gaming industry through online activism, focusing on the *Limbus Company* (2023) incident, where a female illustrator faced feminist stigmatization and the subsequent solidarity movements that emerged on Twitter (X). Distinct from misogynistic male gaming communities, the solidarity movement was comprised of those who identified themselves as “ethical gamers,” a label that is not limited to women. While the movement identified itself as feminist, it prioritized labor protection, positioning the defense of victims’ professional rights as its primary objective. In the South Korean context, where feminist discourse often faces public resistance, the approach taken by the movement represents a strategic pivot toward pragmatic solutions. However, as feminist perspectives intersected with consumer identity, the movement often ended up prioritizing defensive argumentation over thorough deliberation. The conversations between movement participants tended to focus on prominent activists’ personal behavior, inadvertently creating alienation and exclusion of some activists. The study suggests that in order for a movement to bring about sustainable and meaningful changes, it must ensure broader inclusivity and avoid alienating potential allies.

KEYWORDS

game industry, anti-feminist backlash, social media, online activism, ethical gamers

On July 26, 2023, South Korean gaming company Project Moon, developer of the mobile game *Limbus Company* (2023), issued a notice via Twitter (now X). The notice stated that “the contract with the employee who has been controversial will be terminated.” The term “controversy” referred to a female in-house illustrator involved in developing *Limbus Company* who had previously supported feminist causes on social media. The actual circumstances were as follows: A male-dominated gaming community known as the DC

Inside *Robotomy Corporation* Gallery (named after Project Moon's 2018 game) expressed dissatisfaction with the game's design choice of featuring female characters in full-body swimsuits rather than bikinis. Members began seeking Project Moon employees' social media accounts, suspecting feminist influence behind the swimsuit designs. Through this targeted search, they discovered the female illustrator's past social media activity. The community took hostile actions, including inundating the developer with complaints and attempting unauthorized entry into the developer's office building. Subsequently, the announcement from Project Moon mentioned termination of the illustrator based on this manufactured controversy.

This incident follows a pattern in the Korean gaming industry where employees face termination after being labeled 'feminist.' The ideological vetting for feminist beliefs, or "feminism *Sasang Geomjeung*," emerged in 2016 when Nexon terminated voice actor Jayeon Kim from the game *Closers* (2014) after she posted a social media photo wearing a T-shirt with the text "Girls don't need a prince" (Beom et al., 2022; S. Y. Lee, 2019). Following the *Closers* incident, those expressing solidarity with Kim faced cyberbullying and harassment from anti-feminist online communities. Similar cases occurred repeatedly across multiple games: in 2016, *Destiny Child* (2016-2023); in 2018, *Girls' Frontline* (2016-present), *Tree of Savior* (2016-present), *Azur Lane* (2017-present), *DJMAX RESPECT* (2017), and *SoulWorker* (2017-present); in 2019, *Arcana Tactics* (2019-present); in 2020, *Arknights* (2020-present) and *Chrono Ark* (2019) (J. S. Kim, 2019; M. Kim, 2020). Although the National Human Rights Commission issued a recommendation on July 8, 2020, calling for the gaming industry to correct its misogynistic practices (S. J. Lee, 2020), the 2023 *Limbus Company* incident demonstrated the persistence of this pattern.

However, following the *Limbus Company*

Incident, players of the game protested Project Moon's decision to terminate the female illustrator's contract. Players responded rapidly to the announcement with coordinated actions on Twitter, including fundraising for 'truck protests' (a distinct form of protest by Korean gamers using message-displaying LED trucks), organizing hashtag campaigns, and seeking refunds to protest the ideological vetting and contract termination. Their boycott significantly impacted the game's performance: Google Play Store ranking, which had maintained positions between 40th and 100th in June 2023 before the controversy, fell below 200th place by August (Pyeon, 2023). When Project Moon announced potential legal action against Twitter users criticizing the developer, users responded by establishing PM User Association (PMUA), a non-profit organization to challenge the developer's ideological vetting. This association became the central organizing force for both online and offline protests, primarily coordinating through Twitter. In December 2023, PMUA evolved into the Korea Game Consumer Society (KGCS), broadening its mission beyond the Project Moon incident to address systemic issues within the gaming industry and improve gaming consumer culture.

While incidents of anti-feminist "witch-hunting" in the gaming industry have occurred frequently since 2016, the *Limbus Company* case marked a rare instance of game consumers organizing collectively to challenge such practices. The participants in this online movement represent diverse gender identities, backgrounds, and political orientations. Their motivations for solidarity vary, ranging from concerns about misogynistic cyberbullying in gaming culture to opposition against workplace discrimination based on political beliefs.

Although KGCS originated as a Twitter-based user collective, its activities were primarily conducted offline. Their hybrid approach of coordinating physical organization with online mobilization represents a contrast to what Castells

(2012) describes as centerless, horizontal online social movements. As these organizations and their supporters gain prominence both online and offline, shaping discourse and leading movements against anti-feminism backlash, it is important to examine the conflicts between existing supporters and other movement participants and how these conflicts shape the internal dynamics and divergences in solidarity.

This study investigates supporters who stand with workers facing harassment in the gaming industry's male-dominated communities, focusing specifically on consumer activism that emerged after a female illustrator for *Limbus Company* was terminated. By analyzing how these consumers form networks and mobilize power in online spaces, this study examines the emergence of consumer activism around feminist issues and explores its significance within the broader context of ideological vetting in the gaming industry. The findings suggest that this case demonstrates how consumer activism can operate as a form of resistance to misogynistic structures in the gaming community and industry.

Game industry, gamer community, and misogyny

Gamer culture has long created stereotypes that gaming is a masculine space and othered non-males (Bezio, 2018). Male gamers often marginalize female gamers through violent language, sexualizing or stereotyping them as inferior gamers (Beom et al., 2017). This is often reinforced through memes that circulate a fictional narrative portraying female gamers as incompetent and dependent, ultimately distorting the perception of reality (H. J. Lee & Park, 2021). When a gamer is presumed female, feminine stereotypes are applied regardless of their actual skills or characteristics (Choi et al., 2020). These systemic constraints ultimately prevent women from being recognized as legitimate participants within gaming spaces.

Oppressive gender norms also permeate the gaming industry, with women making up only 30% of the global workforce in 2021 (IGDA, 2021), while the Korean gaming industry reflects a similar circumstance (Korea Creative Content Agency, 2022). This male-centered environment stems from the stereotype that 'game makers must be true gamers' and a discriminatory culture that refuses to recognize women as legitimate gaming professionals (T. Yoon & Kim, 2023). Consequently, women game developers face systematic undervaluation, experiencing lower expectations in technical tasks as well as discrimination in hiring and performance evaluations unrelated to their competencies (M. Yoon, 2021). These exclusionary practices hinder women's acceptance as both consumers and key industry professionals.

The 2016 *Closers* incident, known as the first ideological vetting (*Sasang Geomjeung*) for feminist beliefs, exemplifies how the gaming industry's treatment of women intersects with misogynistic online communities. This reveals patterns of online harassment similar to the U.S. Gamergate in 2014 against women like Zoe Quinn and Anita Sarkeesian (Bates, 2021; Bezio, 2018; Martinez, 2020). Bates connected Gamergate to incel trolling culture, where men justified harassment by falsely claiming females were forcing political correctness onto gaming. In Korea, a similar dynamic emerged through Ilbe, an offshoot of DC Inside, that systematically promoted women-targeted hate speech (H. J. Kim, 2022). While these male-centered online communities reproduced similar hateful sentiments, Korea's situation is distinctive due to the direct connection between these communities and industry decision-makers, resulting in attacks on professionals suspected of feminist leanings. This manifested in systematic exclusion and surveillance of creative workers, as well as maintaining feminist blacklists (Beom et al., 2022; Chae, 2023), demonstrating how online hate cultures can directly shape corporate practices and

industry norms.

Yet, there is little research focusing on game consumers who practice ethical solidarity, such as those who raised concerns about the ‘witch-hunt’ while supporting the voice actor in 2016 and the female illustrator in 2023. Although Jo (2022) studied how female gamers formed the National D.Va Association using *Overwatch*’s character as their symbol to challenge female-exclusionary gaming culture, their focus was on addressing female gamers’ experiences and sexual objectification. Meanwhile, Martínez’s (2020) study of Quinn and Sarkeesian’s cyber violence support platform after *Gamergate* illustrates producer solidarity rather than consumer activism.

Online space, women, and feminism

Despite the prevalent misogyny in online spaces, including gaming communities, the internet has emerged as a platform for discourse and emancipation for women. Particularly the rise of social media in the 2010s fostered online feminist movements, often characterized as Fourth Wave Feminism, marked by widespread influence and accessibility (Munro, 2013; Sohn, 2020). As Munro (2013) noted, the internet has revitalized feminism, creating a more fluid and personalized feminist environment. Online feminism demonstrates dynamic solidarity while embracing individual diversity and intersectionality, allowing participants to maintain distinct feminist perspectives (C. Park, 2020). Therefore, online feminism accommodates diverse women’s identities and varying feminist approaches, acknowledging that these differences may lead to internal conflicts and debates within the movement (Sohn, 2020).

Hashtags serve as powerful tools for consolidating feminist discourse on social media, particularly on Twitter, where features like retweets and trends facilitate viral spread. The 2015 Korean #Iamfeminist movement catalyzed

the ‘feminism reboot’ (Sohn, 2017), while the global #MeToo movement of 2018 emerged as spontaneous resistance against mainstream feminist limitations and systemic misogyny (Baik, 2019). Through social media platforms, online feminism transforms individual experiences and seemingly minor issues into broader social concerns, highlighting problems previously overlooked by traditional movements (Sohn, 2017). This pattern of organic and unrestricted online congregation aligns with Castells’ (2012) theoretical framework of networked social movements. On the other hand, Paik (2013) argues that the challenge lies in ensuring the sustainability and material power of the loose connections formed by ad hoc groups on social media. Banet-Weiser et al. (2020) warn that social media campaigns often prioritize visibility and connection without progressing toward substantive political engagement. Yet, Willems (2019) emphasizes that digital spaces are not independent from physical spaces as political discussions emerge through circulation between digital media and physical infrastructures.

Currently, Korean online feminism faces structural challenges. The 2015 feminism reboot was driven by women’s fear and anger over misogynistic threats, including gender-based violence, hidden camera crimes, and digital sexual exploitation (C. Park, 2020). While it successfully highlighted violence against women as a serious social issue, it also reinforced a fixed, homogeneous notion of female identity and a binary perpetrator–victim framework based on gender (H. M. Lee, 2019). This approach not only limits broader solidarity with male feminists but also excludes minorities facing intersectional discrimination based on gender identity, disability, or race, leading to some groups being labeled as TERF (Trans-Exclusionary Radical Feminists) (Pearce et al., 2020). TERF discourse exemplifies affective splintering (D. O. D. Kim et al., 2020) of South Korea’s online landscape within conflicts over feminism. Sohn (2020) criticizes this

tendency, arguing that such groups perpetuate societal prejudices against minorities rather than challenging them.

The 2023 movement against ideological vetting for feminist beliefs in the gaming industry demonstrates feminist characteristics through its anti-misogynistic stance. This movement adopts established social media tactics like hashtag activism while developing unique patterns in its activities, approaches, communication methods, and discourse.

Fandom, social movements, and fan activism

Supporters of the female illustrator among Limbus Company players engage not only in the realm of gaming but also actively participate in fandom spaces, having once engaged in fandom activities on Twitter as fans of the game. Fans are perceived as having a dual role in the cultural industry as consumers and creators of new value. Fiske (1989) conceptualized this dynamic as the cultural economy, where consumers actively produce, adapt, and share meanings based on their lived experiences rather than passively accepting cultural products. Through this active production of meaning while consuming cultural products, fans establish their social identity as members of the cultural economy, engaging in micro-politics through the formation and negotiation of this identity (Fiske, 1989). Jenkins (2015) extends this framework by introducing fan activism, a concrete social movement where citizens who engage with popular culture address real-world issues through their fan identities while leveraging the communal power of networked fandoms.

Despite its positive reception in popular culture studies, fan activism has been critiqued for its foundation in consumerism. As Fiske (1989) argued, fandom culture remains essentially subordinated to capital and can never be truly subversive. It inherently reinforces neoliberal narratives that prioritize individual identity

over structural political and economic issues (Seo, 2011). Companies can listen to their fans' voices if fans' desires align with corporate values (Condis & Bazaa, 2024) but also simply redirect their focus to less socially conscious consumers to safeguard their economic interests (Murdock, 2000). This may limit the effectiveness of fan activism as a social movement strategy, making it vulnerable to either co-optation or dismissal by capitalist logic.

Meanwhile, gender identity serves as a critical factor in analyzing fan activism. Women, historically limited in political and industrial producer roles, have primarily operated as consumers, and thus tend to express political aspirations through consumption practices (Lekakis, 2022). This dynamic manifests distinctly in fandom culture. The performative aspects of fandom, operating through digital spaces while connecting to offline spaces, characterize women's social activism. For instance, S. H. Jang and Kim (2021) illustrate this through the Nth Room case protests, where citizens adopted idol fandom's tactics by using Twitter for fundraising and placing subway advertisements to highlight the case's severity.

The feminism reboot during the late 2010s has created a reciprocal relationship with fandom culture. Through this process, however, young female fans have experienced tension between their feminist and fan identities, facing criticism from both feminist groups and fandom communities (Yang, 2021). S. A. Kim (2017) documents how hashtag activism within fandoms led to conflict between feminist-oriented and non-feminist consumers, resulting in exclusion rather than creating a space for deliberation. S. J. Kim (2018) reframes this intersection of fandom and feminism not as conflict but as a process of identity negotiation, suggesting that feminist perspectives could help fans overcome exclusivity and build broader connections. As the solidarity movement against Project Moon is defined as a form of fan activism, predominantly led by former

Limbus Company players who appreciate gaming culture, this research analyzes how these active consumers utilize their consumer identities, negotiate their political (including feminist) identities, and engage with other participants.

METHODS

This study examines the online social movement protesting Project Moon's termination of a female illustrator. The research analyzes this gamer solidarity movement's strategies, participant motivations, and its achievements and challenges, thereby considering implications for the gaming industry from feminist perspectives.

This study employs digital ethnography as its main method. Digital ethnography observes online spaces and interprets interactions among internet community members through texts like posts and comments, examining how participants develop and share ideas through these interactions. While often conflated with discourse analysis due to its focus on online texts, digital ethnography is distinct in its attention to the cultural practices of actors who create, consume, and interact with digital content (H. S. Lee, 2022). It analyzes not only online discussions but also how actors utilize digital media and connect their online activities to offline contexts (Pink et al., 2016).

Gold's (1958) typology of observational roles, originally developed for offline contexts, is also applicable online. Researchers may adopt different roles in online circumstances: the complete participant who actively engages without disclosing their identity; the participant-as-observer who discloses their identity but joins the community naturally; the observer-as-participant who discloses their identity without contributing directly to the community; the complete observer who remains entirely covert. Meanwhile, these categories can blur depending on how participation is defined online, just as platform

algorithms complicate the concept of a 'complete observer.' In this study, online participation is considered as visible engagement (such as likes, retweets, and mentions), while observation denotes passive behaviors such as viewing and taking screenshots.

This study uses the first author's participatory observation to analyze the Twitter activities of former *Limbus Company* players who criticized Project Moon. Twitter remains a platform where fans interact and build communities, as well as a tool for organizing collective actions in social movements. Before the *Limbus Company* incident, gamers and fans who play Project Moon's games actively used Twitter to discuss the game and share fan art. After the incident, they utilized the platform to raise awareness about its significance. This study mainly employed a participant-as-observer approach (Gold, 1958) as the first author was formerly a member of the *Limbus Company* fandom and naturally participated in the solidarity actions while maintaining a reflective stance. Throughout the research, the account identified the researcher as a graduate student without disclosing personal details such as name or university affiliation.

The initial phase of observation lasted from July 25, 2023, when cyberbullying by DC Inside members first emerged, to December 31, 2023, when attention shifted to a new witch-hunt involving an animation subcontractor working on *MapleStory* (Nexon, 2005-present). The observation was conducted through the first author's personal Twitter account. Before July 25, 2023, this account primarily shared *Limbus Company* gameplay experiences and fan art. It naturally transitioned into a research tool as the *Limbus Company* Twitter fandom began criticizing the incident. To maintain consistent observation, we used Twitter's list feature to track selected users, monitoring their daily activities. We established mutual relationships with key participants, engaging directly through mentions, retweets, and direct messages. On December 3,

2023, as the evolving dynamics of online solidarity required an epoché stance, the research activities were transitioned to a separate research account, marking a shift to the role of complete observer (Gold, 1958).

The second phase of online participatory observation was conducted in March 2024, prompted by evolving discussions and expanding scope within and outside the organization. This follow-up observation was conducted through the research account until August 31, 2024, maintaining the role of complete observer (Gold, 1958).

Approximately 7,000 tweets were collected during the overall observation using screenshots. During the analysis, we categorized the data according to themes, grouping together the 'claims' and 'responses' and tracking how these themes evolved over time. Particular attention was given to *who* made each statement, examining how participants' attributes and stances related to their involvement in the movement.

This study employed in-depth interviews to deepen the analysis, following digital ethnographic practices that examine online-offline interactions for richer understanding (Hampton, 2017). Participants included Project Moon protesters observed on Twitter, KGCS members, and current/former gaming industry professionals who provided insights into industry misogynistic culture. Most were recruited through snowball sampling via KGCS members, with some from the researcher's network. Among 20 interviewees, four were active members of KGCS and seven were gaming professionals (including former *Limbus Company* players). One-on-one interviews were conducted to ensure privacy via video call or in-person. The interview transcripts have been encrypted and securely stored on an offline storage device. To analyze evolving dynamics, follow-up interviews involving three former interviewees and an additional participant were conducted in September 2024. Interviews were semi-structured and lasted between one and

two hours. All interviews were transcribed for thematic analysis.

All interviews were conducted and analyzed in Korean, then translated into English. The first author, who conducted all interviews, informed participants of the data handling procedures and obtained written consent. Participants were informed that all interview data would be anonymized and shared with the co-author, and that any transcribed interviews not included in the paper would be discarded one year after the interviews were conducted. Tables 1 and 2 list the information regarding the participants.

Ethical gamers as both consumers and laborers

The Twitter movement against Project Moon's ideological vetting for feminist beliefs consisted of several distinct groups. The primary solidarity group, comprised of former Project Moon gamers aligned with KGCS, consistently addressed the issue from inception, coordinating fundraising, petitions, and protests with allied groups. Another group included non-players who joined the movement and spoke out on various issues, becoming particularly vocal when the ideological vetting incident reached critical points. Opposition groups, discursively policing feminists, attacked the solidarity movement while maintaining activities on DC Inside. Later, a new group emerged: critical participants who questioned the movement's tactics. This study primarily examines the core solidarity participants: the KGCS allies, who define themselves as "ethical gamers," as they are concerned with moral responsibility in game consumption and the formation of the gaming community.

KGCS, formerly PMUA, emerged to provide practical counter-power beyond online spaces, offering structural stability to Twitter-based movement. While social media activism is often seen as difficult to sustain due to its temporary

Table 1. *In-depth Interview Participants (First Phase)*

Participant	Category	Experience Playing <i>Limbus Company</i>	Gender
A	KGCS member	Yes	Female
B	KGCS representative	Yes	Male
C	KGCS member	Yes	Female
D	KGCS member	Yes	Other*
E	Ally	Yes	Female
F	Ally	Yes	Female
G	Ally	Yes	Female
H	Ally	Yes	Female
I	Ally	Yes	Female
J	Ally	Yes	Female
K	Ally	Yes	Male
L	Ally	Yes	Female
M	Ally	Yes	Female
N	Current Gaming Industry Worker	Yes	Female
O	Former Gaming Industry Worker	No	Other*
P	Former Gaming Industry Worker	No	Female
Q	Current Gaming Industry Worker	No	Female
R	Current Gaming Industry Worker	Yes	Female
S	Current Gaming Industry Worker	No	Male
T	Former Gaming Industry Worker	No	Other*

*Other includes cases where participants preferred not to disclose their gender.

Table 2. *In-depth Interview Participants (Follow-up)*

Participant	Category	Experience Playing <i>Limbus Company</i>	Gender
A	KGCS member	Yes	Female
D	KGCS member	Yes	Other*
U	Ally	No	Female
R	Current Gaming Industry Worker	Yes	Female

*Other includes cases where participants preferred not to disclose their gender.

and issue-based nature (Paik, 2013), the synergy between a formal organization and online solidarity has been formed to overcome these

limitations. Furthermore, PMUA(KGCS)'s actions, such as installing offline banners with online 'proof shot' campaigns and coordinating

hashtag protests with truck protests, reflect their attempt to enact continuity between digital and physical spaces (Willems, 2019).

KGCS allies consistently identified themselves as female gamers, a historically marginalized group in the gaming industry. They felt betrayed when Project Moon failed to recognize them as legitimate consumers. Given Twitter's role as a platform for women's voices (H. I. Kim, 2017), the *Limbus Company* fanbase on Twitter was mostly female. These fans faced marginalization when the company aligned with male-dominated communities that cyberbullied the illustrator while dismissing their Twitter fandom supporting the game and illustrator. In gaming culture, traditionally viewed as a male space, female gamers face systematic exclusion due to discriminatory gender norms (Beom et al., 2017; T. Yoon & Kim, 2023). Their participation in protests and game boycotts asserts that female gamers, despite their historical marginalization, are powerful consumers.

M: The director and board members make decisions based on their feelings and deep-rooted prejudices that female users are just a handful and don't generate significant revenue, completely disregarding statistical evidence in favor of certain male users' opinions. It is extremely irrational. What's frustrating is that so many companies continue this discrimination against women almost out of habit.

N: It's remarkable that so many female users actually rose up together. They turned it into reality, showing they could actually make a real impact. Until now, companies would say, "We follow male users' opinions because there aren't many female users and they don't make money," but that wasn't true. Not this time. It's truly amazing to see them making such a direct impact.

Though predominantly comprising cisgender female gamers, the allies were not a gender-uniform group, including men and non-binary

individuals. Their gendered characterization derived not merely from numerical dominance but from their oppositional stance to male-dominated gaming communities on platforms like DC Inside and ArcaLive. The KGCS representative defined allied gamers as 'the ethical and sensible majority of game consumers' (S. Park, 2024), thereby establishing a new moral identity that transcends gender. The allies labeled misogynistic male-dominated communities as 'incels,' while constructing their own identity as "ethical gamers" in direct ideological opposition.

KGCS allies, under their inclusive identity as ethical gamers, actively welcomed male participants into their coalition, diverging from the separatist feminist discourse that has dominated South Korean Twitter since the feminism reboot movement. Though predominantly female gamers, KGCS strategically selected a male activist as their representative. It was a strategy to protect other members, acknowledging that female representatives would face heightened risks of violence from aggressive anti-feminist communities. Ryu (2024) notes that male allies in anti-misogynistic movements typically leverage their masculinity within male homosocial contexts to confront violence against women. KGCS allies embraced this dynamic, integrating male allies as essential members of their solidarity movement.

As ethical gamers, following Fiske's (1989) framework, KGCS allies functioned as active agents within the industry. KGCS allies demonstrated awareness of labor issues surrounding ideological vetting and responsibility for maintaining game quality, believing active solidarity could transform the industry. Their strategy paralleled that of gamers who protested against EA, emphasizing the connection between their movement and corporate profits (Condis & Bazaa, 2024). KGCS allies consistently highlighted that 60% of *Limbus Company's* customers are female, that the game's popularity stemmed from its genuine ethical exploration, and that excluding employees for

being feminists contradicts corporate values.

As an alternative strategy, KGCS allies identified themselves as both ethical consumers and workers. As working professionals or university students approaching employment, they perceived the practice of denying jobs based on feminist social media activity as a direct threat to their careers. Therefore, while their primary identities were grounded in being women or ethical gamers, KGCS allies emphasized their worker identity throughout the movement's discourse.

A: I'm also a worker who plans to keep working, and if something like this happens, I could be laid off someday too. Although I don't work in the gaming industry, I work in a field very closely related to gaming: the IT industry. If this kind of situation spreads to my field, I could be fired too. That thought really scared me.

E: I believe if you're a working person, you should be angry about this situation. If someone can be forced to retire just for what they said—that's not right. They didn't commit any crime. It was just for speaking up. People might avoid each other personally, but that shouldn't threaten someone's livelihood.

The allies' activities garnered positive responses from past and present gaming industry workers, who noted that in the past, workers subject to ideological vetting lacked resources to respond directly. By organizing through their association, allies provided these workers with support and helped build counter-power, potentially influencing industry dynamics through solidarity with workers. Despite the gaming industry's disregard for workers, characterized by unstable employment, low wages, and pressure to resign (J. J. Kim, 2020), companies remain highly sensitive to consumer complaints due to concerns about sales (S. G. Jang & Chae, 2023). Thus, the emergence of consumers advocating for workers' rights presented a significant opportunity for improving industry labor conditions.

KGCS allies strategically adopted the red headband image, traditionally a symbol of labor protest, to support victims of anti-feminist backlash. They customized their Twitter profiles with red headbands displaying "Struggle, Resolve, Unite," symbolically expressing their solidarity with workers through this visual and linguistic appropriation. The red headband functioned as a unifying symbol that bridged diverse political identities within the solidarity movement, creating a means for mutual recognition. Through these labor movement symbols, KGCS allies, though primarily consumers in the gaming industry, challenged both game companies' discriminatory practices and male-dominated communities' anti-feminist behaviors from workers' perspectives.

The Intersectionality of feminism and labor rights: Competing discourses

Aligning with their solidarity toward industry workers, KGCS prioritized victim protection and advocacy. Given that most of its members were ordinary gamers without experience in civil society organizations, they recruited male union activists as consultants to provide strategic expertise. Reflecting their online origins, KGCS adopted methods suited to digital environments. Understanding how harmful narratives rapidly spread and normalize in online communities, they prioritized direct engagement with victims and dissemination of information to control public discourse and minimize potential damage.

In raising public awareness, KGCS allies framed the anti-feminist backlash in the gaming industry as an intersectional issue combining misogyny and labor rights violations. They highlighted how female workers face dual vulnerability through workers' marginalization and systemic gender discrimination. The *Limbus Company* illustrator and the MapleStory animator exemplified this pattern, as their professional authority and work scope were dismissed purely based on gender.

KGCS allies emphasized that cyberbullying was driven by male-dominated gaming communities' misogynistic tendencies targeting the victims' gender. They built solidarity with victims while asserting workers' fundamental right to workplace inclusion regardless of gender or personal beliefs.

F: While everyone probably thinks similarly, even a single issue can have multiple causes. In my opinion, two major factors created synergy in this situation: the gaming industry's poor compliance with labor laws is a huge problem and a root cause of this issue, and then there's the perception of women, which is also a serious problem.

However, in structuring the discourse surrounding ideological vetting for feminism, KGCS allies primarily focused on labor rights violations when proposing practical solutions. This was significantly influenced by the Project Moon case's unique circumstance: unlike previous cases involving freelancers, the victim was a permanent employee, and the company openly terminated their contract despite legal protections against arbitrary dismissal. KGCS allies strategically used this distinction to legitimize their resistance. Some reinforced this narrative by sharing screenshots showing industry professionals criticizing the incident as a labor rights violation, demonstrating that even non-feminist professionals viewed it as illegal termination. This strategic focus on labor rights appears calculated to appeal to audiences indifferent or hostile to feminism, deliberately sidestepping issues of structural gender discrimination in the gaming industry and the tendency to demonize feminism in Korean society.

The participation of labor activists in KGCS and their leadership in Twitter discussions played a crucial role in shaping counter-narratives that prioritized labor rights over feminist discourse in addressing ideological vetting. Although the problem involved a complex intersection of

feminism and labor rights, KGCS members and allies strategically framed it through labor rights, recognizing that this approach would be more effective in protecting victims and pursuing legal action in the short term. They acknowledged that while feminist agendas are not yet widely accepted in Korean society, labor rights issues generally receive greater public sympathy and understanding. Thus, for KGCS allies, the labor rights agenda served as a tactical means to increase the visibility of ideological vetting and persuade others of the need for its resolution.

A: I thought we should frame this as a feminist issue, thinking it would get more attention that way. But while Twitter constantly goes back and forth about feminist issues every hour, when it comes to real-world politics, issues labeled as 'feminism' don't get any attention. So even though we knew this was a feminist issue, we decided that to make the issue bigger and address the problem, it should be framed as a labor rights issue.

KGCS allies effectively prioritized support for the victim by forming a discourse based on immediately available legal measures. This strategy reflects the reality of Korean society, where comprehensive anti-discrimination and hate speech laws are absent, and merely mentioning feminist agendas can provoke backlash. However, this approach paradoxically hindered more expansive discussions. By focusing on wrongful dismissal, which could be addressed under current legal frameworks, KGCS and its allies insufficiently pursued discussions about fundamental gender inequality and concrete proposals to change discriminatory industry structures. This aligns with Baik's (2019) analysis of South Korea's #MeToo movement, where discussions remained confined to narrow dimensions of hierarchical sexual violence accusations without progressing to address the movement's underlying aims of eliminating gender discrimination and building a gender-equal society.

KGCS allies' focus on visible victim protection became particularly evident when their experiences as consumers of subcultural industries collided with critical discussions in feminist discourse. This was exemplified by the controversy surrounding KGCS-allied activist's past behavior involving sexual objectification. While some Twitter users who had previously criticized the sexual commodification of women in popular culture strongly reacted to these allegations, many KGCS allies decided to 'move past' criticisms of the activist's opinions, given the scarcity of individuals taking concrete action in solidarity with victims. Paradoxically, although they positioned themselves as a group promoting ethical gaming culture, when internal moral controversies arose, they chose to tolerate moral discrepancies to maintain momentum in their movement by prioritizing practical outcomes in victim protection.

KGCS allies argued that individuals with morally questionable preferences in consuming virtual content should also be protected from unfair workplace discrimination. This stance came from their dual position as subcultural fandom members who experienced marginalization and threats within the gaming industry while enjoying the gaming content. They cited experiences of female creators and feminist supporters who suffered harm engaging with subcultural creations including digital contents. During the 2016 Nexon incident, male-dominated communities maliciously reported fan creation events participated by webtoon artists who supported voice actress Kim Jayeon for obscenity distribution (S. Y. Lee, 2019). Women creators also faced various forms of sexual harassment and harm. KGCS allies' defensive response to criticisms of the activist's consumption practices stemmed from their recognition that such criticisms could be weaponized not only against men but also against female creators, undermining solidarity with victims.

H: Just because someone is a woman, it doesn't mean they're completely removed from creating mature or explicit content, and creators shouldn't be rejected just for making such work. I completely agree with this point. I don't think female creators should be persecuted for that kind of work. These creators also need to be protected.

The primary motivation for KGCS allies was the protection of consumer rights, while their solidarity with workers emerged from a broader desire to enjoy games produced by professionals in safe and fair working conditions. Initially, rather than deeply internalizing feminist views, their actions were primarily rooted in their identity as (female) gamer consumers. Ultimately, when conflicts emerged between existing feminist discourse and the unique aspects of the gaming industry, KGCS allies focused on rapidly building and maintaining defensive narratives rather than engaging in sufficient reflection and mature dialogue.

Possibility of loose alliance amid division and conflict

In online spaces, various conflicts surrounding KGCS and its allies emerged during the solidarity movement. KGCS demonstrated a departure from gender separatism by actively incorporating male allies, which led to conflicts with self-proclaimed 'RadFem' (radical feminist) users, similar to TERFs, active on Twitter. RadFem users targeted their criticism mainly at the presence of male representatives in feminist solidarity movements, as they exhibited strongly separatist characteristics, attacking anyone who didn't align with their discourse. As aggressive behavior from RadFem users continued, solidarity members expressed antipathy toward them and criticized their exclusionary tendencies.

D: You know when radical feminism was really active on Twitter? I got attacked and mobbed by those people



back then. I didn't say much. I just said, "Come on, calling kids 'Korean male larvae' isn't right, what did the kids do wrong? It's the adults who taught them wrong and it's a problem with society. Why blame the kids?" Then I got cyberbullied like crazy. They said I must be a "Korean male larva" myself, saying I was revealing my identity.

KGCS allies also faced conflict with intersectional-queer feminist Twitter users initially shown solidarity after the Project Moon incident. Some of the KGCS-allied activists' personal Twitter discourses, unrelated to the incident, stigmatized certain women's groups by deliberately framing intersectional-queer feminists with diverse orientations under a singular 'metropolitan upper-middle class' identity and attributing Korea's child-exclusionary culture to 'young women's hatred of children.' These statements, which could be perceived as discriminatory toward the solidarity's predominantly young female membership, resulted in intersectional-queer feminists developing antipathy toward the activists, KGCS, and allies supporting KGCS.

Some of the activists' statements caused rifts among KGCS allies and revealed contradictions in their relationships. While some allies directly protested, and some even left the movement, KGCS officially distanced itself from the activist's personal views, likely to shield allies from pressure. However, the activist's substantial role as KGCS's spokesperson and engagement with allies, along with visible support from 'red headbands' during controversies, had already solidified their public image as KGCS's representative. Dissenting voices from allies and victims were largely overshadowed, creating a perception where support for the activist eclipsed internal criticism.

P: I keep raising questions. Even with those two, I do challenge them. I don't just let things slide. Sometimes people worship these activists like they're idols, and I wonder why I keep questioning if I worship them.

Also, some people are like "Wow, they're so amazing," and when I see that kind of atmosphere developing, it sometimes worries me.

Some KGCS allies counterattacked critics of the activist, alienating potential allies and weakening solidarity. They conflated separatists rejecting male participation with intersectional-queer feminists, mislabeling both as RadFem. Their indiscriminate labeling revealed that they identified others based only on their position towards the activist, not by understanding different feminist branches. These actions can be seen as hostile mislabeling driven by defensive mechanisms.

T: I think we can accept simple messages of support like "stay strong, activists" as expressions of solidarity or support. But when it leads to attacks on specific users, I actually think this follows a pattern similar to ideological vetting. Because the pattern is similar. While there might be some differences, the pattern of branding someone you don't like, having multiple people attack them based on that branding, and completely silencing their voice through these attacks. This series of patterns, while we have the very good term 'cyberbullying' for it, I feel shares some context with ideological vetting.

Even when the activist's statements conflicted with KGCS allies' own views, they could not exclude the activist due to a perceived lack of alternative support sources. This perception stemmed from both the discourse formed by KGCS allies who primarily verified visible achievements through online platforms and the empirical experiences of the victims of ideological vetting. According to participants P and R, victims were merely collected as case studies by existing organizations without receiving any practical support. In this context, KGCS was recognized as the only organization exercising tangible counter-power through specific support such as close communication and legal responses. Consequently, victims and allies had no choice

but to rely on KGCS and the activist to establish the movement's direction and methodology.

P: If I don't step up, they say we can't help. If I do step up, they ask if I'll be okay because it'll be hard. So, what am I supposed to do? During all this, they engage in power struggles among themselves. They fight with each other and make it impossible to run a proper movement.

R: Now that people know there are only [activist name] and [another activist name], and only KGCS, [KGCS representative name], they don't tell us not to step up. They might say they don't like it, but they don't tell us not to get involved.

The movement's momentum, relying heavily on specific individuals, appears fragile as it could quickly dissipate if these key figures withdraw. Participant T, a former victim of ideological vetting, shared an experience where an activist abruptly avoided communication after offering help. T's trust in the activist diminished significantly upon witnessing their return to the cause, focusing more on self-promotion than addressing victims' concerns. When solidarity is driven by discourse centered around a few key actors rather than through horizontal and deliberative cooperation, it risks becoming an arena for power struggles over achievements, diverging from the essential nature of solidarity. In this process, the movement, which began with victim protection, might dissolve before fully achieving its goals.

T: In the end, what was this fight for? It was supposed to be a fight to restore victims' rights and to prevent more victims, but this fight started to become all about that activist. That activist stopped caring about solidarity with victims and started focusing on mocking those they saw as enemies. Watching this, I started wondering if they were just enjoying this.

The fragmentation of online solidarity paralleled conflicts among real-world civil society

organizations, with both spheres experiencing tensions over movement directions and agenda ownership. However, Twitter's structural features intensified these conflicts. While retweets, trends, and hashtags enabled broad issue dissemination and user connection, they tended to reinforce existing biases rather than foster mutual understanding during debates (J. H. Kim, 2022). While anger-inducing expressions effectively spread agendas through retweets, they simultaneously deepened emotional polarization and sparked unnecessary conflicts (Kam & Han, 2023). Twitter's design amplified like-minded voices but structurally limited meaningful dialogue between opposing viewpoints. Consequently, while Twitter provided crucial solidarity momentum, it ultimately impeded discourse development and fragmented the public sphere.

Nevertheless, Twitter's nature cannot be definitively reduced to fragmentation and conflict. While solidarity members often faced acute conflicts, collective action emerged during critical moments. A notable example occurred in August 2024, when police decided not to forward charges in the online harassment case filed by the *MapleStory* animator. Twitter users unanimously responded by filing government complaints condemning the police's gender-discriminatory investigation. This demonstrated that even as KGCS emerged as a central actor and solidarity seemed to converge around a single organization or individual activist, the characteristic fluid alliance of individual actors around specific issues in online social movements (Paik, 2013) remained robust. Ultimately, what drove success in social media activism was a flexible attitude that while we may not agree with all of each other's opinions, we can still show solidarity on specific issues.

CONCLUSION

The online solidarity triggered by the Project Moon incident shared characteristics with feminist online activism while exhibiting distinctive features in its composition, strategies, discourses, and processes of unity and conflict. The incident generated explosive online solidarity against ideological vetting for feminist beliefs, resulting in the formation of a formal civil organization to maintain momentum beyond typical online campaign lifecycles. Most importantly, through close communication with victims and public visibility, KGCS demonstrated the effectiveness of solidarity and established itself as a viable advocacy option for gaming industry workers. This is an attempt to exert influence on the gaming industry through consumer-worker solidarity, wherein game consumers formed an organization and leveraged their consumer identity to support a victim of ideological vetting. While female voices were marginalized within the gaming industry, members of the solidarity movement not only actively engaged in protests to assert the presence of female gamers, but also redefined a more inclusive identity of “ethical gamers,” distinguishing themselves from male-centric gamer groups that have dominated mainstream gaming culture.

Meanwhile, the solidarity movement tended to rely heavily on established activists for the discursive strategies, thereby limiting the possibility of coalition. The absence of institutional support for women facing harassment within the gaming industry made it inevitable for the victim of ideological victim to rely on KGCS. This created a paradoxical situation where the victim had to accept perspectives from activists whose agendas sometimes conflicted with their anti-misogynistic goals. More problematically, some KGCS allies began enforcing ideological conformity by demanding unconditional support for activist statements while excluding those who questioned them. This uncritical loyalty created

a mechanism for silencing dissent within the movement itself. Since KGCS allies identified primarily as consumers rather than feminists, they lacked the analytical tools for critical feminist reflection, leading to conflicts with other potential allies and undermining broader coalition-building efforts.

While gaming has historically been male-dominated and female objectification remains a critical issue, women in the gaming industry often must comply with corporate directives regardless of their personal opinions. Women critiquing industry misogyny have consistently emphasized their identity as gamers and cultural stakeholders. Understanding women's intersectional identities as game enthusiasts and feminists, as industry workers and backlash victims is crucial not only for meaningful solidarity among women but also for building coalition that transcends gender.

Online environments maintain some functioning of ‘issue-based solidarity’ while demonstrating conflicts between different actors. However, this ultimately relies on temporary mobilization power. This ultimately relies on temporary mobilization power. For a sustainable movement beyond resolving individual cases through victim-centered approaches, it is necessary to learn ways to broaden solidarity by flexibly negotiating with those having different identities or ideological views and finding possibilities for cooperation, as Sohn (2020) and Song (2023) pointed out. Focusing solely on immediate achievements and singular goals can lead to treating diverse feminist perspectives and related critiques as unimportant or postponable issues. To drive genuine change, it is desirable to recognize fellow citizens as social members and not ignore minority opinions. Disregarding complex and multifaceted discussions during problem-solving leads to discrimination and exclusion among allies, ultimately resulting in their withdrawal. Moreover, Twitter does not seem to be an ideal platform for deliberating various viewpoints. More fundamentally,

Korean society itself lacks sufficient capacity to engage in discussions on intersectionality. This difficulty in fostering meaningful discussions on intersectionality remains a critical challenge to address moving forward.

REFERENCES

- Baik, M. (2019). The transition of feminist politics after the Korean #MeToo movement: Toward 'politics of solidarity'. *The Korean Review of Political Thought*, 25(2), 68–92.
- Banet-Weiser, S., Gill, R., & Rottenberg, C. (2020). Postfeminism, popular feminism and neoliberal feminism? Sarah Banet-Weiser, Rosalind Gill and Catherine Rottenberg in conversation. *Feminist Theory*, 21(1), 3–24.
- Bates, L. (2021). *Men who hate women*. Sourcebooks.
- Beom, Y., Kang, E., & Lee, D. (2022). The impact of ideological vetting about gender issues on digital platform creative workers and suggestion of legal action against ideological vetting: In webtoon, webnovel, and illust industries. *Human Rights*, 22, 163–234.
- Beom, Y., Lee, B., & Lee, Y. (2017). <Overwatch>, in different voices -An analysis of violent speeches toward female game players in <Overwatch>-. *Human Rights*, 17, 283–337.
- Bezio, K. M. (2018). Ctrl-Alt-Del: GamerGate as a precursor to the rise of the alt-right. *Leadership*, 14(5), 556–566.
- Castells, M. (2012). *Networks of outrage and hope: Social movements in the Internet age*. Polity Press.
- Chae, Y. (2023, December 18). 'Femi-censorship' seven years ago is still ongoing... "Stamp a label like playing a game". *Hankyoreh*. https://www.hani.co.kr/arti/society/society_general/1120763.html
- Choi, Y., Slaker, J. S., & Ahmad, N. (2020). Deep strike playing gender in the world of Overwatch and the case of Geguri. *Feminist Media Studies*, 20(8), 1128–1143.
- Condis, M., & Bazaaz, U. (2024). Successful fan activist campaign. *Participations*, 20(1).
- Fiske, J. (1989). *Understanding popular culture*. Routledge.
- Gold, R. L. (1958). Roles in sociological field observations. *Social Forces*, 36(3), 217–223.
- Hampton, K. N. (2017). Studying the digital: Directions and challenges for digital methods. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 43, 167–188. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-060116-053505>
- IGDA. (2021). *Developer satisfaction survey: Summary report*. <https://igda.org/resources-archive/developer-satisfaction-survey-summary-report-2021/>
- Jang, S. G., & Chae, Y. (2023, December 26). How did the gaming industry become a battleground for 'feminist ideology interrogation'? *Hankyoreh*. <https://www.hani.co.kr/arti/society/women/1121779.html>
- Jang, S. H., & Kim, S. I. (2021). Recontextualization of subway outdoor advertisements by fandom: Focusing on advertisement condemning 'Nth Room'. *Media, Gender & Culture*, 36(1), 97–135.
- Jenkins, H. (2015). "Cultural acupuncture": Fan activism and the Harry Potter alliance. In L. Geraghty (Ed.), *Popular media cultures* (pp. 206–229). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Jo, A. (2022). *A study on female character in digital games—Discourses on D.Va of <Overwatch> in Korea and alternative practices—* [Master's thesis, Sungkyunkwan University]. <https://dcollection.skku.edu/common/orgView/000000169839>
- Kam, H., & Han, H. (2023). An exploratory study on the mechanism of public opinion formation in social media - Analysis of big data on the issue of 'abolition of the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family' in the 20th presidential election. *Locality & Communication*, 27(3), 5–49.
- Kim, D. O. D., Curran, N. M., & Kim, H. T. C. (2020). Digital feminism and affective

- splintering: South Korean Twitter discourse on 500 Yemeni refugees. *International Journal of Communication*, 14, 4117–4135.
- Kim, H. I. (2017). Women's resistance action seen through SNS hashtags. *Media, Gender & Culture*, 32(4), 5–70.
- Kim, H. J. (2022). *An era of ordinary Ilbe users*. MayBooks.
- Kim, J. H. (2022). *Why does the diversity of opinions result in polarization?: Focusing on the effect of the Twitter platform design on polarization over critical race theory* [Master's Thesis]. Jeonbuk National University.
- Kim, J. J. (2020). IT and game industry characteristics and labor-management relations issues—Naver, Kakao, Nexon, Smilegate—. *Korea Labour & Society Institute Issue Paper*, 2020(4), 1–17.
- Kim, J. S. (2019, November 25). Ideological vetting? Game protection? The game industry's 'feminism' issue 3 years. *ThisIsGame*. <https://www.thisisgame.com/webzine/news/nboard/11/?n=99882>
- Kim, M. (2020, January 6). The game industry is under fire again for 'ideological vetting against feminism... Now, the practice of pre-screening is becoming more blatant. *Hankyoreh*. https://www.hani.co.kr/arti/society/society_general/923339.html
- Kim, S. A. (2017). Connective action? Critical review of twitter hashtag activism and Korean idol fandom. *The Korean Journal of Cultural Sociology*, 25, 297–336.
- Kim, S. J. (2018). When fandom meets feminism: Fruits and issues of fandom studies from the feminism perspective. *Journal of Communication Research*, 55(3), 47–86.
- Korea Creative Content Agency. (2022). *2022 Korean Game White Paper*. <https://www.kocca.kr/kocca/bbs/view/B0000146/2001838.do?searchCnd=1&searchWrd=&cateTp1=&cateTp2=&useYn=&menuNo=204154&categorys=0&subcate=0&cateCode=&type=&instNo=0&questionTp=&ufSetting=&recovery=&option1=&option2=&year=&morePage=&qtp=&domainId=&sortCode=&pageIndex=3>
- Lee, H. J., & Park, J. (2021). "Hyeji" as a discourse of preferential treatment of women and reverse discrimination against men: How does young male online gamers' emphasis on fairness lead to Misogyny? *Broadcasting & Communication*, 22(1), 5–40.
- Lee, H. M. (2019). *Radical reconstruction of feminist politics: Focusing on the critical analysis of "TERF" in South Korea* [Master's thesis, Yonsei University]. <http://dcollection.yonsei.ac.kr/common/orgView/000000520013>
- Lee, H. S. (2022). *Storytelling and media practice of vulnerable bodies on YouTube vlogs about illness and disability experiences* [Doctoral dissertation, Sogang University]. <https://dcollection.sogang.ac.kr/dcollection/common/orgView/000000067129>
- Lee, S. J. (2020, July 8). "I agreed to feminism, so I'm out of the gaming industry" ... The Human Rights Commission "We need to improve our practices on discrimination against women". *KBS News*. <https://news.kbs.co.kr/news/pc/view/view.do?ncd=4489416>
- Lee, S. Y. (2019). *Reexamining the notion of the literary public sphere* [Master's thesis, Sogang University]. <http://dcollection.sogang.ac.kr:8089/dcollection/common/orgView/000000064243>
- Lekakis, E. (2022). Gender, feminism, and consumer activism. In J. Lekakis (Ed.), *Consumer activism: Promotional culture and resistance* (pp. 73–96). Sage.
- Martinez, M. H. (2020). Feminist cyber-resistance to digital violence Surviving gamergate. *Debats*, 134(2), 89–106.
- Munro, E. (2013). Feminism: A fourth wave? *Political Insight*, 4(2), 22–25.

- Murdock, G. (2000). Reconstructing the ruined tower: Contemporary communications and questions of class. In J. Curran & M. Gurevitch (Eds.), *Mass media and society* (3rd ed., pp. 7–26). Arnold.
- Paik, W. (2013). *Network social culture*. CommunicationBooks.
- Park, C. (2020). The subjectification of gender and the politics of resistance in the digital space: Focusing on online feminism. *East and West Studies*, 32(4), 123–143.
- Park, S. (2024, July 28). How did a young man who enjoyed 'DC' become the leader of the opposition to 'ideological vetting against feminist?'. *Pressian*.
<https://www.pressian.com/pages/articles/2024072611540373285>
- Pearce, R., Erikainen, S., & Vincent, B. (2020). TERF wars: An introduction. *The Sociological Review*, 68(4), 677–698.
- Pink, S., Horst, H., Postill, J., Hjorth, L., Lewis, T., & Tacchi, J. (2016). *Digital ethnography: Principles and practice*. Sage.
- Pyeon, J. (2023, August 23). The indie game company that Dev had set his sights on, the reason for the sharp drop in sales. *BizWatch*.
<https://news.bizwatch.co.kr/article/mobile/2023/08/22/0028>
- Ryu, J. (2024). As a reverse discourse, feminism and norms: What norms intervene in the subjectification of male feminists? *Media, Gender & Culture*, 39(2), 357–401.
- Seo, D. (2011). Aesthetical, too aesthetical capitalism: The crisis of cultural studies and its critical exploration. *Economy and Society*, 92, 10–41.
- Sohn, H. (2017). *Feminism reboot*. NamooYeonpil.
- Sohn, H. (2020). Again, matter: Notes on a political project called 'digital feminism'. *Culture/Science*, 104, 49–72.
- Song, J. (2023). The conditions for disconnection and continuation of feminism knowing: Focusing on the experiences of women supporting the standpoint of "TERF". *Journal of Korean Women's Studies*, 39(2), 69–102.
- Willems, W. (2019). 'The politics of things' digital media, urban space, and the materiality of publics. *Media, Culture & Society*, 41(8), 1192–1209.
- Yang, I. (2021). Idol-fans' cultural practices in Korea after feminism reboot. *Culture-business-technology*, 1(1), 23–45.
- Yoon, M. (2021). Digital creative labor: A case study on women game developers. *The Korean Journal of Cultural Sociology*, 29(1), 91–148.
- Yoon, T., & Kim, J. Y. (2023). *Can the female gamer shoot?* Monsbook.