



**National Seminar
on
Problematizing Sexuality and Violence: Deconstructing Institutions, Norms and
Narratives in India**

**Organized by
UGC-SAP, Department of Political Science
and
Research Network on
Feminist Engagements with Law and the State (FELS)
University of Delhi, Delhi**

23rd and 24th August, 2017

Concept Note

The state and its institutions, despite claiming to be democratic, constructs gendered power through its different legislations and policies, and in this process, they are selective and manipulative to serve patriarchal prejudices and privileges. Feminists seek redressal from these kinds of prejudices embedded within norms and institutions of the democratic state.

Feminist engagements with one of the prominent institutions such as the legal system, largely seek to explore what constitutes justice for women in a patriarchal society governed by law. It is well-nigh impossible to arrive at a consensual notion of what is justice; hence there always remains a danger that the understanding of the dominant section will be imposed on the marginalized ones. For the very sustenance of patriarchy, relegation of women and some men to the margin is essential, hence it is imperative to see how law can be used both as a tool of exploitation and empowerment. Feminists, notably, are not a monolithic bloc but more like rainbows. They are of different vantage points, persuasions and perspectives with respect to their engagements with laws and the state. Depending on their vantage point, they debate on the power of law as to whether the latter can perform its role only in a changed society or it can change the society itself, for better or worse. State institutionalizes public/private distinction. Even where the state has intervened by making laws and formulating policies for women, the heteronormative prejudices remain intact. For instance, different laws and government policies have an intrinsic understanding of binary opposites-‘good’ and ‘bad’ women

(Prostitutes/housewives, virgin/non-virgin, married/unmarried, sane/insane). Next level of debate amongst feminists who advocate state intervention pertains to the extent of interference by the state in both public and private spheres. Therefore any analyses of feminist engagements with law and the state will be multi-layered with either questioning or engaging with established heterosexual norms, institutions and practices.

Predominantly, feminists in India have seen democratic institutions like the legal system and the state as a welcome tool to bring gender justice in society. Post-independence, the basic concern of feminists has been to address various forms of violence faced by girls/women from the time in womb to tomb (sex determination and abortion of female fetus, sati, dowry deaths, sexual assault and harassment). As a result of consistent struggles by feminists in this regard many progressive laws have been passed. These include the Dowry Prohibition Act 1961, Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act (PCPNDT Act) 1994, The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012, The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013 and The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2013. Together with the issue of addressing atrocities against women, feminists also fought for empowering girls/women through ensuring access to constitutional rights, especially, educational and economic rights, enshrined in our constitution. Therefore the state sometimes takes a step ahead favouring feminist concerns (Vishakha guidelines) and then takes two steps backwards (Madhu Kishwar v. State of Bihar) so that heterosexual norms and institutions remain unthreatened. This struggle for gender justice has witnessed many vicissitudes.

By early 1990s feminists in India realized and recognised three major drawbacks in their approach. Firstly, they highlighted the fact that there is a lack of willingness on the part of political institutions and society at large to recognise women having their own agency. Women's lived experiences are not only marked by violence they face but also by their own demands of the body and desires of the mind. Feminists needed to highlight these aspects. They had to expand the discourse to include voices of demands and desires. Secondly, women in India are not a homogeneous group. Their individual identity is marked by collective identities based on caste, class, region and religion. Feminists cannot limit their fight to the issues of upper caste, middle class, educated women. Voices of persons pushed to periphery of the society like Dalits, Adivasis, and sexual minorities must also be incorporated in feminist discourses to make their processes more democratic. Thirdly, a conscious attempt to engage with and reaching out to men is a strategy feminists should adopt, because conventional understandings of masculinity and patriarchy do impact men as much as women. This deeply intrinsic notion can have serious repercussions for both men and women. Raising consciousness across gender can strengthen feminist discourse in challenging and deconstructing patriarchal norms and institutions reinforcing superiority and hegemony of masculine interpretations and practices over other sexualities. As a result of these realisations, we could see how in the last twenty five years demands for reforms in political representation of women (particularly beyond local institutions of governance), questioning the model of development prioritizing economic growth over social justice, rights of sexual minorities and changing attitudes of men have gained momentum.

In this context of continuities and changes in the feminist engagements with law, it is imperative that we explore and expand our understanding of the same. In our innovative enterprise of launching a Research Network, we seek to involve versatile inter-disciplinary approaches

involving various vantage points from the fields of theory and practice. We intend to include interactive sessions between academicians, activists and actual survivors of atrocities. As part of this longer exercise, we propose to host a two-day brainstorming seminar with the theme 'Problematizing Sexuality and Violence: Deconstructing Institutions, Norms and Narratives in India', which is the second in line, first one being a workshop on 'Feminist Engagements with Law and the State' held on 29th March, 2017. The workshop was the first concrete step in undertaking this stupendous agenda in terms of which themes to focus, what methodologies to adopt and pursue and how to bring academicians, activists and survivors in the country and abroad together in a common platform of deliberation and discussions.

The **primary objectives** of this Research Network are as follows:

1. To understand the recent developments challenging patriarchal norms and practices embedded in institutions like state and law. For instance, as discussed above, the process of binary creation between good and bad women and its reflection in the legal process.
2. To explore innovative pedagogical tools to engage in feminist understanding of law and the state; for instance, deconstructing survivor stories to better understand the gap between theory and practice.
3. To comprehend the existing legal gaps in actualizing gender justice. For instance, prostitution has been symbolized as oppression, victimization, exploitation of women. Research shows that most sex workers report that they experience violence and exploitation at the hands of police and petty thugs, rather than in sexual encounters with clients. Despite this evidence, violence that occurs within sex work is used to justify severe action against the sex work industry, such as closure of work place and clean ups. It becomes almost impossible for sex workers to voice their right to sex work.
4. To learn from the real life experiences of activists and those who have (or are) fought (or fighting) legally for securing gender justice. For instance, the gendered understanding of 'honour' and its perceptions as the most prized virtue of a community to establish its superiority over others. There have been various examples of brave women fighting back for their right to choose life partners. It is important to focus on such stories because every now and then people end up losing their lives even before their fight back can begin. 'Honour' crimes in the name of non-conforming attitude towards lifestyle, post-marriage association, sexual orientation are also an issue to be studied and highlighted.
5. To expand the understanding of masculinity as a tool for both exploitation and empowerment. For instance, in the predominant gender discourse, gender is conflated with women. Even in The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013, the basic understanding is that only a female worker can be harassed at her workplace. It is silent about harassment faced by men who are marginalized on the basis of their sexuality, caste, class, religion. Further, men could be exploiter and also exploited, empowered or oppressed depending up on the context of gender, caste, class, region and religion. The issues of this segment of men need to be problematized to highlight their issues separately.
6. To continuously engage in the deliberations for advocacy and policy change regarding these issues with the resource persons (academicians, activists and survivors).

The themes this Research Network seeks to focus over a period of time are as follows:

- Uniform Civil Code
- Affirmative Actions and its impact
- Agriculture, Industries and Labour Rights
- Displacement, Resettlement and Rehabilitation
- Obstacles to Representation
- Alternative Development Discourses
- Parenthood and marriage as choice
- Political Economy of Right to Health
- Violence Against Women (In actual and virtual world)
- Violence Against Sexual Minorities
- Violence Against Marginalised Men
- Sexual Desires, Fantasies and Expression

Moving further, the first seminar on ‘Problematizing Sexuality and Violence: Deconstructing Institutions, Norms and Narratives in India’ will be held on 23rd and 24th August 2017. The rationale for choosing this theme is that in the last two decades, sexual and gender based violence have increased globally. One of the reasons behind this is insurrection of the marginalised sections of society for a dignified life. Multiple narratives are challenging hegemony of heteronormativity internalized and implemented by the institutions of the state. These narratives are also questioning social and cultural norms prioritizing a binary and hierarchical notion of sexuality. Questioning and coming-out is suppressed through violence. Here the laws are double-edged sword, used both for exploitation and empowerment. This seminar is an attempt to discover varied experiences of sexual/gender categories and to highlight that divisions are more contradictory, fragmented, shifting and ambivalent than the dominant public definitions of these categories suggest. There is an urgency to disrupt binary logic and its hierarchical oppositional constitutive force in addressing issues of sexuality. In this respect, to understand the role of legal system in India is crucial. Thus this seminar focuses on deconstructing institutions, norms and narratives to democratize sexuality and its experiences in India.

Objectives of the Seminar

In this particular seminar, we look forward to getting insights from feminist activists and academicians about their understanding of different layers of violence and desires which not only contradicts but problematizes the pre-established association of violence and desires exclusively with normative heterosexual bodies. The patriarchal institutional apparatuses of state and its institutions and norms construct and reinforce particular modalities in which acts of violence and desires are understood, performed and redressed. This process is a continuous exercise wherein binaries of legal/illegal, male/female, public/private and natural/unnatural is created to ease the task of ‘governance’ within socio-political, cultural and economic institutions. This experience is multi-layered with intersectionality of caste, class, region, religion and gender-sexual identities.

Different processes of practicing law such as—interpretations by judges, actual practices of courts, law offices and police stations—define and determine impact of law in the lived experiences of the people. In this seminar we look forward to address these intersectionalities which would help to critically explore different sites of sexualities not only in terms of sexual danger but pleasure as well by which heteronormative thinking, processes, practices and their institutionalizations by different socio-political and economic mechanisms could be deconstructed. Issues of marginalized men are also focus of this seminar, who are also being violated, exploited and discriminated against their inherent right to life.

In this backdrop, we intend to focus on following themes and sub-themes:

1. Sexual Desires, Fantasies and Expression
 - a. Legal understanding of sexual desires, fantasies and expression
 - b. Sexual desires, fantasies and expression in heterosexual relationships
 - c. Sexual desires, fantasies and expression in non-heterosexual relationships
 - d. Sexual Desires, Fantasies and Expression in Art and Literature
2. Violence against Sexual Minorities
 - a. Sexual Violence
 - i. Sexual Violence by known persons
 - ii. Sexual Violence by State Agencies/Institutions
 - b. Physical Violence
 - c. Cultural Violence
 - d. Economic and Social Violence: Livelihood, skill development and social security
 - e. Legal Violence: Non-recognition of identity, relationship and property entitlements and Coming out as a political act
3. Violence against Marginalised Men
 - a. Sexual Violence
 - i. Sexual Violence by known persons
 - ii. Sexual Violence by State Agencies/Institutions
 - b. Physical Violence
 - c. Cultural Violence: Food, dress, cinema, religious beliefs, lifestyle and others
 - d. Systemic Violence of exclusion and discrimination
 - e. Economic Violence

Programme Schedule

UGC CAS-SAP National Seminar on Problematizing Sexuality and Violence: Deconstructing Institutions, Norms and Narratives in India			
23 rd and 24 th August 2017			
Venue: Auditorium, Satyakam Building, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Delhi (North Campus), Delhi-110007			
DAY ONE			
Time	Session	Speakers	Per speaker time
9.00 - 9.30 am	Registration		
9.30-9.45 am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the Seminar by Prof. Navnita Chadha Behera • Introduction to the research network by Dr. Pawan Kumar 		
9.45- 10.30 am	Inaugral Address	Prof. Sanjay Srivastava Title: Sexualities and Culture in India: Histories, Registers, Traces	30 minutes lecture and 15 minutes discussion
10.30- 11.00 am	TEA		
11.00 am- 12.30 pm	Technical Session-I Theme- Sexual Desires and Fantasies in heterosexual and non-heterosexual relationships	Prof. Krishna Menon Tentative title: Intersections between Disability and Sexuality through a Feminist Lens	20 minutes
		Paper presentation by Anupom Hazarika on Interrogating the City and the production of space in R.Raj Rao's The Boyfriend, M-Phil Research Scholar, Gauhati University anupom001@gmail.com	20 minutes
		Paper presentation by Megha on Deconstructing Compulsory (Hetero)sexuality: A Post- structuralist Feminist Interrogation, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, DU meghadelhi5@gmail.com	20 minutes
		Discussion	30 minutes
12:30 –	LUNCH		

1:30 pm			
1:30-4.00 pm	Technical Session-II Theme- Sexual Desires and Fantasies: Expression through art and literature	Mr. Sridhar Rangayan Title: Lesbian, Bisexual and Trans Narratives in Indian Cinema: A Microview	20 minutes
		Paper presentation by Jhilam Roy on Wife, Queen, Goddess: Treatment of sexual violence in Rituporno Ghosh's Antarmahal: Views of the Inner Chamber, Independent Researcher, Pune jhilamroy.capri1996@gmail.com	20 minutes
		Paper presentation by Rashmi Gopi on With love to Bharatnatyam - Performing Sexuality, Sensuality and Spirituality, Assistant Professor, Miranda House, DU rashmi.gopi@gmail.com	20 minutes
		Movie Screening	60 minutes
		Discussion	30 minutes
4.00 pm	TEA		
DAY TWO			
Time	Session	Speakers	Per speaker time
9.00 am-9.10 am	Welcome note to Day Two of the Seminar		
9.10 am-11.00 am	Technical Session III Theme – Violence against Marginalised Men: Sexual, physical, institutional and cultural	Dr. Rachna Chaudhary Tentative title: Maleness and Masculinity of Men in Delhi Police	20 minutes
		Paper presentation by Upasana Sinha on Hyper Masculine Militarization and Kashmir: Mapping Gendered Violence in Select Kashmiri Narratives, PhD Research Scholar, IIT, Dhanbad upasana.lit@gmail.com	20 minutes
		Paper presentation by Aniket Nandan on Sites of Violence in a Gendered Hierarchy: Aspirations and Verity of Women from Bhumihar community in Bihar, Ph.D Research Scholar, Deptt. of HSS, IIT Madras aniket39n@gmail.com	20 minutes

		Paper presentation by Arun P on 'Visual Body' in surveilling space: A case study of video surveillance in Delhi Metro, Research Scholar, Deptt. of Political Science, University of Hyderabad arun.p@uohyd.ac.in	20 minutes
		Discussion	30 minutes
11.00 am-11.30 am	TEA		
11.30 am-1.00 pm	Technical Session-IV Theme – Violence against sexual minorities: Cultural, Economic and Social	Ms. Rituparna Borah Title: Violence on LGBTIQ people	20 minutes
		Paper presentation by Sudha Bharti on Problematizing notion of Sexual health in feminist discourses, Ph.D Scholar, Gender Studies Centre for Women Development University of Hyderabad sudhaworld@gmail.com	20 minutes
		Paper presentation by Manashi Misra on The Trans-Mother: Delinking Mothers from Conventional Femininity, Assistant Professor, Zakir Husain Delhi college, DU manashi.misra@gmail.com	20 minutes
		Discussion	30 minutes
1.00-2.00 pm	LUNCH		
2.00-3.30 pm	Technical Session-V Theme – Violence against sexual minorities: Sexual, Physical and Legal	Dr. Rukmini Sen Title: Sexual 'minorities' and the juridical: Site between reclaim and rejection?	20 minutes
		Paper presentation by Pradyumna Anil Purohit on A jurisprudence of sexual expression in India, Assistant Professor of Law and Politics, Amity Law School, Amity University, Mumbai purohit5125@gmail.com	20 minutes

		Paper presentation by Swarupa Deb on Under the shadows of law: Situating epistemologies of violence against female to male transgender community in India, Ph.D Research Scholar, Deptt. of HSS, BITS Pilani swarupa.deb@gmail.com	20 minutes
		Discussion	30 minutes
3.30-4.00 pm	Valedictory Address by Dr. Karen Gabriel Title: The Field of the Sexual and Violence		
4.00 pm	HIGH TEA		

ABSTRACTS

Anupom Kumar Hazarika
M.Phil Research Scholar
Gauhati University

Title: Interrogating the City and the production of space in R.Raj Rao's *The Boyfriend*

William H. Whyte in *City: Rediscovering the Centre* defines city as the combination of three key variables-size, density and heterogeneity or diversity of population. Yi-Fu Tuan in his book *Space and place: The Perspective of Experiences* associates city with freedom and openness. The word “space” is associated with words like infinite, limitless and unrestricted. The word that had a geometrical meaning in the past and which was a part of the mathematical discourse and was confined within its field has always been a topic of much dispute among the philosophers. Henri Lefebvre opines that every society produces its own space. As sexual politics affect all spaces- private and public, urban and rural etc, human sexuality is mapped and remapped across various cultures and social landscapes. Sex and sexuality cannot be decoupled from space. Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code— which was instituted by the imperial authorities in India in the year 1860 and is still operative— declares sodomy as criminal activity; hence the gay population in India is confined to an invisible underground subculture. R.Raj Rao has chosen Bombay as the backdrop of his novel *The Boyfriend*. By adopting a queer theoretical framework, my paper will be a humble attempt to discuss how the hegemonic ideology of heteronormativity in a city in India which criminalizes homosexuality is likely to affect the ordering of space. It will explore how space is a means of control, of domination, and of power and analyse the predicament of the gay characters.

Keywords: Gay, Power, Culture

Megha
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University of Delhi.

Title: Deconstructing Compulsory (Hetero)sexuality: A Post-structuralist Feminist Interrogation

‘Sexuality’ has become a central issue for feminists because this is not merely about body or having a sexual relationship, the way precisely it was conceived originally, but it is more about power mechanisms and configurations which create web of unequal gender relations defined in terms of heterosexuality characterized by superiority of masculinity and inferiority of femininity. To explore this point the paper first explains how the rigidity of masochistic sexuality has been emphasized by psychoanalytic theories of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan on the bodies by prioritizing penis and phallus. In order to challenge the essentialist phallogocentric culture, the paper further presents Foucault’s post-modernist idea of constructed notion of sexuality where he has conceptualized the idea of sexuality based on the notion of ‘discourse’ which explores the social production of meaning and action and thus argues that the women’s body and the idea of masculinity as superior and femininity as inferior are constructed, which is why these can be challenged or changed. With the emergence of these different ideologies, the paper discusses post-structuralist feminists’ understanding who have uncovered the discursive strategies for normalizing subjugation of women through language construction and constructing spaces of ‘masculinity’ as centre and ‘femininity’ as ‘other’, and challenge the whole infrastructure of hierarchical masculinist world which not only normalizes heterosexual bodies but behaviors as well. With these underpinnings the paper proposes to apply the post-modernists and post-structuralist feminists’ theoretical conceptualizations to understand the practices of sexual dangers for women in terms of rape and pornography and presents the way of emancipation through women’s own linguistic constructions and practices.

Keywords: compulsory heterosexuality, masculinity, femininity, emancipatory language

Jhilam Roy

Independent Researcher, Pune.

Title: Wife, Queen, Goddess: Treatment of sexual violence in Rituporno Ghosh's Antarmahal: Views of the Inner Chamber

Rituporno Ghosh, one of the most acclaimed directors of the Bengali Film Industry, is known for his unparalleled portrayal of the female psyche. His films glorify „the Indian woman“ in all her emotional hues – joys, dilemmas, and sufferings; often providing a deep insight into the issues faced by women from various walks of life in different contexts and ages. Predominantly concerned with the „broken woman“, Ghosh's cinematic legacy lay in the romanticization of the melancholic and unvoiced female in the sensual, and often rancid, mundane. In all the films, the „heroine“, if the term should be employed thus, flits in and out of the physicality of familial gloom and deplorableness – which is itself a material extension of her depleted soul that is both fatalistically adhering to and gallantly revolting against her oppressive whereabouts (read: society). Nonetheless, however the keynotes of the oeuvres resemble those of a film noir, the other essential ingredient is reconfiguration of the accepted dynamic of power equations, particularly the transgression of gender, class, and norm – in a processed or erratic pursuit of freedom. This pursuit of freedom comes on the wings of the much recognized agency of sex – and not surprisingly sexuality, coupled with the tilt of the director's own homosexuality, is the beloved of critics of his works. One of his controversial period dramas Antarmahal: Views of the Inner Chamber (2005) have been dubbed pornographic on grounds of its flamboyant portrayal of oppression (sexual, political and religious) in 19th century Bengal. The foremost factor is given much thought, centring on the persons of the two bibis of the zamindari household and what recede into the background are the many ironies of female worship; the strength and resistance associated with the subjugated women; and the perceptual legion of the „woman“ of a bygone era. The purpose of this paper is to examine the varied and layered manner in which the „woman“ is treated (read: violated) in not only the intertwined avatars of Wife, Queen and Goddess but also the “effeminate” babu – and how the film locates the „ethical chaos“ of a microcosmic aristocratic household as resonating into the macrocosmic Imperial Cult, and colonized mindset of the period.

Keywords: Rituporno Ghosh; Woman; Unvoiced; Mundane; Sex; Antarmahal; 19th Century Bengal; Female Worship; Resistance; Ethical Chaos; Imperial Cult; Colonised Mind-set; Babu, Wife, Queen, goddess.

Rashmi Gopi
Assistant Professor
Miranda House, University of Delhi

Title: With love to Bharatnatyam - Performing Sexuality, Sensuality and Spirituality

In the early 20th century Bharatnatyam was constructed as a nationalist art symbolizing the women performers as chaste and pure wherein they had given up historical association of this dance form with *Devadasis* having sexual and social agency over their art and bodies. Like in the predominant nationalist discourse, the ideal Indian woman dancer was essentialised as spiritual and asexual. As a consequence girls/women from ‘respectable family’ started learning and performing this art form. One of the tools to be used in this strategy was to over emphasize *bhakti sringara* and *vatsalya sringara* in place of *rati sringara* in the performance. Even though predominance of this technique was established, there was a limited and yet strong resistance to ‘purification’ of Bharatnatyam of earthly sexual desires. Thus the body of the performer became site of resistance to nationalist discourse of chaste, abstinent and pure Indian women who cannot express sexual desire in public.

One of the choreographers/performers who has used dance as a resistance tool to nationalist-patriarchal construction of Bharatnatyam dancer as semi-divine is Chandralekha. She created performers who were completely human and challenged patriarchal conditioning which suppressed power of female body and their sexual desires. Through her works, she celebrated women’s sexuality, sensuality and spirituality. It is interesting to note that she has challenged hegemony of Brahmanical patriarchy tradition with subaltern traditions to emphasize history of dance as plural and political. In the creations of Chandralekha, on the one hand, there is comingling of femininity and masculinity on equal footing and on the other hand, there is coming together of sexuality, sensuality and spirituality in a non-hierarchical manner. In this paper, the focus of study is Chandralekha’s last choreographic creation *Sharira*.

This paper attempts to explore and expand the understanding of politics of Bharatnatyam as a dance form empowering or restricting expression of sexual desires and fantasies. It seeks to problematize the positioning of performer as ‘pure’ and semi-divine being.

This work is qualitative in nature. It is based on re-reading of lyrics of Bharatnatyam dance item *Padam*, videos/ visuals of Bharatnatyam performance by Chandralekha, writings on Bharatnatyam, especially on resistive choreography by Chandralekha and the author’s personal experience as a Bharatnatyam performer.

Keywords: Bharatnatyam, Sexuality, Sensuality, Spirituality

Upasana Sinha

Ph. D Research Scholar

IIT, Dhanbad

Title: Masculine Militarization and Kashmir: Mapping Gendered Violence in Select Kashmiri Narratives

Modern history bears a witness to the fact that army has been the quintessential of masculinity and colonial encounters. This hegemonic masculinity impacts the kind of conflict in a particular conflict zone. Lately, militarization, gendered inequality and structural violence has appeared as a dense construct which has become complex enough to relate to the outer world. Militarized masculinity being hegemonic and hyper masculine in nature, devoid the soldiers of the 'man' inside. In this case, the 'uncertain manliness is replaced by a strong, stoic and emotional warrior who is ready to engage in violence when called for. This involves dehumanizing the victim or the enemy in order to be mentally and emotionally strong. In this process, the 'other' has to be eliminated. Diminishing things that are considered to be feminine is the key thing when it comes to hyper masculine militarization.

The paper, in its holistic outlook will try to introduce some vital theoretical concepts on hyper-masculine militarization in Kashmir which incorporates gendered and structural violence and the way it is manifested by state backed military which many a times leads to destruction of the common mass. This will be studied in relation to the hegemonic masculinity as shown in select fiction narratives. Keeping in mind these theoretical concepts, the paper will try to investigate into the security strategies of the nation state which acts as a male of which the army is the representative and the people being the female counterpart. Violence against the natives particularly women would be taken into consideration which would help to understand the gendered nature of violence. It would be detailed how the legitimate public place for women shrinks and they are driven back to their private spheres when disturbance occurs. Adding to this, structural violence would be analysed in the light of its reification in militarized institutions which reek out havoc and harm the society. Female body becoming the motif for cultural identity would also be taken into consideration which would explicate how the spirit of nationalism is marred by the military which they do by hurting the motif of the natives 'cultural identity.

Methodology: The research would be grounded in particular arguments and analysis of various primary and secondary sources taking into account the fiction as well as nonfiction narratives. Those arguments would be taken to support and build my own method which would encompass re-reading the violence as a result of hyper masculine militarization in the valley. While taking cognizance of the theoretical literature, empirically the research would undertake a study of the narratives and an in-depth study of the conflict and violence spread in the valley. It would entail focus group discussions with the varied stakeholders both from the government and civil society

Keywords: Kashmir, violence, hyper masculine militarization, gender

Aniket Nandan
Ph. D Research Scholar
IIT, Madras

Title: Sites of Violence in a Gendered Hierarchy: Aspirations and Verity of Women from Bhumihar community in Bihar.

To be conscious of manifestations of caste necessitates us to observe the anger and violence which caste divulges. Concomitantly, the exercise of re-reading caste has become equally imperative. Dr. Ambedkar's indictment of the Hindu social order is as much as indignant as enriching. For Ambedkar, the critical evaluation of the various characteristics of caste leaves no doubt that prohibition or rather the absence of intermarriage principled on endogamy can be called the essence of caste. Thus Ambedkar was assertive in stating that, "if we succeed in showing how endogamy is maintained, we shall practically have proved the genesis and also the mechanism of Caste". Subsequently, the control which men exercise on women within the premises of caste often is the parameter of a castes' ability to dominate. The paper attempts to highlight the gender relations and its, violent, repressive mechanisms in a Bhumihar society. Bhumihars have been a violent and dominant caste in the geo-political landscape of Bihar. The women in Bhumihar caste society are often confined to the interiors of houses or given an inferior status to men. The prevalence of 'parda' is somewhat common and is practiced even in higher socio-economic households. The mechanisms for 'internalization of the patriarchy' within the women of Bhumihar community are considerably robust. The sense of pride and dignity associated with superiority is visible in women but at the same time they seem to be unable to exercise the power which is enjoyed by the men in the community. Inherently they position themselves beneath men appropriating the normative of the hierarchy by upholding the pride and dignity associated with the caste. Bhumihar women mostly provide only supportive roles in the manifestations of the political and social acts committed by the community. However, they are equally aware of the socio-political milieu.

The significance of this paper subsists in analysis of the exercise of power by force at several sites of violence that explicates the veracious reality of inequality, dehumanization and patriarchy. The paper further documents the culture of violence, based on customs, tradition, and the dominant ideology of a caste society instating the subjective form of socio-structural violence. As the structure of the caste and the system of power eminently influence views, values, belief and faith fabricate the stereotypes of a caste society. Hence the objective of the paper is to question the socio-cultural norms prioritizing a binary and hierarchical notion of sexuality. Violence not only is a site of contestation but it also pitches the opposite notions of responsibilities, passion and a particular action. Thus this paper is an attempt for conceptualizing agency in much more complex ways, which seems to be called for, rather than compartmentalizing violence in forms of oppression and resistance.

Keywords: Agency, Caste, Patriarchy, Stereotyping-women, Violence

Arun P.

Ph.D Research Scholar

University of Hyderabad

Title: Visual Body” in Surveilling Space:Case Study of Video Surveillance in Delhi Metro

Over the last two decades there has been a rapid rise of urbanization process around Indian cities. Living in such a modern city means it is an agglomeration of huge number of inhabitants and with such a huge surge comes a greater upsurge of fear and vulnerabilities. From here begins the significance of safety and security in modern cities. Also, understanding rapid urbanization would remain lopsided if we do not quantify or measure the massively growing security apparatus in cities. Because, it has become a general obsession and with a readymade narrative template to address fear, insecurity and vulnerability in urban city by production of a new surveilling space. This is a kind of space which is built and rebuilt innumerable times. In such space, an entire matrix of surveilling mechanisms are normalized and integrated into our everyday spaces, which is wittingly or unwittingly being endorsed. The surveilling space has become a basic amenity and utility in several Indian cities which is conceived as a parameter for secure and safe living conditions in a developed smart city. In this transit systems are regarded as highly secured surveilling spaces. In such scenario, this paper aims to explore surveillance space, in which it intends to focus on body under video surveillance. Because one of the rudimentary facts of our society is that urban space is gendered in its essence, hence it becomes necessary to disentangle women’s space and reactions emerging from surveilling space. Such space needs to be questioned and evaluated along with interrogating its credibility and authenticity. Therefore, this paper will try to understand the nature and form of surveillance space. Second, it will explore case study of video surveillance in Delhi Metro (New Delhi, India) to explore visual body, public space and gender relations. And further it shall understand whether surveillance cameras being punitive or preventive.

Keywords: Surveilling space, urban city, gender, visual body and surveillance.

Sudha Bharti
Ph.D Research Scholar
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Title: Problematising Notion of ‘Sexual Health’ in Feminist discourses: Some reflections in the Women’s narratives on sexual wellness in Hyderabad city

The questions related to sexuality are treated as private and their discussion in public is considered a taboo. In Indian context, the notion of ‘sexual health’ do not much refer as phenomena of ‘social well-being’ but largely restricts to symptomatic diseases such as sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) including HIV/AIDS. The state intervention in the matters of sexuality is restricted to the agenda of population control under the campaign of reproductive and sexual health programs. The other avenue where sexuality is discussed is in controlling HIV/AIDS by promoting hygienic sexual practices like ‘safer sex’ under the promotion program on ‘condom use’. Therefore then sexual health approach is more socially located as symptomatic and women are socially located as in lacking of their agencies. Mainly Indian discourses on sexual health have projected the image of women as victim, which often complies, with the notion of sex as all danger and no pleasure. In the present policy framework, the component of sexual health has been evolved and expanded within the reproductive health paradigm with limited approach. National policies and program on women health majorly focus on maternal and childcare. Women are still being the subject of target group of population control mechanism of state policies. It led to ignore women as an independent sexual agency for making their own sexual choices. It’s a need to move ahead of conceptualizing sexual health beyond violence or no choice and to be more inclusive of affirmative sexuality which affects positively in the health lives of women. The debates within the feminist discourses are also raising their concerns for appropriating feminist notions of women health in government programs and policy making. Further, there is no universal framework to capture the complexity of women sexual lives from the health point of view within the feminist perspective. The feminist voices at global level are heterogeneous and internally differentiated and also interrelated. Although patriarchal control over sexual freedom is central in understanding the sexual health status of women, the Third World perspective i.e. Indian feminism has additionally taken into account several other inequalities and contradictions in society while addressing sexual health discourse. Moreover, if patriarchal structural society regulates every aspect of women’s lives then the religion, caste, class and cultural values also plays significant roles in defining and controlling women’s sexuality.

A feminist based field inquiry was carried out in the year 2016 in Hyderabad City to understand and analyze women perspective on their daily sexual lives and difficulties implicating on their health situations and affecting their wellness. The field inquiry was about to explore the social forces/ determinants contributing in shaping up the sexual health notions and status for women

across sections – caste, class, religion, language and profession; living in Hyderabad city of Telengana State. Women narratives collected from the women individuals, women professionals and Non Governmental Organisations specialized in the area of Sexual Health issues of women and had formed the core assessment for the feminist inquiry which had revealed women real situations which was interlinked with their sexual health matters. This field based inquiry had made use of the feminist perspectives to locate ‘sexuality’ in the sexual health of women. The findings found to be vary in the actual construction of sexual health status of women and differ from the existing public health perspectives. It was also observed that the notion of sexualities expressed in the lives of women, which majorly leads to a future bearing implications on their health situations affecting their social wellness. Women’s positioned status specific to their social location results for them in living a very complex and negotiated lives, which often remained silent or not discussed at all when subject of sexual health is discussed in the public discourses.

Keywords: Sexuality, Sexual Health, Social Well-being, Autonomy, Agency, Sexual Pleasure Feminist Perspective, Subjectivity, Women Narratives, Sexual Violence.

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Title: The Trans-Mother: Delinking Mothers from Conventional Femininity.

Feminist scholars have argued again and again that motherhood is an acquired attribute. Women in patriarchal societies are trained to become mothers- one only needs to keep in mind the special privileges that a mother (of sons) can enjoy under patriarchy. Motherhood in patriarchy does experience its share of violence despite the reverence. Extremely harsh and emotionally draining words are reserved for women who cannot (or choose not to) become mothers. Those who bear only daughters are not much better of either.

What happens to those non-heterosexual, 'non-feminine' trans-women who would like to be mothers in a patriarchal society? When Gauri Sawant appeared in a recent TV commercial as a transgendered mother, it was a revolutionary step in the world of motherhood. Motherhood is often understood as exclusively feminine. The qualities associated with motherhood are the epitome of all 'feminine' virtues. This paper seeks to dismantle the binary between motherhood and fatherhood in terms of gender. The all sacrificing, ever forgiving mother is a mythical construction, so is the strong, rational, disciplinarian father. Associating motherhood with femininity can have a weakening effect. Popular culture will be more receptive of a transgender mother- because to portray her in feminine colours is more acceptable. But can a heterosexual, muscular man be shown mothering a child? Why does motherhood in an ironical twist become more of a female attribute and thus weak?

Radical feminists like Shulamith Firestone argued long ago against the gendered understanding of motherhood. Firestone was all for a biological revolution to liberate women from the compulsions of biological reproduction. For this generation of radical feminists, artificial reproductive technologies (ARTs) were all women needed to come out of the 'sexual class' structure. However, this paper takes a different position to argue that artificial reproductive technologies can be an instrument of liberation for non heterosexual people of any gender. For heterosexual women, these very technologies can have some contradictory effects altogether and rather than challenging the patriarchal norms, they are reinforced at different levels.

This paper seeks to explore questions such as-- is motherhood gendered? Can *anyone* be a mother? When conditions are attached with motherhood, could it be as divine and selfless as it is made out to be? Is the much dreaded stigma of illegitimacy a concern only for the heterosexual 'feminine' woman and not so much for those who are already in the margin of 'heteronormativity'?

This paper will be a qualitative study based mainly on secondary sources. Content analysis of popular cultural materials will be used.

Keywords: Motherhood, Patriarchy, Heteronormativity, Artificial reproductive Technologies (ARTs).

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Title: A Jurisprudence of Sexual Expression in India

Sexual expression in India has been juridically contested and confronted in various ways and forms. In our contemporary troubled times, it i.e. 'sexual expression' has been mostly contextualized for the 'rights' associated with sexual orientation of groups and individuals. The paper aims to critically analyse the 'subject' of jurisprudence (roughly appropriated as philosophy or science of law) upon the 'object' sexual expression.

When it comes to theory or academics in law, Legal theory & Jurisprudence occupies the centre stage. Writings of eminent jurists such as Bentham, Austin, Savigny, Pound, Holmes, to name a few have shaped the existing corpus of the discipline. It will not be wrong to assert that attempting a paper or a textbook on a type and form of jurisprudence is academically challenging yet intellectually gratifying. In the development of a jurisprudence of sexual expression various schools of thought or ideologues need to be visited. It is somehow impossible to acknowledge or undertake all or even some of them within the scope of this paper. Therefore, keeping the limitations in our gaze the paper focuses on the seminal work of Prof. Wesley Newcomb Hohfeld's analysis of rights and attempts to develop the term 'sexual expression' into a legal doctrine.

In the "hohfeldian scheme", the term sexual expression shall be algebraically situated in context of eight prime variables, divided in two clusters or boxes. The first groupings are of terms namely, rights (claims), duties, liberty (privilege), no-rights. The second groupings consist of power, liability, immunity and disability. Every essentially contested term shall derive its significant meanings through three satellite equations of 'jural co-relatives', 'jural contradictories' or 'jural opposites' and 'jural contradictories of co-relatives' or 'jural opposites of co-relatives'. The 'scheme' shall be illustrated with the connector model of Professor G.L. Williams for smoother understanding of the connectors in complex calculus.

In this paper, the researcher would attempt to theorize and philosophize the term and meanings attached to it in broader as well as *stricto sensu* (strict sense). The *raison d'être* for such an attempt is to ensure that the manifestation of sexual expression is not limited to the terminological absolutism of sexual orientation. The first part of the paper shall inspect the plurality in meanings of the doctrine to be developed. The second part, shall probe into the nature of the doctrine under the realm of expression as 'right' or 'freedom'. The third part shall illustrate the dynamics of sexual expression in 'hohfeldian scheme'. To conclude this theoretical investigation, assessment, examination and evaluation of 'sexual expression' the researcher shall be able to determine the jurisprudential location of the said doctrine.

Keywords: Sexual Expression, Jurisprudence, Rights, Jural Co-relative, Jural Contradictories.

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Title: Under the Shadows of Law: Situating the epistemologies of Violence against the Female to Male transgender community in India

This study peruses the exceedingly marginalised condition of the FTM transgender community in India. The study is premised on the lived experiences of FTM transgender persons demonstrating violence divulged on them by the state and the mainstream society, not only due of their gender non-conformity but also for being in a woman's body.

The FTM transgender persons are vulnerable to systematic exclusion and violence even more than the Male to Female transgenders. They are problematic not only to the patriarchal heteronormativity but to the hegemonic transgender community predominated by MTF transgenders as well. A biological female identifying as a man upsets the normative gender roles and reproductive duty assigned to women. Consequently, the FTM community is silenced into invisibility. Number of reasons contributes to the closeted existence of FTM transgender persons. The significant reason has to do with the constructed norms of gender binary and the control/denial of women's sexuality. Thus, gender discrimination and ostracism against FTM transgender community go hand in hand. MTF transgender persons are currently able to find visibility in public spaces (albeit restrictions) due to their prerogative of being born in a male body, unlike the FTM transgender community that has no such spaces. Often they are confined to home restricted to express their gender identity. Thus, the epistemic root of the problem facing FTM in India is the repudiation to recognise them.

This study deals with the different types of violence that are systematically perpetrated by the state as well as the hetero-normative society upon the FTM transgender community. The state legitimises violation through the agencies of Law and Police while, societal violence is executed through the institutions of family, marriage, health-care system, educational institutes, workplace, media and popular culture. The paper further documents the issues of self-inflicted violence (physical and psychological) by the FTM community members due to loss of personal dignity and self-expression. The invisibility or limited scope for the FTM transgender community within several state mandates directed towards transgender community too presents itself as disquiet. Violence inflicted on the FTM community by the MTF transgender community which largely remains under the shadows further problematises their concerns of security. This study concludes with the narratives of violence and abuse of FTM transgender persons to demonstrate the allegations of harassment, abuse and discriminations. These testimonials stand as evidence where an entire community is negated the promised constitutional claim of equal citizenship and protection under the law.

This study is based on first-hand data gathered during field studies on the transgender communities of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal between 2015 and 2016. The paper employs case study method wherein interviews conducted with FTM transgender persons from each state were analysed to ascertain the challenges faced by the community members in the areas of identity, rights, access to health care, education and employment.

Keywords: Female to Male Transgender, Violence, Hetero-normativity, Law