Towards a Feminist Internet and its Governance in India and Beyond
Academic Syllabus[1]
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Introduction

> *"A feminist internet works towards empowering more women and queer persons – in all our diversities – to fully enjoy our rights, engage in pleasure and play, and dismantle patriarchy. This integrates our different realities, contexts and specificities – including age, disabilities, sexualities, gender identities and expressions, socioeconomic locations, political and religious beliefs, ethnic origins, and racial markers."*
> - Feminist Principles of the Internet, Association for Progressive Communications, 2016

The Internet holds great promise as a democratizing enabler of social, economic, cultural and political rights. How far has this vision been actualized for women and gender minorities in the Global South? How can we envision a 'feminist internet'? How would it be different from the Internet of today? One of the aims of this syllabus is to unsettle the idea of the Internet and its governance as being a 'First-World' concern. It attempts to unpack the politics of one's location while accessing the Internet and how those social, cultural, economic, political, and geographic locations complicate one's experience in cyberspace.

The course aims to understand the Internet in the context of some of the major current debates in the social sciences; globalization, democratization, divides in access to information etc. It provides an overview of the major findings from research on the social implications of the Internet, from a feminist framework, and at each point, relates these findings to similar debates in 'offline' spaces.

This syllabus is curated as an introductory course at a Post-Graduate / Masters-level for students in / from the Global South. Its potential to be offered in the form of a webinar series is to be further explored.

Please note that all references to 'women' in this syllabus also include people who identify as women and girls (unless otherwise specified).

The following key questions will run through all the topics discussed in this course, and students are expected to bear these in mind when undertaking course readings:
- Does the Internet reinforce or challenge (or both) existing social, cultural, economic and political dynamics in the Global South, and how?
- How are existing debates about identity, violence, privacy, movements, labor, democratization etc. being reshaped by Internet technologies in the Global South? And what are the newer debates that are emerging in the context of 'new media' technologies?

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[1] *Created originally for the "Gender, Media, Culture" course as part of the M.A. in Women's Studies programme at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, India*

- What are some feminist contributions to Internet Governance in the Global South, and how have these contributions complicated the traditional paradigm of digital media technologies?

Lesson Plan

The course is taught over 15 sessions, with each session's discussions leading into the next session, like a journey the student is taken on over the course period. Sources used in the assigned readings for each session include journal papers, issue papers, discussion papers, background papers, research reports, book chapters, interviews, and researched articles. There are 2-3 required readings per session, with upto 3 optional / further readings for students interested in diving deeper into the theme of the session.

Session 1: What is a Feminist Internet?
Session 2: Meaningful Internet Access
Session 3: Freedom of Expression Online
Session 4: Post-Colonial and Intersectional Digital Identities
Session 5: Digital Identities: Gender, Sexuality, Race
Session 6: Digital Identities: Caste, Religion, Disability
Session 7: Technology-Mediated Violence Against Women
Session 8: Feminist Resistances and Movement Building Online
Session 9: Feminist Digital Labor
Session 10: Alternative Economies of the Internet
Session 11: Gendered Politics of Data and Algorithms
Session 12: Privacy and Cyber Surveillance
Session 13: Memory and Anonymity
Session 14: Internet Democracy
Session 15: Women's rights in Internet Governance

Session 1: What is a Feminist Internet?

Before diving into the current major debates relating to the Internet, this introductory session first historicises feminist struggles and engagement with the Internet and explores how we can envision a "feminist Internet" going forward. A feminist Internet can mean different things for different individuals and communities depending on their social locations and privileges (or lack thereof). We will examine some such articulations, and discuss our own visions of a feminist Internet in the context of the postcolonial Global South.

Key questions:
- What has been the nature of feminist engagements with the Internet across various stakeholders - civil society, private corporates, academia, governments and Internet Governance policy spaces?
- How does feminist thought help us depart from mainstream frameworks of the Internet that have embedded power relations that dictate the Internet's structure as well as the processes governing it?
- Why do we need a feminist Internet and what would a feminist Internet look like?

Required Readings

1. Gurumurthy, A. (2017). A history of feminist engagement with development and digital technologies. Retrieved from https://www.apc.org/sites/default/files/HistoryOfFeministEngagementWithDevelopmentAndDigitalTechnologies.pdf

2. Nagarajan, C. (2016). What does a feminist internet look like? | Chitra Nagarajan. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/sep/12/feminist-internet-empowering-online-harassment

Optional Readings

Zoonen, L. V. (2001). Feminist internet studies. Feminist Media Studies, 1(1), 67-72.

Session 2: Meaningful Internet Access

After gaining an understanding of what various articulations a feminist Internet would have for the Global South, this session explores the Internet gender gap that is hindering us from actualizing visions of a feminist Internet. While the Internet is helping people to imagine new possibilities and actualize them, women and girls are being left behind across the globe - women are nearly 25 percent less likely than men to be online. The numerous existing challenges to accessing the internet are amplified in the case of women. Apart from these, there are also gender-specific hurdles that women face in harnessing the internet's potential. Therefore, since gender is proven to be a contributing factor in hindering internet access globally, any efforts made towards bridging that Internet gender gap can help achieve gender equality.

While access is the starting point for discussing Internet dynamics, the conversation needs to move beyond accessibility to *meaningful* accessibility (context-appropriate use of digital connectivity). This session will unpack how a feminist Internet has the potential to enable more women to thus meaningfully access the Internet in a "universal, acceptable, affordable, unconditional, open, and equal" manner (APC, 2016).

Key questions:
- How do we move beyond frameworks of 'access' towards 'meaningful access' to the Internet?
- What are the known barriers to meaningful Internet access for diverse populations of women?
- In India, what potential does meaningful Internet access hold for 'women empowerment'? (women's ability to make strategic life choices where that ability had been previously denied to them)

Required Readings

1. Internet Governance Forum, United Nations-DESA. (2016). Overcoming Barriers to Enable Women's Meaningful Internet Access. Retrieved from https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/filedepot_download/5004/1318
Part A: Sections 1, 2, 3, 5

2. Srivastava, R., & Manzar, O. (2013). The Internet as a Pathway for Women's Empowerment in India. Retrieved from https://www.giswatch.org/sites/default/files/india_gisw13.pdf

Optional Readings
United Nations. (2018). Gender equality and empowerment of women through ICT. Retrieved from http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/public/w2000-09.05-ict-e.pdf

Internet Governance Forum, United Nations-DESA. (2017). Unique challenges for unique women: An exploration of the unique needs and challenges women from diverse communities face in gaining meaningful Internet access. Retrieved from https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/filedepot_download/5004/1319
Part 1: Section 1.1 - 1.7

(Thayer), M. (2017). Let's close the Internet gender gap - Mozilla | Internet Citizen. Retrieved from https://blog.mozilla.org/internetcitizen/2017/03/08/closing-the-internet-gender-gap/

Palitza, K. (2007). ICTs—closing or expanding the gender digital divide?. Agenda, 21(71), 36-41.

Session 3: Freedom of Expression Online

Once meaningful accessibility has been explored, we turn our discussion towards the dynamics of diverse women's experiences on Internet platforms. Women's expressions are often surveilled and restricted using technology, legal regulations and even violence. This session is about the threats that freedom of expression face on the Internet by various stakeholders, focused on the socio-political contexts of the Global South.

Key questions:
- What are the different types of law that affect the right to free speech and expression on the Internet in India?
- How do we view threats to freedom of expression online as part of "larger political projects of moral policing, censorship, and hierarchisation of citizenship and rights"? (APC, 2016) In this context, how are Indian laws being (mis)used to "protect morality, and through this, a particular set of power relations"? (Rashid & Kovacs, 2013)
- What are the dominant policy responses to 'contested' forms of expression on the Internet? This can be examined by understanding global policy responses to pornography.

Required Readings
1. Association for Progressive Communications. (2017). Unshackling expression: A study on laws criminalising expression online in Asia (pp. 50-82). Retrieved from
https://www.apc.org/sites/default/files/giswspecial2017_web.pdf
Chapter: Criminal law and freedom of expression on the internet in India
Authors: Anja Kovacs and Nayantara R, Internet Democracy Project

2. Rashid, S., & Kovacs, A. (2013). Criminalising Dissent? An Analysis of the Application of Criminal Law to Speech on the Internet through Case Studies (pp. 40-46). Retrieved from

https://internetdemocracy.in/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Shehla-Rashid-Shora-and-Dr.-Anja-Kovacs-Criminalising-Dissent.pdf
Chapter: Morality and 'Women's Modesty': The Air India, Ambikesh Mahapatra and Henna Bakshi Cases

3. Datta, B. (2015). Porn. Panic. Ban.. Retrieved from
https://www.giswatch.org/sites/default/files/gw2015-datta.pdf

Optional Readings
Digital Empowerment Foundation. (2010). Limited Access Restricting Expression. Retrieved from
https://www.apc.org/sites/default/files/Annex%2013_%20DEF%20Country%20Report%20Year%201_0.pdf
Indicators I, III

Venkiteswaran, G. (2017). "Let the mob do the job": How proponents of hatred are threatening freedom of expression and religion online in Asia (pp. 13-41). Association for Progressive Communications. Retrieved from
https://www.apc.org/sites/default/files/mobReport10-Online_0.pdf
Section 2, 3, 4

Oozeer, A. (2014). Internet and social networks: freedom of expression in the digital age. Commonwealth Law Bulletin, 40(2), 341-360.

Session 4: Postcolonial and Intersectional Digital Identities
After broadly discussing freedom of expression and its threats online in the previous session, we now turn to looking at how such freedoms and un-freedoms manifest for different digital identities from a postcolonial, intersectional lens for the Global South.

Key questions:
- Has the Internet been successful, so far, in achieving decentralisation and democratisation for diverse populations of women in the Global South? How can we move towards a decolonisation of the internet?
- What are the everyday online experiences of postcolonial (and in some cases, diasporic) identities online?
- How can a feminist envisioning of intersectionality be performed in cyberspace?

Required Readings

1. Gajjala, R. (2002). An interrupted postcolonial/feminist cyberethnography: complicity and resistance in the" cyberfield".

2. [DECLARATION] Decolonising the internet: Second International Cyberfeminist Meeting | GenderIT.org. (2018). Retrieved from
https://www.genderit.org/resources/declaration-decolonising-internet-second-international-cyberfeminist-meeting

3. Thelandersson, F. (2014). A Less Toxic Feminism: Can the Internet Solve the Age Old Question of How to Put Intersectional Theory into Practice?. Feminist Media Studies, 14(3), 527-530.

Optional Readings

Franklin, M. I. (2001). Inside out: Postcolonial subjectivities and everyday life online. International Feminist Journal of Politics, 3(3), 387-422.

Noble, S. U., & Tynes, B. M. (2016). The intersectional internet: Race, sex, class, and culture online. Peter Lang International Academic Publishers.

Chattopadhyay, R. (2003). The internet and postcolonial development: India's transnational reality. Contemporary South Asia, 12(1), 25-40.

Session 5: Digital Identities: Gender, Sexuality, Race

The previous session set up a broad general understanding of intersectional, postcolonial identities online. This session goes into further detail about digital identities to look at how specific identities belonging to marginalized gender, sexuality, and race locations are performed online, and how the Internet affects the ways that people define and redefine themselves.

Key questions:
- Does the Internet simply mirror / reflect identities or does it play a part in creating new kinds of digital identities, mediated by social locations?
- How does self-presentation on the Internet intersect with existing structural inequalities of gender, sexuality, and race? Can autonomy that marginalized identities are denied due to structural inequalities be achieved through cyberspace?
- What liberating potential does the Internet hold for marginalized gender, sexuality, and race identities, and what challenges does it throw up?

Required Readings

1. Association for Progressive Communications. (2015). Global Information Society Watch 2015 Sexual rights and the internet (pp. 9-12, 17-21, 138-142). Retrieved from https://www.giswatch.org/sites/default/files/gw2015-full-report.pdf
Chapters: Kanaga's choices: Queer and transgender identity in the digital age (pp. 9-12), Re-Criminalizing Homosexuality in India: Its Effect on Alternate Sexual Expression on the Internet (pp. 17-21), A policy landscape of sexual orientation, gender identity and the internet (pp. 138-142)

2. Nyboe, L. (2004). 'You said I was not a man': Performing Gender and Sexuality on the Internet. Convergence, 10(2), 62-80.

3. Nakamura, L., & Lovink, G. (2005). Talking race and cyberspace: An interview with Lisa Nakamura. Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies, 26(1), 60-65.

Optional Readings

Peter, and Lisa Nakamura. *Race After the Internet*. London: Routledge, 2010. Chapters 1-7

Zilli, B., & Sívori, H. (2013). Sexuality and the Internet. Retrieved from
https://www.giswatch.org/sites/default/files/internet_reg_gisw13.pdf

SM Kee, J., & Moolman, J. (2011). Sexuality and women's rights (pp. 42-45). Retrieved from
https://www.giswatch.org/sites/default/files/gisw2011_en.pdf

Session 6: Digital Identities: Caste, Religion, Disability

Continuing from the previous session on digital identities, this session explores similar questions in the context of caste, religion, and disability - how these identities are performed online, and how the Internet affects the ways that they get defined and redefined.

Key questions:
- Does the Internet simply mirror / reflect identities or does it play a part in creating new kinds of digital identities, mediated by social locations?
- How does self-presentation on the Internet intersect with existing structural inequalities of caste, religion, and disability? Can autonomy that marginalized identities are denied due to structural inequalities be achieved through cyberspace?
- What liberating potential does the Internet hold for marginalized caste, disability, and religion, and what challenges does it throw up?

Required Readings

1. Patil, S. (2017). [SPECIAL EDITION] Debrahmanizing Online Sphere: On Larger Questions of Caste, Gender and Patriarchy | GenderIT.org. Retrieved from
https://www.genderit.org/articles/special-edition-debrahmanizing-online-sphere-larger-questions-caste-gender-and-patriarchy

2. Robinson, R. (2001). Religion on the net: An analysis of the global reach of Hindu fundamentalism and its implications for India. Sociological bulletin, 50(2), 212-221.

3. Kapoor, P. (2018). As a visually impaired woman, I navigate two worlds. Retrieved from
https://medium.com/skin-stories/as-a-visually-impaired-woman-i-navigate-two-worlds-a94004c1b2d7

Optional Readings

Chopra, R. (2008). The Cyber Presence of Babri Masjid: History, Politics and Difference in Online Indian Islam. Economic and Political Weekly, 47-56.

Munusamy, K. (2018). Intersection of identities: Online gender and caste based violence | GenderIT.org. Retrieved from

https://www.genderit.org/articles/intersection-identities-online-gender-and-caste-based-violence

Session 7: Technology-Mediated Violence Against Women

So far, we have taken a look at the varied experiences of marginalized identities online and the extent of their freedoms and unfreedoms for expression. Many of these unfreedoms are mediated through power flows that channelize through violence in cyberspace. This session explores the social and cultural perspectives on technology-mediated violence against women (TMVAW) and marginalized identities, and some legal-institutional responses to it.

While talking about TMVAW, one dominant framework is to view violence through an offline-online continuum (where violence in the virtual world is linked with the violence in the 'offline' world). Contesting frameworks go beyond such conceptualizations to theorize the techno-materiality of the digital that re-orders violence in newer ways and require us to treat cyberspace differently than we would 'offline' spaces. This session will explore some such frameworks contributed by feminists.

Key questions:
- What are the patterns of violence against women in and through digital spaces - "spaces that are not just online, but also comprising the new, hybrid zones that arise as humanity becomes more and more imbued in technology" (Gurumurthy, A., 2010)?
- How can this violence be viewed in the larger context of power relations in 'offline' spaces as well as restructured power relations in cyberspace?
- What are some legal-institutional responses to TMVAW in India and how can they be improved from a feminist framework?

Required Readings

1. Gurumurthy, A. (2010). Understanding gender in a digitally transformed world. Retrieved from
https://www.itforchange.net/sites/default/files/484/Think%20piece_Understanding%20gender%20in%20a%20digitally%20transformed%20world_Vimochana.pdf

2. Herring, S., Job-Sluder, K., Scheckler, R., & Barab, S. (2002). Searching for safety online: Managing" trolling" in a feminist forum. The information society, 18(5), 371-384.

3. IT for Change. (2018). Examining Technology-Mediated Violence Against Women Through a Feminist Framework: Towards Appropriate Legal-Institutional Responses in India. Retrieved from
https://itforchange.net/e-vaw/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/ITFC-DISCUSSION-PAPER.pdf

Optional Readings

Internet Governance Forum, United Nations-DESA. (2015). Online Abuse and Gender-Based Violence Against Women. Retrieved from
https://www.intgovforum.org/multilingual/filedepot_download/5004/1317

Part 1

Kovacs, A., & Padte, R. (2013). 'Don't Let it Stand!' An Exploratory Study of Women and Verbal Online Abuse in India (pp. 10-25). Retrieved from https://internetdemocracy.in/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Internet-Democracy-Project-Women-and-Online-Abuse.pdf
Chapters 1, 2

Moolman, J. (2013). Violence against women online. Retrieved from https://www.giswatch.org/sites/default/files/violence_gisw13.pdf

Session 8: Feminist Resistances and Movement Building Online

Although TMVAW (as explored in the previous session) has received much attention from various stakeholders engaged in the field, what is often missed in this narrative is that there is also feminist resistance to this violence. Women and activists are fighting back and working towards a feminist Internet. Hence, taking on from the previous session on TMVAW, this session focuses on how feminists are resisting violence and reclaiming digital spaces. It attempts to locate how contemporary movements on the streets are informing online feminist struggles and vice versa. While examining some such contemporary movements, this session explores how such resistances create opportunities for feminist movement building across locations.

Key questions:
- How do we view a continuum between movements of resistance online and on the streets? How can we extend the articulations of loitering on the streets to loitering online?
- How does the digital environment enables alternative discourses of resistance, and render visible codes that are usually silenced in dominant discourses?
- How do individual acts of resistances lead to building and strengthening feminist solidarities and intersectionalities? What are examples of some contemporary digital movements that have helped forge feminist solidarities?

Required Readings

1. Phadke, S. (2013). Unfriendly bodies, hostile cities. Economic and Political Weekly, 48(39), 50-59.
To be read alongside -
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_OBdKb4omSw - 1 minute video - "Why loiter – women claiming online public spaces".

2. Chadha, G. (2017). Towards Complex Feminist Solidarities after the List Statement. Economic And Political Weekly, 52(50). Retrieved from https://www.epw.in/node/150586/pdf

3. Kee, J. (2017). [EDITORIAL] Making a feminist internet: Movement building in a digital age | GenderIT.org. Retrieved from https://www.genderit.org/node/5035/

Optional Readings

Moawad, N. (2017). Opinion Piece: Everybody, Offline. We Need to Talk. Retrieved from
https://itforchange.net/e-vaw/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Opinion-piece-1.pdf

Barrera, L. (2017). Impact for what and for whom? Digital technologies and feminist movement
building | GenderIT.org. Retrieved from https://www.genderit.org/node/5025/

Brown, M., Ray, R., Summers, E., & Fraistat, N. (2017). # SayHerName: a case study of
intersectional social media activism. Ethnic and Racial Studies, 40(11), 1831-1846.

Harad, T. (2018). Towards an internet of equals. Retrieved from
https://www.livemint.com/Leisure/c7XqIj7NcWEhmcV3WdeauI/Towards-an-internet-of-equa
ls.html?facet=amp&utm_source=googleamp&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=googleamp
&_twitter_impression=true

Session 9: Feminist Digital Labor

Feminist resistances that we explored in the previous session are being conceptualized as labor
in recent feminist scholarship. Some scholars are theorizing the work of women in voluntarily
moderating misogyny and sexism online as labor which is often unwanted, punished, and
viewed as censorship, uncivil behaviour, or forms of sexism. This session discusses some such
theorizations in the larger context of 'women's labor' that has been theorized in Women's
Studies.

Key questions:
- How do social media platforms benefit and generate profits from the voluntary efforts
  and labor of women and queer individuals to moderate misogyny on these platforms?
- How do we view this unpaid online labor in a continuum with the cheap 'offline' female
  labor employed in electronic plants (or 'sweatshops') of the digital industry?
- How can we connect the debates around digital labor to larger debates around market
  capitalism and neoliberalism?

Required Readings

1. Nakamura, L. (2015). The unwanted labour of social media: Women of colour call out culture
as venture community management. New Formations, 86(86), 106-112.

2. Jarrett, K. (2014). The relevance of "women's work" social reproduction and immaterial labor
in digital media. Television & New Media, 15(1), 14-29.

Optional Readings
Terranova, Tiziana "Free labour: Producing culture for the digital economy" in Social Text,
18(2):33-58. 2000.
http://web.mit.edu/schock/www/docs/18.2terranova.pdf

Session 10: Alternative Economies of the Internet

After the previous session explored the 'digital economy', this session looks at how we can create alternative forms of digital economic power that are grounded in "principles of cooperation, solidarity, commons, and openness" (APC, 2016) such as FLOSS (free/libre and open-source software). While doing so, we will interrogate the capitalist logic that drives the Internet towards privatisation and profit.

Key questions:
- How can we imagine alternative digital economies of the Internet that are more in line with feminist envisionings of the Internet? What are examples of some such alternatives?
- What role can free/libre open source software (FLOSS) play in empowering women and queer individuals as compared with other proprietary software? How can we improve the current status of women and queer individuals engaged in FLOSS development?
- How can this be viewed in the context of other inequalities that women face from the power relationships between expert and lay (namely, developer and user) in software design?

Required Readings

1. Toupin, S., & Hache, A. (2015). Feminist autonomous infrastructures. Retrieved from https://www.giswatch.org/sites/default/files/gw2015-hache.pdf

2. Lin, Y. (2005). A Techno-Feminist Perspective on the Free/Libre Open Source Software Development. Retrieved from https://www.genderit.org/sites/default/upload/lin5.pdf

3. Heidel - Scann, E. (2017). [COLUMN] Open software movements, open content, free culture: Where are the women? | GenderIT.org. Retrieved from https://www.genderit.org/feminist-talk/column-open-software-movements-open-content-free-culture-where-are-women

Optional Readings
Smith, E. (2017). An ongoing conversation on feminist autonomous infrastructure: Erika Smith and Kéfir | GenderIT.org. Retrieved from
https://www.genderit.org/articles/ongoing-conversation-feminist-autonomous-infrastructure-erika-smith-and-k-fir

Session 11: Gendered Politics of Data and Algorithms

A discussion on alternative economies of the Internet would not be complete without discussing the political economies of the digital or 'datafication'. Data cannot be seen independently of its wide and fluid contexts - algorithms and big data are increasingly influencing the way we connect to information and the world around us. In this session, we will explore the feminist politics of such political economies of personal data and algorithmic decision-making.

Key questions:

- How do the outcomes of algorithmic decision-making disadvantage, exclude, or disproportionately single out women and minorities?
- How do questions of accountability get reshaped in the context of Artificially Intelligent algorithmic decision-making when something goes 'wrong'?
- What are some emerging concerns around algorithmic ways of knowing? How are they replacing or reshaping other forms of knowledge, and at what costs to larger projects of social justice and civic engagement?

Required Readings

1. Gurumurthy, A., & Chami, N. (2016). Data: The new four-letter word for feminism | GenderIT.org. Retrieved from https://www.genderit.org/node/4738/

2. Neff, G., & Nagy, P. (2016). Automation, algorithms, and politics| talking to Bots: Symbiotic agency and the case of Tay. International Journal of Communication, 10, 17.

3. Shephard, N. (2016). Algorithmic discrimination and the feminist politics of being in the data | GenderIT.org. Retrieved from https://www.genderit.org/feminist-talk/algorithmic-discrimination-and-feminist-politics

Optional Readings

Ranganathan, N. (2018). India's data protection draft ignores key next-generation rights – The Internet Democracy Project. Retrieved from https://internetdemocracy.in/2018/08/indias-data-protection-draft-ignores-key-next-generation-rights/

Session 12: Privacy and Cyber Surveillance

After discussing the politics of data, we now turn to looking at some implications of the same. This session discusses the right to privacy and to full control over personal data and information online. It will explore practices by various stakeholders to use user data for profit and to manipulate behaviour online. Moreover, surveillance has historically been employed in a patriarchal and paternalistic manner to control women's bodies and expressions in various spaces, including the virtual. This session hence also explores surveillance practices online by various stakeholders and questions the implications this has for democracy.

Key Questions -
- How do we view discussions around privacy and surveillance as feminist issues, and not as separate domains as they are often viewed? How can we question the underlying power relations when thinking about surveillance?
- How do we connect the debates around cyber surveillance to the larger debates around the surveillance and moral policing of women's bodies and speech in public spaces when they deviate from the 'norm' that surveillance tries to control?
- How do questions of privacy and surveillance relate to questions of consent and how do we complicate such consent from feminist frameworks?

Required Readings

1. Shephard, N. (2016). Big Data and Sexual Surveillance. Retrieved from
https://www.apc.org/sites/default/files/BigDataSexualSurveillance_0_0.pdf

2. Kovacs, A. (2017). Gendering Surveillance: An Introduction. Retrieved from
https://genderingsurveillance.internetdemocracy.in/intro/

3. Kovacs, A. (2017). Gendering Surveillance: Reading Surveillance through a Gendered Lens:
Some Theory. Retrieved from https://genderingsurveillance.internetdemocracy.in/theory/

Optional Readings
Shephard, N. (2016). 5 reasons why surveillance is a feminist issue | GenderIT.org. Retrieved
from https://www.genderit.org/feminist-talk/surveillance-feminist-issue

<u>Session 13: Memory and Anonymity</u>

Discussions on privacy and surveillance bring us to discussions on control over our digital
identities - the feminist perspective of anonymity needs to be carefully considered here during
discussions about surveillance as it is largely women and sexual minorities who feel watched
over. This session discusses women's right to exercise control over our personal history and
memory on the internet, as well as our right to remain anonymous online. This must necessarily
include conversations around who can access our data, under what conditions, and whether we
have the agency to delete it or let the internet "forget". The discussion on anonymity is essential
in the context of performing policed and stigmatized gender and sexual identities online in
order to enable a safe and discrimination-free virtual environment for women and queer
individuals.

Key questions:
- How did being anonymous work in a networked world before the Internet? How have
  new digital technologies changed what it means to be anonymous?
- What unique value do stigmatized identities (example - sexual minorities) gain from
  anonymity online?
- What is the 'right to be forgotten' online and what is the claim of women and sexual
  minorities to it?

Required Readings
1. I delete myself: anonymity and sexuality online | GenderIT.org. (2016). Retrieved from
https://www.genderit.org/feminist-talk/anonymity-and-sexuality-online

2. Korenhof, P., & Koops, B. (2014). Identity Construction and the Right to be Forgotten: the Case
of Gender Identity. In The ethics of memory in a digital age : interrogating the right to be
forgotten. Palgrave Macmillan.

3. Facebook to tweak 'real name' policy after backlash. (2018). Retrieved from
https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/gadgets-and-tech/news/facebook-to-tweak-real-na
me-policy-after-backlash-from-lgbt-groups-and-native-americans-a6717061.html

Optional Readings

Kee, J. (2012). Anonymity, accountability and the public sphere | GenderIT.org. Retrieved from
https://www.genderit.org/feminist-talk/anonymity-accountability-and-public-sphere

Shaikh, R. (2014). How crucial is anonymity for sexual exploration and promoting sexual rights activism | GenderIT.org. Retrieved from
https://www.genderit.org/feminist-talk/how-crucial-anonymity-sexual-exploration-and-promoting-sexual-rights-activism

Session 14: Internet Democracy

Questions of privacy, surveillance, data, and anonymity bring us to questioning democratization and how these emerging concerns have an effect on democracy at large. Democracy rests on the notion of a free and informed public - how does non-transparent algorithmic decision-making and bodies under constant surveillance affect this? This session connects the debates we have looked at so far with key debates around how datafication and digitization affect democracy.

Key questions:
- Can we expect new social media structures to enhance or hinder democratization processes? How do digital media reshape questions of democracy?
- Does the Internet offer new choices and enhance diversity, or does it does fragment and homogenize news and political opinion? Does a greater diversity of content and of media channels affect political opinion?
- How do we recover democratic content of digital spaces for claims-making by marginalised women and queer individuals?

Required Readings

1. Gurumurthy, A., & Bharthur, D. (2018). Democracy and the algorithmic turn - Sur - International Journal on Human Rights. Retrieved from
http://sur.conectas.org/en/democracy-and-the-algorithmic-turn/

2. Gurumurthy, A., Chami, N., & Thomas, S. (2016). Unpacking Digital India: A Feminist Commentary on Policy Agendas in the Digital Moment. Journal of Information Policy, 6(1), 371-402.

3. Schroeder, R. (2018). Digital media and the rise of right-wing populism. In R. Schroeder, Social Theory after the Internet: Media, Technology, and Globalization. Retrieved from
https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt20krxdr.6

Optional Readings

Pinto, R. (2018). Digital sovereignty or digital colonialism? - Sur - International Journal on Human Rights. Retrieved from
http://sur.conectas.org/en/digital-sovereignty-or-digital-colonialism/

Piccone, T. (2018). Democracy and digital technology - Sur - International Journal on Human Rights. Retrieved from http://sur.conectas.org/en/democracy-and-digital-technology/

Session 15: Women's Rights in Internet Governance

As a concluding session, this session looks at challenging the cis-hetero-patriarchal spaces that control Internet governance by centering women's rights in spaces where Internet policies are discussed and designed. This session takes us back a full circle to the first few questions addressed by this syllabus regarding women's participation in the decision-making of development policies on the Internet and communications in cyberspace - "why should women be interested in these topics? What does the world of virtual communications have to do with women's rights and needs at present?" (APC, 2012)

Key questions:
- Why should Internet governance include consideration of gender issues? Why should women's rights activists care about Internet governance?
- How can we ensure more feminists in the decision-making processes of Internet governance forums across the world, given the current male hegemony that dominates these spaces?
- How do we democratise Internet policy making to diffuse power structures that have traditionally held women back?

Required Readings

1. Association for Progressive Communications. (2012). Critically Absent: Women's Rights in Internet Governance. 9-16, 26-30. Retrieved from
https://internetdemocracy.in/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/APC-Critically-Absent-Final.pdf
Chapters: Internet Governance and gender issues by Avri Doria (pp. 9-16)
Internet democracy and the feminist movement by Anja Kovacs (pp. 26-30)

2. Jensen, H. (2013). Whose internet is it anyway? Shaping the internet – feminist voices in governance decision making. Retrieved from
https://www.giswatch.org/sites/default/files/whose_internet_gisw13.pdf

Optional Readings
Manaf, K., Wahyuni, D., & Baadila, I. (2014). Queering Internet Governance in Indonesia. Retrieved from
https://www.apc.org/sites/default/files/Queering_Internet_Governance_in_Indonesia_final_research_book_.pdf