

GENDER IN NEW MEDIA



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Gender in New Media
Module

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The Aims and Outcomes of this Module

Aims of the Module:

1. Explore the concept of gender identity as a human right
2. Examine the intersectional vulnerability of diverse gender groups in new media and related threats to privacy
3. Critically assess the legal framework pertaining to gender rights in Sri Lanka
4. Examine the concept of gender beyond the binary discourse

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this module, you should be able to:

1. Discuss technology-based sexual and gender violence and why some people feel unsafe in comparison to others
2. Discuss intersectional vulnerability
3. Outline what constitutes digital safety and identify it as a human right
4. Discuss the gaps in the law available for Cyber exploitation and Cyber Sexual and Gender Based Violence in Sri Lanka
5. Discuss gender stereotypes in new media
6. Discuss the relationship between gender and privacy in new media
7. Identify threats to privacy in light of gender
8. Discuss strategies to improve access, inclusivity and vulnerability
9. Describe and differentiate the definitional concepts of gender, sex and sexuality beyond the binary discourse
10. Use Pronouns and understand how to become an Ally

The Number of Learning Hours Required:

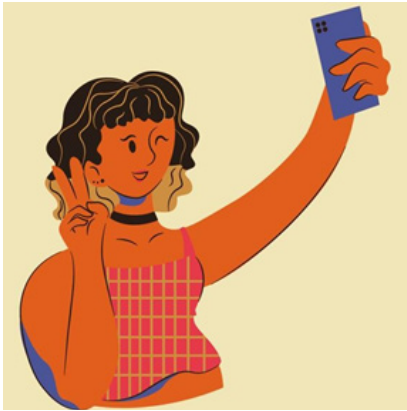
	Total number of hours	15 Hours
1.	Tool box 1	3 hours
2.	Tool box 2	3 hours
3.	Tool box 3	3 hours
4.	Tool box 4	3 hours
5.	Community Impact Project	3 hours

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Introduction

Meet Shakthi and Amal!



Hello Friends!

My name is Shakthi.

I like lists, so let me list out a few things about me:

1. I am a Queer female;
2. I am a gender equality activist / freelance digital illustrator/ content writer;
3. You can get to know more about me over @Shakthilogy where I share and talk all things related to gender, equality, rights and how to avoid being #thatperson in the room!
4. I don't use pronouns. Use my name.



Hi Everyone!

Pronoun: He/Him

Amal here. I identify myself as a male. I love photography and like using still pictures and videos to share my insights into gender equality as well as genderbased violence.

With the advent of new media, the challenge to raise awareness and promote gender equality is so hard, contrary to what some might believe. This is because, the lack of awareness about gender and many of the physical world biases, discrimination and violence against gender have expanded into the online world.

I am always reporting one post after another on Instagram, Facebook, twitter, Tiktok etc. It is tiring. But, playing the watchdog is a part of my digital citizenship! So, I take my responsibility quite seriously.

I am excited to get to know you and share my insights with you. Let's begin this uplifting journey, shall we?

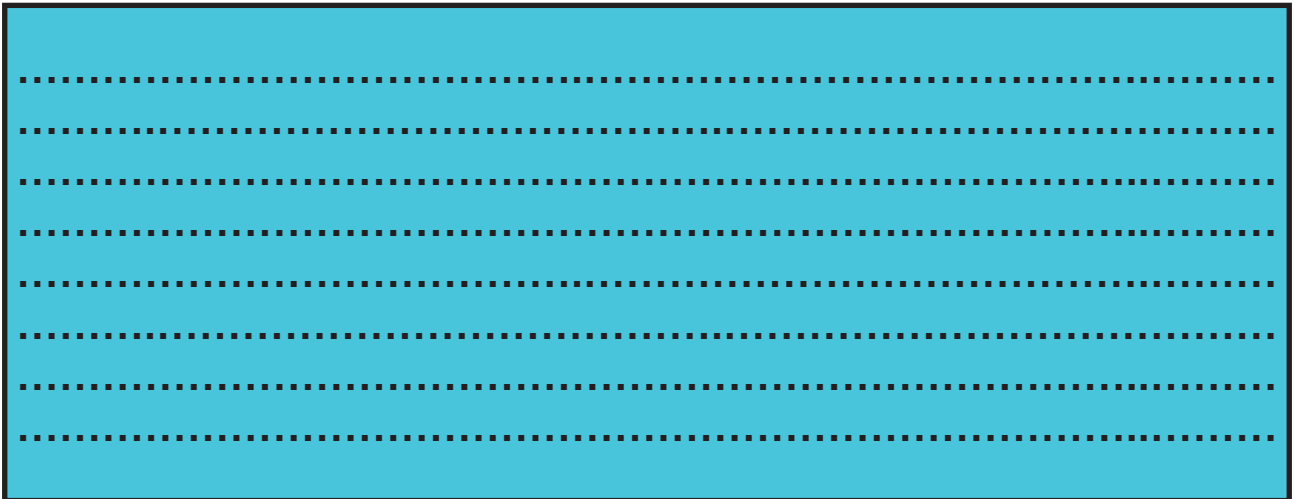
You can reach me at
@AmalBehindtheLens
Pronoun I prefer: He/Him

@Shakthilogy: *Before we begin our journey, we want you to do something for us. You have to be completely in the moment for this one...Okay, you are ready? Let's Go!*

Imagine you only have about 300 Sri Lankan Rupees for the rest of your life.¹ You are required to purchase buy 3 things to live your life, from the list given below. Imagine that each item costs 100 rupees.

1. Complete your education
2. Find a partner and celebrate your love with your family
3. Having a good job
4. Ability to walk freely and happily on the road
5. Feel safe when you interact with authorities like the Police
6. Be able to visit restaurants and public places without fear
7. Having my parent know and accept my gender and sexuality
8. Inheriting wealth from my family

Now write down what you will purchase. Try to be as honest as possible.



Okay, now that you wrote your list, we will start talking about gender in new media. Are you curious as to what the list was? Don't worry, you will have to visit this list again soon!

¹ This exercise is inspired by Neelam Jain, the founder of "Peri Ferry", an organization seeking to empower transgender individuals. See more at: Jobs and Training Opportunities for Transgender Individuals; <https://www.periferry.com>

TOOL BOX 01

UNDERSTANDING VULNERABILITY: WHY SOME PEOPLE ARE UNSAFE THAN OTHERS?

“There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives”

- Lorde ²

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Discuss technology-based sexual and gender violence and why some people feel unsafe
2. Discuss intersectional vulnerability

²‘The value of intersectionality in understanding violence against woman and girls’ (Imkaan, July 2019) <https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20eca/attachments/publications/2019/10the%20value%20of%20intersectionality%20in%20understanding%20violence%20against%20women%20and%20girls.pdf?la=en&vs=3339> accessed 24 January 2021

Why do some People feel more Unsafe in the Age of New Media?

While technology can be an interesting window for freedom, especially for individuals whose voices are sometimes muted due to restrictive social norms; the reality is far from it. Technology-mediated environments have proved to become conducive to the persisting sexual and gender-based violence in society. This makes some people feel much more unsafe being online than others. Who are these people? Why is it difficult for them to feel safe in an online world? Let's look at it in the form of what can really make these people feel unsafe...In other words, let's look at threats that can make a person vulnerable!

Cyber Exploitation and Violence

Any form of exploitation or violence perpetrated through ICTs falls under cyber exploitation and violence (CEV). CEV could negatively impact a person's physical, social as well as psychological wellbeing. This could be either due to cyberbullying, stigmatization, discrimination, harassment, blackmailing etc.

CYBERBULLYING Cyberbullying is where people are bullied or harassed on social media based on their gender, sexual, religious, ethnic or any other social identity.	TROLLING Trolls are everywhere on the internet today. This is because ICTs enable anonymous interaction on cyber spaces. Trolls make random and controversial comments or posts in order to provoke a negative reaction from the readers of the specific comment/post. Their purpose is to provoke an argument.
CYBERSTALKING This is when someone is systematically harassed or threatened through social media, email or other online platforms.	IDENTITY THEFT Impersonating another person online through unauthorized collection and use of personal information. Often this information is misused.
REVENGE PORN Sadly, when relationships don't work out, we have the former partners sharing private and likely sexual pictures and videos, that were previously shared in confidence over online platforms for revenge.	

@AmalBehindtheLens:

Interestingly, a person's gender identity can easily make them vulnerable to CEV. This results in Cyber sexual and gender-based violence!

Cyber Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

Cyber sexual and gender-based violence is an extension of offline gender-based violence. As Centre for Information Technology and Development Nigeria put it, “ICTs are not just a neutral tool, -they are informed by gender-biased experiences and patriarchal thinking have gone into their making”.³

A recent report by the Special Rapporteur for the United Nations Commission on Human Rights outlined how privacy threats and violence against vulnerable groups involve a variety of activities:

1. Dissemination of reputation-harming lies
2. Electronic sabotage in the form of spam and malignant viruses,
3. Impersonation of the victim online; as well as many new emerging forms of violence against women
4. Use of ICT for doxing⁴ and trolling⁵
5. The non-consensual distribution of intimate contents known as revenge porn.

Women and LGBTIQ+ persons are often the most vulnerable groups on the internet.⁶ Fear of safety and abuse as well as the common perception of the risks of being on the internet can discourage them from making the best of their online experience. It can also prevent them from ever trying to even come on the internet. Moreover, women worldwide are 12% less likely to have internet access than men. This digital gender divide is measured at 33% in developing countries.⁷

@Shakthilogy: *I simply think the facts speak for itself!*

³ Nino Lomia, Nino Berdzuli, Ekaterine Pestvenidze and Lela Sturua, ‘Socio-Demographic Determinants of Mortality from Chronic Non-Communicable Diseases in Women of Reproductive Age in the Republic of Georgia: Evidence from the National Reproductive Age Mortality Study’ (2014) International Journal of Women’s Health 12, 105. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/339532671_Socio-Demographic_Determinants_of_Mortality_from_Chronic_Noncommunicable_Diseases_in_Women_of_Reproductive_Age_in_theRepublic_of_Georgia_Evidence_from_the_National_Reproductive_Age_Mortality_Study_20 accessed 17 January 2021

⁴ “Doxing” refers to the publication of private information, such as contact details, on the Internet with malicious intent, usually with the insinuation that the victim is soliciting sex.

⁵ “Trolling” consists in the posting of messages, the uploading of images or videos and the creation of hashtags for the purpose of annoying, provoking or inciting violence against women and girls. 6 Graeme Reid, ‘LGBTQ Inequality and Vulnerability in the Pandemic’ (Human Rights Watch, 18 January 2018)

<https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/06/18/lgbtq-inequality-and-vulnerability-pandemic#> accessed 23 January 2021

⁷ ‘Women’s Rights Online: Translating Access into Empowerment’ (World Wide Web, 20 October 2020)

<https://webfoundation.org/research/womens-rights-online-2015/> accessed 19 January 2021

In Sri Lanka, the 2019 Women’s Wellbeing Survey,⁸ which is Sri Lanka’s first national survey on violence against women and girls, revealed that:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One in five (20.4%) women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6% of women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a partner in the last 12 months
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most reported form of partner violence was controlling behaviors (19.1% of women in lifetime and 9.9% in the last 12 months) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical violence is also high at 18.9% of women during lifetime and 4.8% in the last 12 months
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two in every five women (39.8%) have experienced physical, sexual, emotional, and/or economic violence and/or controlling behaviors by a partner in their lifetime 	

The situation of LGBTIQ+ community is worse than we think because most countries still have archaic laws which does not recognize diverse Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) categories. This condition will completely obstruct the enjoyment of the respective community’s human rights and the ambitions of gender equality. In Sri Lanka a person identifying as LGBTIQ+ is restricted in many ways:

1. Same-sex sexual activity is criminalized
2. Cannot get married, therefore are not legally recognized
3. Cannot adopt children
4. Cannot join the military
5. Cannot donate blood⁹

⁸ Department of Censures and Statics, Women’s wellbeing survey 2019 (2020) 25-29 Available at: <<https://asiapacific.unfpa.org/en/publications/sri-lanka-womens-wellbeingsurvey2019#:~:text=Sri%20Lanka%20Women's%20Wellbeing%20Survey%20%2D%202019,-Findings%2from%20Sri&text=The%20survey%20covered%20all%2025,intimate%20partner%2in%2their%20lifetime>> accessed 25 February 2021

⁹ The National Blood Transfusion Service bans LGBTIQ+ people from donating bloodclassifying them as the people who engage in risky sexual activities.

A group of Civil Society movements such as *Take back the tech*, *Luchadoras* and *SocialTic*, in Mexico developed a list of 13 manifestations of online gender-based violence.¹⁰ Check out the figure given below...



13 MANIFESTATIONS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE USING TECHNOLOGY



¹⁰ '13 Manifestations of Gender Based Violence Using Technology' (GenderIT, 12 November 2018 Available at: <https://www.genderit.org/resources/13-manifestations-gender-based-violence-using-technology>)

Newer forms of Vulnerabilities: What do you know about Sharenting?

I think we have all seen it. Perhaps we have even done it...

Over sharing + Parenting= Sharenting

Today, parents often share images and personal data of their children on social media. It's also regarded as a popular way of showing affection towards a child. However, sharenting has many implications. For starters, there is the inherent conflict between a parent's freedom to post content online and a child's right to privacy. Then there are much nuanced gender implications as well.

Sharenting can open up a toxic environment for cyber sexual and gender-based violence. Did you know that more than 80% of children are said to have an online presence by the age of 2?¹¹ Interestingly, children also develop their gender identity around the age of 3.¹² The nature in which parents impart identities on children over social media can affect the way in which children perceive gender identities.

Imagine if a mother or a father is constantly dressing up a biologically female child in stereotypical "girly" attire. How does that affect the way in which the child perceives her gender identity as they grow up? These posts can also impact the way in which others perceive the child's gender identity. Practically, this is a form of reinforcement of stereotypes and accepted social norms in the online dimension.

DID YOU KNOW?

- » In the UK, 42% of parents share photos of their children online with half of these parents sharing photos at least once a month.¹³
- » The average parent shares almost 1,500 images of their children online before their fifth birth.¹⁴
- » Unfortunately, we do not have much data about the Sri Lankan context as of now... However, have you experienced sharenting? What do you think about it?

¹¹ '13 Manifestations of Gender Based Violence Using Technology' (GenderIT, 12 November 2018) Available at: <https://www.genderit.org/resources/13-manifestations-gender-based-violence-using-technology>

¹² 'Breaking a complicated concept into bite-sized, digestible pieces' (The Genderbread Person) < <https://www.genderbread.org/> > accessed 25 January 2021

¹³ Anna Pattison, "Sharenting' is Robbing Our Right to Privacy' (The Peak, 11 December 2020) <<https://mountainsidepeak.com/1672/op-ed/sharenting-is-robbing-our-right-to-privacy/>> accessed 25 January 2021

¹⁴ Ibid.

By 2030 sharenting could account for up to 7 Million incidents of identity theft and over 800 million in online fraud.¹⁵ Taking into account the nature of vulnerability faced by children, due to emerging privacy implications the European Union introduced the General Data Protection Regulation in 2016. This regulation was particularly designed to give wider protection and ensure rights to all individuals,

@AmalBehindtheLens:

Sharenting is just one example of how some people are more vulnerable especially in the age of new media. These could be already vulnerable groups like minors (children). Sometimes, it could be circumstances that make them more vulnerable in the age of new media... This is where intersectionality of discrimination and violence is an important concept that we should chat about!

Intersectionality of Gender based Violence and Discrimination in New Media

Intersectionality is a concept, which was first coined by Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw.¹⁶ She was an African American feminist activist, who sought to understand how African American women faced many simultaneous oppressions because of the intersection of number of factors alongside the fact that they were females.

Intersectionality is not talking about multiple discriminations. Here, what you should understand is how a number of social circumstances such as race, ethnicity, religion, social class, gender, sexuality, disability, nationality, immigration status, even geographical location can simultaneously affect the way in which a person faces sexual or gender-based violence. Since, our online world often mirrors the violence that exist in the offline world, intersectionality of violence and discrimination also expands to the online world.¹⁷



Source: Center for Gender in Global Context, Michigan State University

¹⁵ 'Identity Theft: Planning for the Future' (Federal Trade Commission Protecting America's Consumers, 24 May 2014) <<https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/events-calendar/2017/05/planning-future-conference-about-identity-theft>> accessed 23 January 2021

¹⁶ Cho, Sumi, Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, and Leslie McCall, 'Toward a field of intersectionality studies: Theory, applications, and praxis' (2013), Signs: Journal of women in culture and society 38, no. 4, 785-810 <https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/oxlaw/oscola_4th_edn_hart_2012quickreferenceguidepdf> accessed 23 January 2021; 'Center for Gender in Global Context' (International Studies & Programs-Michigan University) <<https://gencen.isp.msu.edu/features/gender-dialogues/>> accessed 9 February 2021

**“Intersectionality refers to particular forms of intersecting oppressions, for example, intersections of race and gender, or of sexuality and nation. Intersectional paradigms remind us that oppression cannot be reduced to one fundamental type, and that oppressions work together in producing injustice.”
- Hill Collins (1998)¹⁸ -**

Let’s take Online Dating as a case study, shall we?

Online dating is very much a part of new media. Even prior to the birth of designated online dating Apps, social media platforms like MySpace and Facebook opened up new ways for people to meet potential partners. Since our lives are heavily digitized, meeting a potential partner online is not a big deal anymore. This could be someone you met over your social media or a designated online dating App. These online platforms are actually called internet intermediaries¹⁹ because they are facilitating your social networking and dating life!

One of the main issues in online dating is the lack of a clear and clean legal framework to establish obligations and responsibilities on the internet intermediaries. Why do they need such obligations and responsibilities?

Many of these internet intermediaries are facilitating human interaction, which can go either way. Sometimes, you meet the perfect person online and it is bliss from thereon. However, sometimes, things just don’t work out and the traditional offline sexual and gender-based violence can permeate into these online platforms too.

The lack of a clear legal framework establishing responsibility on the part of intermediaries to prevent and respond to online sexual and gender-based violence is very problematic. These platforms can sometimes completely evade their responsibility, even if violence sometimes translates into the offline world. Let’s take the issue with the “Grindr App” in the United States as an example²⁰...

¹⁷ Ibid 16.

¹⁸ Ibid 23. [16]

¹⁹ Divya Srinivasan, ‘Set me up, knock me down: Legal obligations of dating apps to address sexual violence’ (GenderIT, 3 December 2020) <<https://genderit.org/feminist-talk/set-me-knock-me-down-legal-obligationsdating-apps-address-sexual-violence>> accessed 23 January 2021

A Grindr harassment suit could change the legal landscape for tech – and free speech

Months of harassment led Matthew Herrick to file a lawsuit against the dating app – and he's using laws meant to protect consumers from dangerous products to do so.



Source: NBC News

²⁰ Carrie Goldberg, 'Herrick v. Grindr: Why Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act Must be Fixed' (Lawfair, 14 August 2019) <<https://www.lawfareblog.com/herrick-v-grindr-why-section-230-communicationsdecency-act-must-be-fixed>> accessed 21 January 2021; David Ingram, 'A Grindr harassment suit could change the legal landscape for tech — and free speech' (nbcnews, 5 January 2019) <<https://www.nbcnews.com/tech/technews/grindr-harassment-suit-could-change-legal-landscape-tech-free-speech-n954976>> accessed 9 March 2021

In the USA, an ex-partner of a user once created 50 fake profiles and the App did not respond at all to taking them down. This was despite the fact that the user was harassed offline at their own residence.

In the USA, there are safe harbor laws which are supposed to preserve freedom of expression in online platforms. At the beginning, these laws were formulated to prevent internet intermediaries from being liable for what their users share online. However, these laws are now enabling these platforms to evade responsibility, especially in cases of online bullying and sexual gender-based violence.

@Shakthilogy: *Whoa! This is so new to me...I know that there are dating apps in Sri Lanka, like Tinder, Dating.mobi, Lankan Kapuwa, Sri Lankan Matrimony, Gayxchange.com and Lankanfriends.com. These apps are not governed under a specific law regulating the apps per se. I also want to know how this relates to intersectionality?*

@AmalBehindtheLens: *Well, let's just imagine a situation where a woman uses a dating App. She could be someone from a minority ethnic or religious group. If by any chance, she is subjected to a form of online harassment or violence, her social circumstances of being a woman from a minority ethnic group can make her much more vulnerable in comparison perhaps a woman from a majority ethnic group.*

@Shakthilogy: *I understand. I was thinking of an Asexual person in such a context. Or a gender-non-conforming person. Imagine they are from a low-income family from a rural area of a country. These social circumstances could make them much more vulnerable too...*

AmalBehindtheLens: *Yes, this is why the Istanbul Convention urges countries to take action to address specific issues of people who could be vulnerable due to their unique circumstances.²¹*

Here is an array of circumstances that the convention highlighted. All of these could really make a person more vulnerable, especially in the age of new media. However, these are only a few examples. Unfortunately, there are many more vulnerable groups...

1. Women and girls
2. Pregnant mothers
3. Single mothers
4. Women with young children
5. Persons with disabilities both physical and mental
6. Persons living in rural areas
7. Persons recovering from substance abuse
8. Sex workers
9. National or ethnic minority groups
10. Migrant workers
11. Undocumented migrants
12. Refugees
13. People who identify themselves with different sexual orientation and gender identities
14. Women affected by micro-finance debt

²¹ The Istanbul Convention 2014, Article 12, part 3

AmalBehindtheLens: When we discussed sharenting with you, did you ever think of how the content shared by parents online can easily make them a target of aggressive online marketing campaigns that actively target mothers? New media allows internet intermediaries and even businesses to target people based on their online behavior. We will discuss more about this under privacy...

Support Groups and Resources

There are also a few support groups in Sri Lanka that you can turn to if you ever need information or help.

Women-in-Need + 2SIX4 Mobile App https://www.winsl.net	The Grass rooted Trust http://www.grassrooted.net
Center for Equality and Justice http://cejsrilanka.org	Bakamoono.lk http://www.bakamoono.lk
Shilpa Sayura http://shilpasayura.org	
Yeheliya Foundation https://www.facebook.com/YeheliyaFoundation/	The Sisterhood Initiative https://sisterhoodinitiative.blogspot.com

For any person identifying as LGBTIQ+:

GBV Forum http://gbvforum.lk/about.php	Venasa Transgender Network - Astraea Lesbian Foundation https://www.astraeafoundation.org/
Jaffna Transgender Network: https://www.facebook.com/jaffnatransgendernetwork/	Bakamoono.lk http://www.bakamoono.lk
The Grassrooted Trust : http://www.grassrooted.net	
iProbono: https://i-probono	Hashtag Generation: https://hashtaggeneration.org

IMPACT EXERCISE

Time for some Self Reflection: We just looked at some examples of how “some people” are constantly feeling threatened and unsafe online.

Can you think of any personal instances where you or someone you know had a similar experience of online sexual and gender-based violence which translated into offline violence? Being able to recall at least one incident, makes us question – Isn't there something wrong here? Shouldn't people feel free and safe online despite their sexual orientation or gender identity?

What are your thoughts?

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TOOL BOX 02

HUMAN RIGHTS, DIGITAL SAFETY AND GENDER

“The technology that we use nowadays, even the internet itself, was developed under the principle of connectivity. While this is an important value, we realized that we can’t conceptualize it without relating it to other values, such as the right to privacy and data protection”

- Joana Varon ²²

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Outline what constitutes digital safety and identify it as a human right
2. Discuss the gaps in the law on Cyber exploitation and Cyber Sexual and Gender Based Violence in Sri Lanka

²² José Peralta, ‘Coding rights translating human rights into codes’ (WACC, 11 November 2018) <<https://waccglobal.org/gender-and-human-rights-in-the-digital-age/>> accessed 21 January 2021.

Digital Safety and Digital Human Rights

The simplest meaning of digital safety is protecting yourself and those who are near and dear to you. It is not just about taking steps to protect yourself against online predators, but it also involves the exercise of one's digital rights.

We already discussed how some people can be more vulnerable than others owing to their sexual orientation or gender identity. When it comes to digital safety and gender, we should then focus beyond the binary and further look into intersectional marginalization as well.

@Shakthilogy: *Digital safety is a human right. I feel like before talking about digital safety and gender, it is important to identify the nature in which digital safety came to become a human right. It was not always the case, I think...*

@AmalBehindtheLens: *Yes, you are right. Here's a script from one of my videos on digital safety as a human right. I think you will find it interesting!*

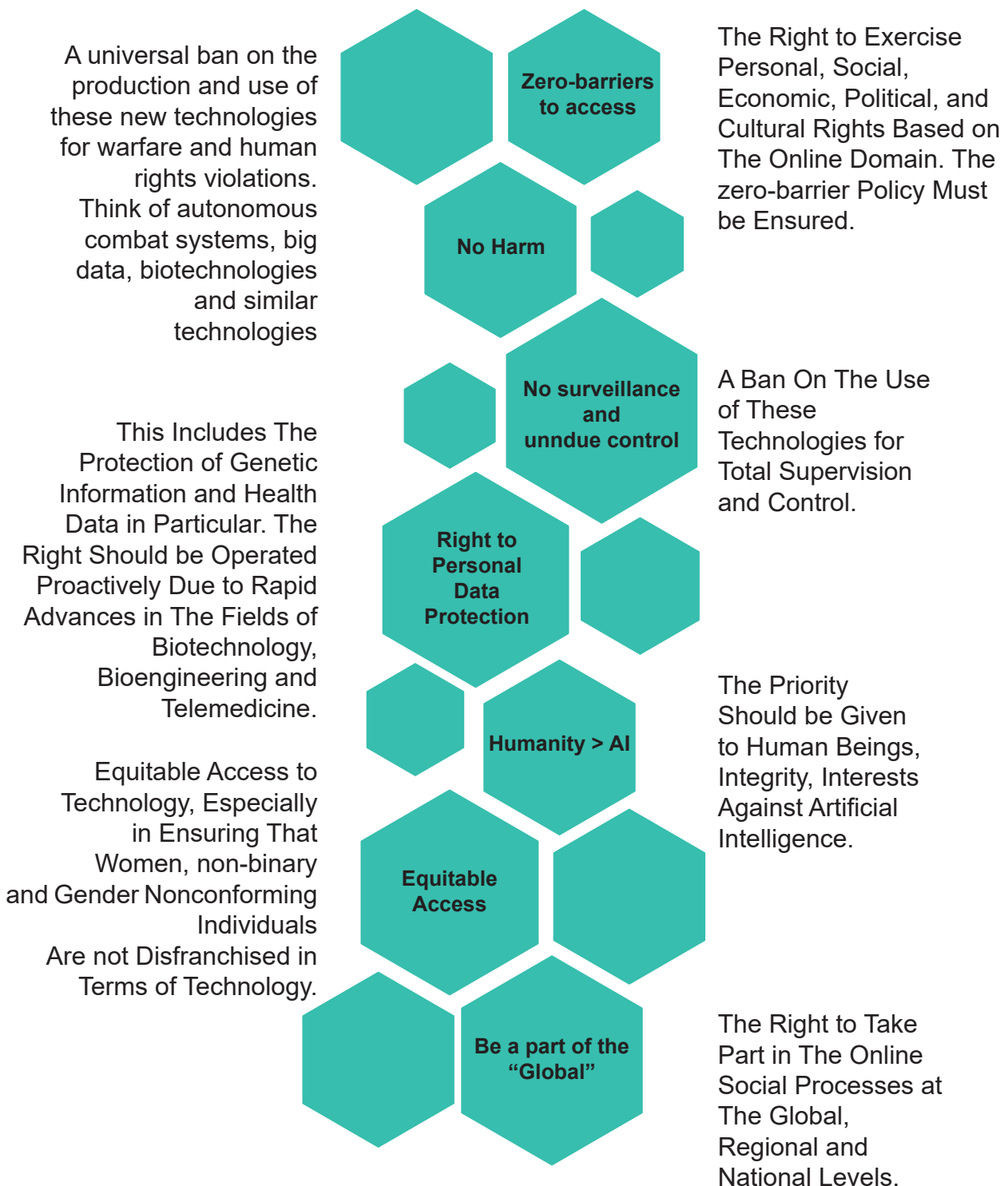
“The digital revolution is a major global human rights issue. Its unquestionable benefits do not cancel out its unmistakable risks.”²³

The International Bill of Human Rights or the Universal Declaration of Human Rights have played a vital role in protecting human rights for decades. It was also the foundation of the International Human Rights legal regime. Along with the Bill of Rights, there are five other international instruments that shaped a system of universal values. It is worth noting that they were introduced after two world wars and once they came into operation, the world began to move from the second industrial revolution to the third. These human rights instruments were actually from the first and second industrial eras even if they represent the fundamental universal values of being a human being, to understand the meanings of these values at present, we have to interpret these values in light of the digital world.

We are currently heading towards the fourth industrial revolution with self-driving cars, smart robots and genetic engineering. The newest challenge to understanding human rights is revisiting the idea in the context of newer technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI).

²³ Keynote speech by Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 'Human rights in the digital age - Can they make a difference?' (United Nations Human Rights office of high commissioner, 17 October 2019) <<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=25158&LangID=E>> accessed 15 January 2021

Accordingly, the following interpretations are made in order to recognize global digital human rights, especially with the view of providing opportunities for everyone to access digital benefits equitably.²⁴ Check out the figure given below.



²⁴ Deusto Declaration Human Rights in Digital Environments 2018, Available at: <https://www.deusto.es/cs/Satellite/deusto/en/university-deusto/information-about-deusto/human-rights-in-digitalenvironments> accessed 16 January 2021

@AmalBehindtheLens: *Upgrading our understanding on human rights to overcome the challenges of the digital era is fundamental in building a fruitful, fairer and more resilient digital world. This holds true even for our understanding of gender and sexual rights.*

@Shakthilogy: *That is correct. It is also important to involve all stakeholders - you and me, our national governments, universities, research centers, policy makers, law enforcement agencies and even scientists to establish and harmonize a good theoretical and legal matrix in defining gender rights within the human rights framework as well.*

@AmalBehindtheLens: *Let's check out some existing instruments of global digital human rights. These instruments seek to raise awareness of the urgent need to reflect and debate on the protection of human rights in the context of the technological revolution.*

Draft Declaration of Global Digital Human Rights²⁵ developed by the Global Digital Human Rights Project.²⁶

Preamble of the Declaration of Global Digital Human Rights

“Reaffirming the meaning and strength of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of December 10, 1948, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of December 16, 1966, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of December 16, 1966 and other fundamental documents, collectively, we create and approve the Declaration of Global Digital Human Rights, putting it at the head of the course for the digital and global transformation of our reality for sustainable planetary development.”

@AmalBehindtheLens: A comprehensive version of digital rights can be seen in the Deusto Declaration of the University of Deusto. You can read few of the provisions from the Declaration down below:

Deusto Declaration on Human Rights in Digital Environments	
<p>Right to be forgotten on the Internet</p> <p>Individuals have the right to have their personal data erased from Internet search engines.</p>	<p>Right to be forgotten on the Internet</p> <p>Individuals have the right to have their personal data erased from Internet search engines.</p>
<p>Right to be forgotten on the Internet</p> <p>Individuals have the right to have their personal data erased from Internet search engines.</p>	<p>Right to the protection of personal integrity in connection with technology</p> <p>Every person is entitled to have their fundamental rights and public rights protected vis-à-vis cyberspace.</p>

²⁵ The Global Digital Human Rights for 4IR, Available at: [http://maxlaw.tilda.ws/digitalrights_ globalshapers](http://maxlaw.tilda.ws/digitalrights_globalshapers) accessed 17 January 2021

²⁶ This is a joint project by with Global Shapers Moscow (World Economic Forum) and the GlobalLaw Forum.

<p>Right to online freedom of expression</p> <p>There should be no constraints on an individual's online freedom of expression, including automatic filtering or blocking, denial-of-service attacks, deletion of search results, and other unlawful mechanisms.</p>	<p>Right to digital identity</p> <p>Individuals have a right to control their online identity, and to prevent any undesired third-party interference in how they manage it.</p>
<p>Right to privacy in technological environments</p> <p>Individuals have the right to have their personal data protected.</p>	<p>Universal right to Internet access</p> <p>Internet access should be universal, regardless of an individual's geographic location, economic level, disability or other personal constraints, in order to ensure that other human rights are respected.</p>
<p>Right to digital literacy</p> <p>All individuals have the right to digital literacy, and assurances should be given that they will be able to find and assess online information, to create their own content, to securely communicate and navigate on the Internet, and to have any technical problems they may encounter resolved.</p>	<p>Right to online impartiality</p> <p>All persons are entitled to have their online traffic treated impartially.</p>

Right to online security

Individuals have the right to online security, which guarantees the integrity and confidentiality of their data, as well as protection from malware and specialized attacks.

@AmalBehindtheLens: *It is important to understand and promote digital human rights especially because of their universal applicability irrespective of a person's gender identity.*

The Gender Bias in New Media

The technological revolution is not gender-neutral. It is a reflection of our offline world and its archaic models of gender discrimination, violence and bias. Exploring the biases against women and people of colour – Professor Safiya Noble wrote a book called Algorithms of Oppression.²⁷ In this book, Professor Noble highlighted the nature in which search engine results and algorithms reinforced gender, sex and racial stereotypes of African American, Latina and Asian American females.

²⁷ Safiya Umoja Noble, 'A revealing look at how negative biases against women of color are embedded in search engine results and algorithms' (NYU Press, October 2018) < <https://nyupress.org/9781479837243/>> accessed 17 January 2021

In fact, in the **UN Special Rapporteur’s Report in 2018**²⁸, warned that AI technology personalizes what users see online, consequently reinforcing biases and promoting and recommending inflammatory content or disinformation in order to keep the users engaging online. More hate = more engagement!

IMPACT EXERCISE: 1

@Shakthilogy: *It is time for a quick Google Search! First search “Sri Lankan school boy” on your search engine. Take a good look at the results that come up, especially in the images section. Next, search “Sri Lankan school girl” on your search engine. What are the differences you see in the two search results? Write down your thoughts...*

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Well, this was a simple exercise to show you that when you search “Sri Lankan school girls” in the search bar, the first page suggests a number of pornographic images as the primary representation of Sri Lankan school girls. On the contrary, if you noticed your “Sri Lankan school boys” results, you would notice that pornographic images of boys do not appear as it did for the girls.

Now this exercise surely made you question how the content or results of a search engine is curated. This opened a series of questions about how search engine content is curated. Well, the issue is not just about the algorithm. Even if a number of criteria are taken into account by search engines, the results largely represent and reflect the majority opinions of society. Unfortunately, the representation of Sri Lankan school girls is aligned to sexist and negative stereotypes.

²⁸ United Nations Special Rapporteur’s Report, Promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression (United Nations General Assembly, A/73/348, 29 August 2018), Available at: <<https://freedex.org/wpcontent/blogs.dir/2015/files/2018/10/AI-and-FOE-GA.pdf>> accessed 15 January 2021

Legal Rights for Digital Safety

Sri Lanka launched an ICT development initiative named as e-Sri Lanka Development Project in the year 2007. The project aimed at promoting ICT skills in almost all sectors of governance. As a result of the development project, ICT literacy in the country has grown from 9% to 19% by 2011. The Department of Census and Statistics, (2019) shows that in Sri Lanka, about 30.1% of the population is digitally literate. However, the women lag behind at 28.3%.²⁹ There is no indication of non-binary or gender nonconforming citizens in this report.

However, this report is somewhat useful to understand that despite the increasing levels of computer literacy, women are still falling behind. Whilst many factors can contribute to the rise of online sexual and gender-based violence, we can argue that disproportionate access to the internet is definitely one of them. Undoubtedly, a strong legal framework is required to ensure digital safer against this backdrop.

In Sri Lanka, **cyber violence is a crime**. However, the laws underlying cyber violence are not always very tech-savvy!

For starters, the Sri Lankan Penal Code was enacted over a century ago and we still resort to it to criminalize certain offences like theft, cheating, misrepresentation even in a digital world! It goes without saying that the definitions of the offences mentioned in Penal Code are quite limited in this digital scope.

In fact, in the case **Nagaiya v. Jayasekara**³⁰ an accused person was acquitted for the charge of theft of electricity because electricity was not a tangible property and it did not fulfill the requirement of theft as depicted in section 366 of the Penal Code! You might find this quite funny! However, this is what happens when law is interpreted in its black letter form.

In many instances relating to new media, it is very difficult to resort to old laws, because we are simply dealing with completely new social issues! This is particularly the case when it comes to new media related cyber sexual and genderbased violence.

Let us look at the current legal framework on digital safety and try to understand how these laws can protect people from cyber sexual and gender-based violence.

²⁹ Department of Census and Statistics Sri Lanka, Computer Literacy Statistics (2019, 2012-6565), Available at: <<http://www.statistics.gov.lk/PressReleases/ComputerLiteracystatistics-2019-Firstsixmonths>> accessed 21 January 2021

³⁰ Nagaiya V. Jayasekera [1997] NLR-Vol. 28, p 467.

Computer Crimes Act in 2007³¹

Due to the gaps in the penal code, Sri Lanka enacted the Computer Crimes Act in 2007. This Act welcomed direct provisions specially to deal with cyber sexual and genderbased violence. The Act was useful for computer related crimes on theft, fraud, unauthorized modification. It also introduced several hacking related offences, which dealt with various forms of unauthorized access. Here are some key provisions from the Act:

Section 3 criminalizes the securing of unauthorized access to a computer, or any other information held in a computer, with knowledge that the offender had no lawful authority to secure such access.	Section 4 criminalizes unauthorized access with the intention of committing another crime.
Section 5 criminalizes an unauthorized modification and damage to a computer system.	Section 6 deals with the offences committing against national security and economy by use of a computer.
Section 7 criminalizes unlawful buying, receiving, uploading and downloading data.	Section 8 deals with illegal interception of subscriber's information.
Section 9 criminalizes the activities like production, selling, importing, and distribution of a computer with the intention of committing offence online.	Section 10 deals with unauthorized disclosure of information.

Obscene Ordinance in 1927³²

Sharing personal and intimate images without consent or sharing of images which have been explicitly altered using editing software are offences under this Act.

Section 2 of the Act makes it an offence to possess, distribute or publicly exhibit of obscene photographs. Publication of an obscene article electronically will be a criminal offence under amended Obscene Publication Ordinance.³³

Sri Lanka Telecommunications Act in 1991³⁴

³¹ Computer Crime Act, No.24 of 2007

³² Obscene Publications Ordinance, No.04 of 1927

³³ Obscene Publications (Amendment) Act, No. 22 of 1983

³⁴ Sri Lanka Telecommunications Act, No. 25 of 1991

According to **Section 53** of the Act, every person who willingly seeks to intercept and improperly acquaint themselves with the contents of any telecommunication transmission commits an offence.³⁵

Intellectual Property Act in 2003³⁶

Section 178 (3) states that any person knowingly or having reason to believe that he/she is in possession or has access to a computer programmer infringing the rights of another person for commercial gains shall be guilty of offence and be liable on conviction by a magistrate to a fine not exceeding Rs. 500,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or to both such fine and imprisonment.

Penal Code Amendment Act in 2006³⁷

All persons providing computer services should ensure that such services would not be used for offences relating to sexual abuse of a child.

Is the Existing Law Enough?

In Sri Lanka, the idea of gender is culturally entrenched in the conception of men and women as the accepted gender norm. For anyone else, who identifies with a different SOGI category, social stigmatization, discrimination and victimization to entrenched violence is the unfortunate reality. They can face both physical and mental abuse from law enforcement, internet intermediaries (tech-platforms!) as well as from civil society. This pushes people to live their lives in the shadows often at the cost of their happiness and mental well-being.

As Human Rights Watch reveals, common abuses experienced by transgender people include arbitrary detention, mistreatment, and discrimination accessing health care, employment, and housing.³⁸ The abuse experienced by the victims are often based on their SOGI, which is different to the traditional gender norm. Many incidents of violence signals at the lack of acceptance and tolerance by society at large – both online as well as offline.

³⁵ Ibid 48.

³⁶ Intellectual Property Act, No. 36 of 2003

³⁷ Penal Code (Amendment) Act, No. 16 of 2006

³⁸ 'All Five Fingers Are Not the Same': Discrimination on Grounds of Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation in Sri Lanka' (Human Rights Watch, 2016) < https://www.ecoi.net/en/file/local/1325738/1002_1471775569_s

Being Transgender and Being Denied the right of Legal Identification

A transgender person might want to establish their gender identity both socially as well as legally. Let's forget about the social aspect for a second here. There is a much larger issue in terms of the legal aspect in these cases. Whilst, everyone has an inherent right to their own gender identity, there is currently no clear law or policy which provides a direct path for someone who is in the gender transitioning process. This is problematic for so many reasons. Let's chat about some down below:

- Everyone needs certain documents like their national identity card, indicating their appearance, name, gender and so on. This is also essential to be recognized as a Sri Lankan citizen before the law. However, a transgender person in Sri Lanka might not always be able to access these documents from respective authorities. What this means is that the transgender person has close to no choice in the matter. They are unable to live with dignity and identify with the gender they belong to, before the authorities. This results in a life that is lived under the constant scrutiny from police, security checkpoints, employers, schools, hospitals and soon.
- In most instances, people might be called by their dead name or the name assigned at birth. Just imagine the amount of trauma that can inflict on a person who is already going through a lot! Therefore, it is no secret that those who wish to change their gender identity face multiple institutional barriers in Sri Lanka. These are:
 - » Government officials reject applications to change the gender.
 - » Officials follow arbitrary and invasive procedures
 - Production of evidence of gender transition surgery
 - Asking for a parent's explanatory letters that should show how they acted in their childhood
 - Having to repeat explanations to different officials at different times outlining their experience during transitioning.
 - » Government officials, even health authorities refuse to acknowledge their gender identity sometimes. This might result in calling the person by their dead name or the name assigned at birth, irrespective of the transition!

@AmalBehindtheLens: *Nadun, a transgender person I work with told me that he is often asked questions like:*

“Why are you pretending yourself to be a boy?”
“Why do you carry another female's passport?”

@Shakthilogy: *Oh no...I heard a similar story about an activist in Nepal called Bhumika Shrestha. Bhumika was a transgender rights activist who traveled abroad carrying a passport which marked the gender as "other" and not as female or male. This happened for the first time ever in Nepali history. The Nepal Supreme Court ruled that gender identity of a person- neither male or female- should be based completely on one's interest and not based on the legal or medical sense.*

Unsafe LGBTIQ+ Community

Physical and verbal abuse experienced by transgender people are only a part of the whole story! LGBTIQ+ individuals face constant social stigma in their own home, place of employment, at health care institutions and at various governmental institutions etc. Simple words targeting their gender and sexuality can lead to immense and serious mental trauma. This is the same in the online world. The stigma and discrimination are mirrored across various digital platforms. For example, using derogatory words like *Samanalaya, Nangi-Malli, Ponnaya, Kolukaraya, Napunsakaya* to troll, harass and cyber-bully. Intersectionality also plays a role here. Social class, religion, geographical location can all lead to the amplification of vulnerability.

There is evidence of the police often using two major laws to target LGBTIQ+ people. Take for example:

01. The Vagrants' Ordinance,³⁹ which includes laws to prohibit soliciting or committing acts of "gross indecency," or being "incorrigible rogues" procuring "illicit or unnatural intercourse."
02. Section 365 and 365A of Sri Lanka Penal Code that criminalize acts of "carnal knowledge against the order of nature" and "gross indecency,". This law aims at criminalizing same-sex relations between adults regardless of their consent and disregards of the fact that sexual relationships are an extremely private matter.

So, ask yourself - is the law enough?

@Shakthilogy: *Here are some ways you can become an ally and work towards promoting the wellbeing of anyone who identifies with a difference SOGI other than the traditional gender norms!*

1. Urging authorities to repeal criminal law provisions such as Section 356 and 356A of the Penal Code and Vagrant's Ordinance, which criminalizes samesex sexual relations.
2. Compel police to stop detaining transgender people for "cheating by personation" under section 399 of the Penal Code and for "gross indecency," under Vagrant Ordinance.

³⁹ Vagrants Ordinance, No 4 of 1841

3. Law enforcement should be sensitized to gender, sex, and sexual orientation of people. Clear guidance is required in terms of their duty to respect the rights and dignity of all people regardless of their gender identity.
4. Effective lawful measurements need to identify, prevent, and respond to such discrimination.
5. Holding governmental and non-government bodies accountable when they fail to uphold rights and the dignity of people. Standing up and speaking out!
6. Sensitizing health officers on gender, sex and sexual orientation, usage of pronouns and inclusivity.
7. Include gender identity as a parameter to the non-discriminatory provision of the Constitution.⁴⁰

IMPACT EXERCISE: 2

@Shakthiloggy: *Let us write a pledge on the way forward... Try to answer the three questions given below in your pledge...*

1. How can I be more inclusive hereon when it comes to Gender?

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⁴⁰ Gender is currently exempted by the Constitution. Read the Article 12 (2) of the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka as “No citizen shall be discriminated against on the grounds of race, religion, language, caste, sex, political opinion, place of birth or any one of such grounds”.

2. What is my role in digital media moving forward?

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3. What is the one thing I will do this year to be more inclusive and respectful?

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TOOL BOX 03

GENDER PORTRAYAL AND PRIVACY IN NEW MEDIA

“It’s Time we imagined a Queer internet”

- Nyx Mclean ⁴¹

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Discuss gender stereotypes
2. Discuss the relationship between gender and privacy in new media
3. Identify threats to privacy in light of gender
4. Discuss strategies to improve access, inclusivity and vulnerability

⁴¹ Nyx McLean, 'Include LGBTIAQ+ Voices in internet governance conversation' (Gender IT, 1 December 2020) <https://genderit.org/feminist-talk/include-lgbtiaq-voices-internet-governance-conversations> accessed 15 January 2021

Gender Portrayal and Gender Stereotyping

Gender portrayal in new media is the way in which gender identities are projected, visualized and communicated in the digital space. Gender portrayal in the recent times have shown a great deal of gender insensitivity and discrimination. Gender sensitivity is crucial for a participatory and gender-balanced society. It is not only fair, accurate and ethical to be gender-sensitive in reporting stories. However, in both traditional and new media, gender portrayal involves gender stereotyping.

Gender stereotyping is the practice of linking certain attributes, characteristics, and roles only because a person belongs to a particular gender group. i.e. a woman, a man or a self-identified gender group. Gender stereotyping is wrongful because it leads to the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of human beings.

A gender stereotype is a generalized view or preconception about attributes or characteristics, or the roles that are or ought to be possessed by, or performed by women and men. A gender stereotype is harmful when it limits women's and men's capacity to develop their personal abilities, pursue their professional careers and make choices about their lives.

- United Nations Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights⁴² -

Take a moment to check out the following news items and assess the level of gender sensitivity. What do you think about these news items? How does it make you feel?

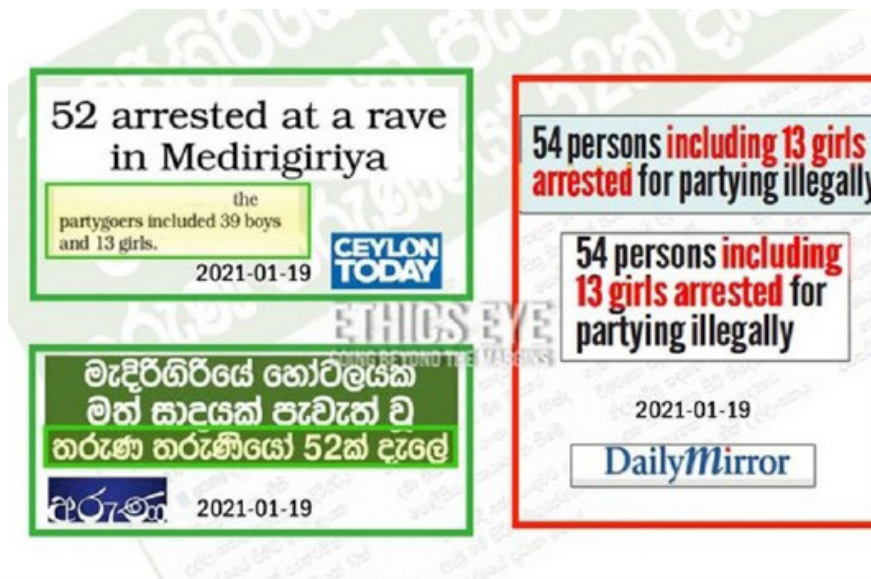


Translation: Unmarried lady police constable in a strange relationship with a mother of three children dismissed for insulting the police service.



Translation: "9 women have gambled inside a house in Dikwella."

⁴² 'Gender stereotyping' (United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner) <https://www.ohchr.org/en/issues/women/wrgs/pages/genderstereotypes.aspx> accessed 11 February 2021



Do you think these news items share sexist and gender biased content, especially discriminating women? Can you spot any intersectional vulnerabilities?

Let's run these news items through a basic gender sensitivity check list...

Gender Sensitive Reporting Checklist:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the news items using Gender fair language? <p>Avoid using the pronoun “he” as a generic term. Equally, avoid using the term “man” as a generic noun. Terms such as “human being” or “person” are much more inclusive nouns.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What about the selection of sources and stories? <p>Ensure balanced representation of all genders, particularly stories and voices of people who are particularly invisible in traditional media.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any Stereotypes? How are gender identities portrayed? <p>Try not to make gender-based assumptions and share stories with stereotypes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are these news items promoting awareness of Gender Equality? <p>Highlight the importance of multidimensional representation of voices in a society</p>

Take a moment to reflect on your ideas...

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Now read-up and watch the #LikeAGirl advertisement campaign by an International sanitary napkins Brand called “Always”. Click on the picture below and it will take you to the online video of the Ad.



Read:

“Procter & Gamble-owned feminine hygiene brand Always broke from category norms last summer with an Ad that tried to dismantle gender stereotypes.

The brand’s #LikeAGirl campaign, by Leo Burnett, Chicago, London and Toronto, centres on a film that has a total view count of more than 85 million since the campaign launch in June 2014.

The Ad shows boys and girls of various ages being asked to do different activities ‘like a girl’. As the younger children run and fight furiously with no inhibitions, the older participants flap their limbs around pathetically. According to the research conducted for the Ad, only 19% of women have a positive association with the expression ‘like a girl’.”⁴³

What are your own thoughts about gender portrayal in digital media advertisements? Have you seen advertisements portraying gender stereotypes? Are there advertisements actively trying to overcome gender stereotypes?

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Privacy in New Media: The Internet is Listening

@AmalBehindtheLens: Privacy is the ability to control information about one’s self as well as the ability to be free from surveillance, from being followed, tracked, watched, and being eavesdropped on.⁴⁴ It sounds quite serious, doesn’t it? Well, the real question is whether you actually enjoy privacy?

With the advent of new media, especially in the last couple of decades, almost every part of our life is digitalized. However, despite this digitalization, we know very little about privacy. Think of your own personal experiences in the following circumstances.

<p>Do you know how TV or Netflix ratings are computed when no researcher has ever contacted you personally?</p>	<p>What about all the online shopping you do? Do online shopping sites and Apps share suggestions with that shoe you keep on thinking about?</p> <p>Maybe you did one simple search on the latest Tiktok trends and now you are suggested so many videos on Youtube?</p>	<p>Think of every time you write an email. Does your email suggest the next word or phrase that you ought to write? Heck, your email sometimes can figure out who to send the email to as well!</p>
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⁴³ 'Insight & Strategy: #LikeAGirl' (contagious, 21 May 2015) <<https://www.com/news-and-views/insightstrategy-likeagirl>> accessed 11 February 2021

⁴⁴ Sara Baase, A gift of fire (New Jersey: Pearson Education Limited 2012) 103

@Shakthilogy: *The truth is that the internet is listening. To you. To me. Right this minute.*

Digital technologies are constantly monitoring and calculating our online behavior. Our clicking, watching and viewing patterns are recorded and utilized by various technological platforms to ensure that we receive exactly what we want!

The issue with monitoring and calculating our online behavior is not just all about the internet being able to better predict us – perhaps even better than our loved ones. Sometimes large business corporations, election campaigners, and even policy makers have the ability to collect (often in unauthorized ways) our personal data due to the very fact that our digital presence is being recorded in various ways. Alarmingly, digitization of human life has resulted in digital imprints. A quick google search or a click on a website account for our digital fingerprint.

@AmalBehindtheLens: *We are actually leaving our digital imprints behind, in so many places for so many decades, without even really realizing it. Sometimes, even if a communication is deleted, our digital footprint is not.*

@Shakthilogy: *In certain instances, our digital imprint can even be investigated by the State for national security purposes or by employers for reference points.*

@AmalBehindtheLens: *That is such a good point Shakthi! You are right. I think we are all guilty of the fact that sometimes we just click on the “I agree to the terms and conditions” tab without even reading the terms and the conditions. This type of User behavior does not really help improving privacy concerns, right?*

@Shakthilogy: *Guilty as charged. However, given the number of tech-related actors on the internet today and the number of technological services we rely on, privacy rights are sometimes very controversial. Even if we may be entitled to the right to privacy, there is limited redress for individuals when there is a breach of sensitive or personal information. Privacy sort of becomes marginal in most of these circumstances.*

@AmalBehindtheLens: *There is also the issue of unauthorized access to data.*

@Shakthilogy: *Yes, privacy is clearly a concern. However, what does this really mean for gender?*

@AmalBehindtheLens: *Well, take for example fertility and menstruation apps...*

Fertility and Menstruation Data

There are many Fertility and menstruation apps such as Clue Period Tracker, Flo Period and Ovulation Tracker, Glow, Fertility Friend, Ovia, Natural Cycles etc. These apps have both free and paid versions. The App collects data from its users on their bodies, feelings, sexual activities and much more. No one really checks and follows-up with these Apps to see what measures are taken to protect user-privacy.

Sometimes, certain Apps use traditional language and symbols which reinforce gender stereotypes because they promote pro-fertility and concepts like traditional family models through the App.



The Menstruation App called 'Clue'

Tech- Inclusivity Beyond the Binary

@Shakthilogy: *If you remember, in the Digital Citizenship Toolkit, the problems of digital security were laid out for you. (If you have not checked it out yet, please note that digital security is extensively discussed in the Digital Citizenship module. Therefore, we will not dwell into it much over here.)*

One of the main issues arising out of digital security is privacy. The impact of privacy on gender is not just about cyber sexual and gender-based violence. It is also the way in which fear of such violence pushes out marginalized as well as vulnerable groups of people when it comes to accessing as well as enjoying the many benefits of the internet (We know that the internet is not all bad!). This is where it is important to understand the issues of digital security and privacy in a holistic manner. Currently, there is very little space for non-binary or gender non-conforming people on the internet. Conversations on cyber sexual and gender-based violence often doesn't account for LGBTIQ+ issues. There is also very little effort taken to approach issues in an intersectional view to access, inclusivity and vulnerability.

For Nyx Mclean to make "Tech more inclusive for non-binary folks", it is important to look into the LGBTIQ+ community as well as an intersectional approach to understanding issues of access, inclusivity in internet conversations and vulnerability.⁴⁵

@AmalBehindtheLens: *How can we make this work?*

@Shakthilogy: *Every step, every voice and every allyship counts!*

<p>» Keep pushing for gender responsive policies. Your voice matters!</p>	<p>It is important to integrate a gender perspective into ICTs at a global, regional as well as a national level. This involves, gender sensitizing and gender mainstreaming of strategies, policies, plans as well as budgets.</p> <p>It is important to take measures to educate people about gender. At the same time, actively involving various gender identities in designing, implementation and monitoring strategies, projects and policies is crucial. In promoting access, improving inclusivity and reducing vulnerability, it is fundamental to have a diverse group of decision makers. This is why positions of decision making should embody the values of diversity and inclusion.</p>
<p>» Help women, non binary and gender-non conforming communities to access ICTs.</p>	<p>Having access can be so important to mitigate or respond to online as well as offline threats sometime. Access is important for awareness, to exercise digital rights as well as to feel empowered. It is important to identify intersectional barriers to access such as low-income, social class or the urban-rural divide.</p>
<p>» Build digital capacities and thereby build resilience against vulnerability.</p>	<p>It is important to develop content, applications and services that meet the needs, desires, interests and values of women, non-binary and gender nonconforming people. This includes investing in developing digital literacy and skills as well as confidence building exercises. If anything goes wrong – people should be aware of what they should do!</p>
<p>» Establish multistakeholder partnerships at all times. We are all in this together!</p>	<p>When it comes to access, inclusivity and vulnerability everyone counts. It is important to involve as many people as possible in the conversations. Most of the time, privilege is invisible to those who have it. It is crucial to leverage privilege for Allyship.</p>

@Shakthilogy: You can also be more inclusive when you use new media in a personal capacity.

⁴⁵ Nyx McLean, 'Include LGBTIAQ+ Voices in internet governance conversation' (Gender IT, 1 December 2020) <<https://genderit.org/feminist-talk/include-lgbtiaq-voices-internet-governance-conversations>> accessed 15 January 2021

How can you be more Inclusive when you use New Media?

- 1. Understand inclusivity correctly:** Don't try to assume a person is heterosexual. As you already know, gender, biological sex, sexuality are separate conceptions. Remember that terms like LGBTIQ+ are evolving terms and require your constant awareness. Most importantly, identifying oneself as LGBTIQ+ is not a lifestyle choice or a choice at all.
- 2. Use inclusive language:** This is a prerequisite for respect. Don't leave anyone behind from the conversations you have both online and offline. Involve and engage various SOGI categories into your conversations!
- 3. Use terminology/ pronouns correctly:** Ask people what they use as a pronoun. It is important to use a pronoun yourself. When you specify your pronoun on your digital media, it also symbolizes that you are an Ally.
- 4. Don't ask anything that you don't need:** This is so important especially in terms of privacy. First consider whether you really need information about a person's gender. Most of the time, information about gender is collected even if it is not required at all. If you ever require gender related information, be inclusive. You can include a section in addition to the traditional man and woman binary such as "self-described" asking the respondents to specify the gender they identify as.
- 5. Try to reflect diversities in your own community in your own work and personal media:** You can use photographs and even videos to reflect diversity when you are engaging online and even in your own work.
- 6. Try to move away from a filter bubble:** Try to follow and accompany yourself with content outside of your filter bubble. That way, you would see much more diversity in the online world. Encourage others to try this too!
- 7. Dress codes can be restrictive:** Avoid specifying dress codes for any events that you organize. Who even follows dress codes?

IMPACT EXERCISE

Let's put your knowledge on inclusivity into practice!

Imagine that you are collecting data for a new class assignment on youth and digital communications. The topic of this assignment is to understand the threats to privacy faced by the youth in the age of digital communications. You are required to collect data from a group of youth using an online form for this assignment. Design the online form with 5 questions.

TOOL BOX 04

'GENDER' FOR NEW MEDIA USERS

“Gender is something everyone thinks they understand, but most people really don’t...It’s less “this or that” and more “this and that.””

- Sam Killerman ⁴⁶

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Describing and differentiating the definitional concepts of gender, sex and sexuality
2. Outline Pronouns and how to use them
3. Discuss Allyship and how to become an Ally

⁴⁶SamKillermann, ‘Breakingthroughthebinary: Genderexplainedusingcontinuums’(It’sPronouncedMetrosexual) <<https://www.itspronouncedmetrosexual.com/2011/11/breaking-through-the-binarygenderexplained-using-continuums/#menu>> accessed 25 January 2021

Understanding the Difference between Gender, Sex and Sexuality

@Shakthilogy: *Gender is an interesting concept. Just like Sam Killerman explained, it's a tough subject to tackle and often people misunderstand gender with concepts like biological sex and sexuality of a person. These confusions often lead to biases and judgement – both of which we can do without in this world!*

@AmalBehindtheLens: *Yes, precisely. Many people understand gender as just a binary – male or female. However, it is not a binary where you are either male or female. Think about it...Naturally,we cannot really categorize gender into black and white boxes. The truth is that gender is greyer than a binary of black or white. Don't be confused. Let us explain what we are talking about...*

@Shakthilogy: *I think you will understand the concept of gender much better if you look at it through the “Genderbread person” which is a concept coined by Sam Killerman. According to him, gender should be identified in a continuum. Put simply, this prompts you to understand gender through a “nessmodel”. You are technically looking into the female-ness or the male-ness or another-ness of a person.*

The Ness-Model

The Ness model invites people to identify themselves within a range as opposed to one single dot in a continuum. So, for example if you are trying to look into the male-ness or female-ness of a person, you are actually trying to think of a range you belong to in a continuum as opposed to marking yourself using a dot or a point on the continuum. This allows people to identify gender beyond a binary and understand the infinite possibilities of gender for each person.

@AmalBehindtheLens: *The Genderbread person? What a fantastic way of putting it! It is so true...gender identities are very dynamic and can differ based on our psychological as well as sociocultural environment. So, assuming that your sex assigned at birth is your gender is not always correct. Mind-blowing, is it not?*

@Shakthilogy: *Let's use Killerman's Genderbread model to raise awareness of the differences between gender and other concepts like sexual orientation on social media. We can host a couple of Instagram live sessions and it would be great if you can also come on board. What do you say?*

Before we start our live session, here are some useful concepts that you should know about:

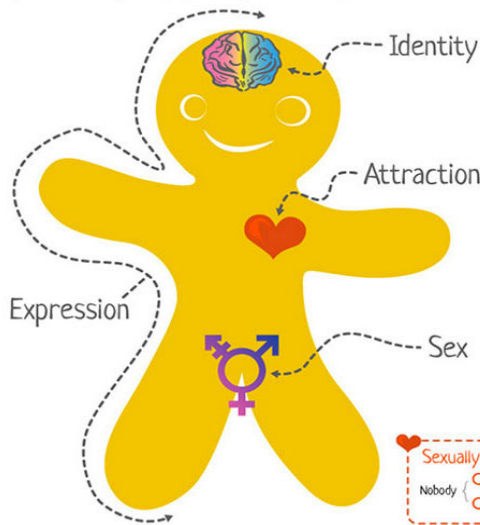
1. Gender identity
2. Gender expression
3. Biological Sex
4. Sexual Orientation and sexuality

Don't worry if you don't know what these terms mean. That is why we are here to help you out! Let's start with Figure 3 given below – the Genderbread Person! You can check more about the Genderbread person over.

The Genderbread Person v3.3

by its pronounced **METROsexual**.com

Gender is one of those things everyone thinks they understand, but most people don't. Like *Inception*, Gender isn't binary. It's not either/or. In many cases it's both/and. A bit of this, a dash of that. This tasty little guide is meant to be an appetizer for gender understanding. It's okay if you're hungry for more. In fact, that's the idea.



For a bigger bite, read more at <http://bit.ly/genderbread>

Plot a point on both continua in each category to represent your identity; combine all ingredients to form your Genderbread. 4 (if infinite) possible plot and label combos.

Gender Identity
 How you, in your head, define your gender, based on how much you align (or don't align) with what you understand to be the options for gender.
 Woman-ness
 Man-ness

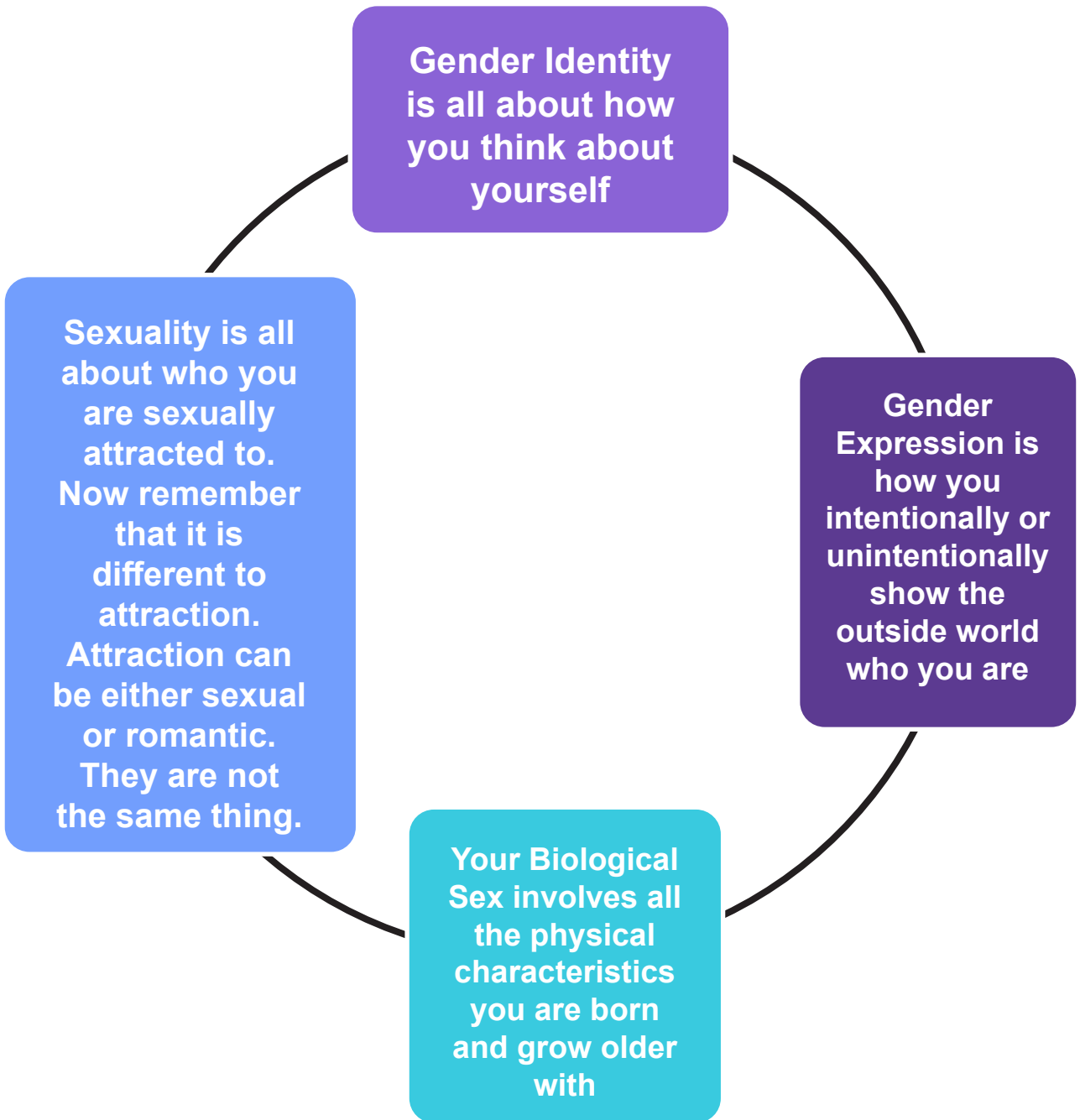
Gender Expression
 The ways you present gender, through your actions, dress, and demeanor; and how those presentations are interpreted based on gender norms.
 Feminine
 Masculine

Biological Sex
 The physical sex characteristics you're born with and develop, including genitalia, body shape, voice pitch, body hair, hormones, chromosomes, etc.
 Female-ness
 Male-ness

Sexually Attracted to
 Nobody (Women/Females/Femininity)
 (Men/Males/Masculinity)

Romantically Attracted to
 Nobody (Women/Females/Femininity)
 (Men/Males/Masculinity)

⊖ indicates a lack of what's on the right.



I think now you are ready to jump into our Instagram live sessions!

Live session 1: Gender Identity



Gender identity is all about who you think you are. It often reflects the hormonal make up of your being. Let us begin by asking some questions from you. Try to be as honest as you can. You can also write down your answer in a piece of paper and reflect on it after a while.

1. In your view, do you fit the social role and norms of a man or a woman?
2. Are there instances in life, where you feel and identify with aspects of both a man and a woman?
3. Do you feel like your gender falls outside of the two boxes: a man or a woman?

Whatever your answer is for any of the above questions – it basically reflects the way you think about yourself and your identity. There are no right or wrong answers here, so don't sweat about any of your answers.

It is important to understand that gender identity is not similar to a person's biological sex. Gender identities are influenced by so much more. Socio-cultural and environmental factors as well as a person's inner chemical make-up a.k.a. Hormones. A person's gender identity is formed around the age of three, as Killerman outlines. It is important to understand that gender identity is not a choice. It is the way a person is born – so no one can try or ask a person to change their gender identity.

Some people go through gender incongruence. This is when a person is in constant conflict with their bodies because they do not identify themselves with their assigned birth sex. In other words, a person might be assigned a sex at birth, but it does not align with how they come to identify themselves later. Often, this constant battle results in distress and unease. When people are going through gender incongruence, they just want society to let them be.

Did You Know?

In June 2018, the World Health Organization (WHO) declassified being transgender as a mental illness. This is great news! Generally, when we classify anything as a mental illness it often results in social stigma and discrimination. Just imagine how important it is for an International Organization to completely take-out being transgender as a mental illness. The WHO also replaced terms like "gender dysphoria" and "gender identity disorder" with the term "gender incongruence". WHO describes gender incongruence as 'characterized by a marked and persistent incongruence between an individual's experienced gender and the assigned sex'. Gender incongruence was moved out of the "mental and behavioral disorders" chapter to the "conditions related to sexual health" chapter.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ 'WHO/Europe brief – transgender health in the context of ICD-11' (World Health Organization) <<https://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/health-determinants/gender/genderdefinitions/whoeuropebrief-transgender-health-in-the-context-of-icd-11>> accessed 17 January 2021

If you study the Genderbread model, you will realize that your gender identity will be in a continuum. There can be many gender identities based on the level of woman-ness or manness or “different-ness” you identify yourself with.

@AmalBehindtheLens:

We are going to list out several gender identities down below (check out figure 4 given below), just for you to understand the basics of gender identity. However, it is important to note that this is not an exhaustive list and that some of these terms are umbrella terms. Some people might not necessarily like to identify themselves according to a given label or an umbrella term. Each person may feel different in unique ways. It is always often to keep an open mind when it comes to gender identity. It is also crucial to identify the person in the way they prefer to be identified.

@Shakthilogy:

I mean what is the point of addressing someone in a way they don't like? It is like you are talking to a wall because you are not directly addressing the person you intend to communicate with. We will learn a bit more about addressing people with respect later...

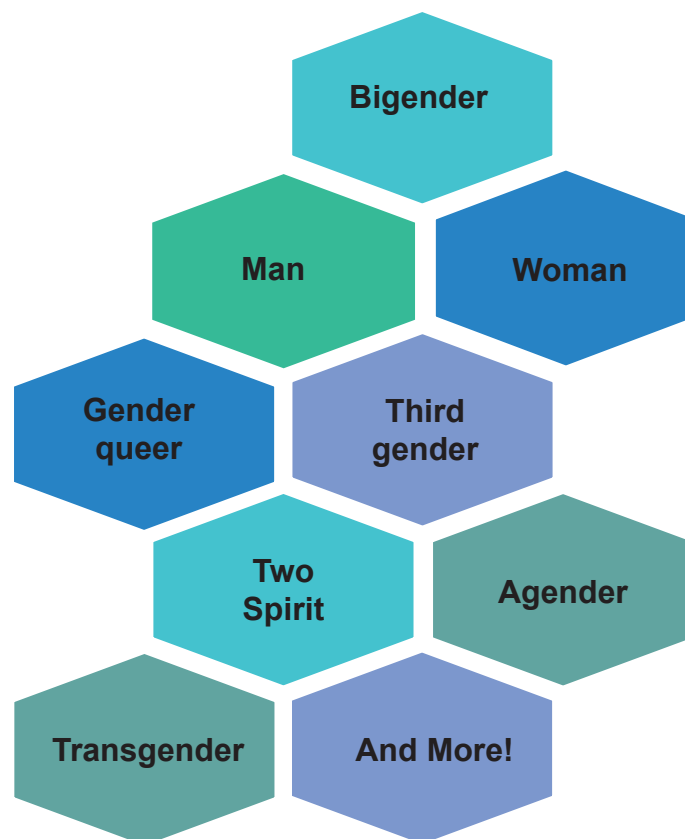


Figure 2

Live session 2: Gender Expression



Figure 3

Gender expression is all about how you project yourself to the rest of the world. This includes the way you dress, act, interact, maintain your Facebook and Instagram feeds, post Tiktok videos or simply behave with the rest of the world. Look at the picture given above in figure 5. How would you identify these two people? As two boys? As two people, who dresses like boys? Well, often if someone is wearing pants, they are considered to be men. If someone is wearing makeup or dresses, they are considered to be women. This is a classic interpretation of the traditional gender identity.

Gender expression is just as dynamic as gender identity. We can never presume that the two people in figure 5 are exactly boys. Perhaps, they are gender- non conforming and prefers to dress like boys sometimes and like girls some other time. Perhaps, they don't dress like boys or girls at all. Maybe it is a mix.

Now don't be confused. This is why gender expression is considered to be dynamic. It might in certain instances interrelate to gender identity. However, it does not interconnect to someone's gender identity. Killerman notes that gender expression actually changes day-to-day or outfit-to-outfit. It can change based on the event the person is attending to. Sometimes it can change depending on the social setting they are in.

Live session 3: Biological sex

People often misunderstand gender with biological sex. It is important to remember that gender and biological sex are two different elements. Biological sex looks at your physical characteristics including your bodily organs, body shape, voice, hormones as well as chromosomes. In the traditions sense, biological sex is two-fold: males and females. However, this is a very narrow way of looking at things. As progressive young people, it is important to look beyond the binary!

Generally, a male is someone with a penis, more testosterone and the XY chromosome. A female, on the contrary, has a vagina and ovaries, more estrogen and the XX chromosome. Don't worry, we are not going to go into the biological aspect of things. What we wanted to highlight was the importance of looking beyond the binary because there is also a variant of biological sex called "intersex". Check out figure 6 given below.

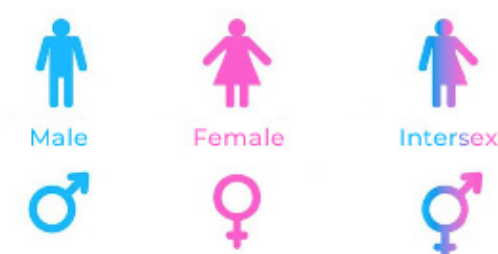


Figure 4⁴⁸

Intersex people can appear to be male or female physically but could have a different reproductive system inside of them. According to the Report of Rapid Situation Assessment of Transgender Persons in Sri Lanka 8% of the sample, recognized themselves as born as intersex, while 92% recognized themselves as born as male.⁴⁹

Live Session 4: Sexual Orientation and Attraction Sexual orientation of a person refers to their physical sexual conduct, desires, needs of a sexual relationship. This is different from a romantic attraction. Sometimes people might experience both at the same time or neither at all. At times, people might find themselves experiencing more of one than the other. Pansexual is when you are attracted irrespective of the gender. Asexual is when you have a romantic attraction without a sexual attraction. There are multiple labels at play when it comes to sexuality or the sexual orientation of a person. However, it is important to remember that sexuality of a person is not interconnected to a person's gender or biological sex. There might be interconnections, but one doesn't determine the other and vice versa.

⁴⁸ 'Disorders of Sexual Development' (Andromedic Academy) <<https://www.andromedicacademy.com/en/medical-procedures/intersex-person/disorders-of-sexual-development>> accessed 15 January 2021

⁴⁹ Institute for Participatory Interaction in Development, Rapid Situation Assessment of Transgender Persons in Sri Lanka (draft paper, 2016) 5-15. Available at <https://www.aidscontrol.gov.lk/images/pdfs/publications/research_documents/Rapid-situational-Assessment-of-TGs-Sri-Lanka-2017.pdf> accessed 17 February 2021

DID YOU KNOW?

Dr. Alfred Kinsey once conducted a comprehensive study about people's feelings, fantasizes, dreams and emotions to better understand the concept of sexuality. Dr. Kinsey introduced a 7-point scale for people to understand their sexuality better.⁵⁰

- 0 – Exclusively heterosexual
- 1 – Predominantly heterosexual, incidentally homosexual
- 2 – Predominantly heterosexual, but more than incidentally homosexual
- 3 – Equally hetero and homo sexual
- 4.- Predominantly homosexual, but more than incidentally heterosexual
- 5 – Predominantly homosexual, incidentally heterosexual
- 6 – Exclusively homosexual

Dr. Kinsey found out that most people who generally called themselves exclusively heterosexual were actually in the range of 1 -3. People who identified themselves as exclusively homosexual were between 3- 5.

@Shakthilogy:

The distinctions made between gender identity, expression, sex and sexual orientation is important to understand the broad nature of gender in general. You can never really speak about someone else's reality. So, knowing these conceptual differences does not mean that you can really determine a person's gender or sexuality. These concepts should be used to understand the world and the society we live in, beyond a binary.

@AmalBehindtheLens:

I agree 100%. It is equally important to remember that these concepts are interrelated but not interconnected. I noticed that the Genderbread model also outlines the importance of this distinction.

“Gender identity, gender expression, biological sex, and sexual orientation are independent of one another (i.e., they are not connected). People's sexual orientation doesn't determine their gender expression. And their gender expression isn't determined by their gender identity. And their gender identity isn't determined by their biological sex.”⁵¹

- Sam Killerman -

⁵⁰ Institute for Participatory Interaction in Development, Rapid Situation Assessment of Transgender Persons in Sri Lanka (draft paper, 2016) 5-15. Available at <https://www.aidscontrol.gov.lk/images/pdfs/publications/research_documents/Rapid-situational-Assessment-of-TGs-Sri-Lanka-2017.pdf> accessed 17 February 2021

⁵¹ Institute for Participatory Interaction in Development, Rapid Situation Assessment of Transgender Persons in Sri Lanka (draft paper, 2016) 5-15. Available at <https://www.aidscontrol.gov.lk/images/pdfs/publications/research_documents/Rapid-situational-Assessment-of-TGs-Sri-Lanka-2017.pdf> accessed 17 February 2021

Understanding SOGI

LGBTIQA+ is an evolving acronym. It stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning, asexual and other terms such as non-binary and pansexual. This acronym is constantly evolving because when it comes to gender and sexual identities, the possibilities, as you know now, are endless!

At times people use the term “queer” as an umbrella term to refer to everyone. However, limiting gender and sexual identities to umbrella terms have been criticized by many due to various reasons. LGBTIQA+ is a word that attracts a lot of criticism. Sometimes if you say the word in a very restrictive society, you might be labelled as a neo-imperialist believing in Western liberal political ideas. What can be worse is being labelled as someone trying to destroy traditional cultures.

Against this backdrop the term SOGI is used more often now, especially to refer to diverse gender and sexual identities of individuals. This term is derived from international human rights law. To put it simply, SOGI stands for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity.

@Shakthilogy:

SOGI does not presume and categorize individuals into fixed identities. This allows the reality of sexual and gender identities to really come to light. Nothing is fixed, you know?

@AmalBehindtheLens:

Yes indeed! Sexual and gender identities are an experience that evolves all throughout our lifetime. It is sometimes messy, chaotic even. But like everything else – it is also subjected to change!

Understanding Pronouns and How to Use them

Pronouns are used to refer to people when you engage in any conversation. If you consciously listen to yourself speaking or sometimes even thinking in your own head, you will realize that you refer to other people using pronouns all the time. You do, don't you? Aha!

@AmalBehindtheLens: *You might be wondering why we are suddenly talking about pronouns. Since you have an understanding about gender, we thought it would be useful to help you utilize that knowledge to be more gender sensitive when you engage with other people. So let's start from the basics...*

Generally, pronouns that we use can have gender implications. Just imagine you are talking to your best friend about a movie you watched recently. You love the actor in this movie and you think the actor looks a lot like your friend. Here, you would use the term "he" to refer to the actor. If the actor appeared to look like a female, you would possibly call the person "she". The issue with these associations to appearance or name might not always be correct. This is problematic and not very helpful in real life, when you are engaging in a conversation with someone who doesn't like being called a he or a she. By limiting your usage of pronouns to a binary, you are also excluding so many other gender identities, which is not very accurate.

@AmalBehindtheLens: *People often make assumptions about gender based on a name or the appearance. Nadun, a friend of mine, who is also a transgender male was often referred to by his dead name or the name assigned at birth – which was Naduni. However, he preferred the pronoun is He/Him.*

@Shakthilogy: *That is so unfortunate. I have also noticed how "Trans" is an umbrella term, which isn't used by everyone to describe themselves.*

@AmalBehindtheLens: *You are right. If a person was assigned female at birth, and they chose to be identified as a male – it is important to refer to that person in the way they prefer. For example, someone might prefer to call themselves "a trans man", "a man with a trans history" or "just a man." Sometimes, they might just want to be called by their name and that is it. It is important to respect the wishes of a person. It is not a choice that you can make!*

@Shakthilogy: *I made a list of benefits in using the correct pronouns. I am also pointing out the issues in making assumptions and calling a person a wrong pronoun. It is also important to note that a pronoun does not affirm anyone's gender or sex identity. Therefore, trying to figure people out based on the pronoun they use is not a useful task. Check out the figure given below.*

What are the benefits of knowing and actively using the correct Pronouns?

- It is a way of showing respect
- You are being and actively building an inclusive environment

What happens when you use incorrect pronouns?

- It is offensive to make assumptions about a person based on their appearance or name and use an incorrect pronoun
- You are also sending out a harmful message by implying that you are supposed to look a certain way to be addressed correctly

What happens if you actively chose to ignore Pronouns?

If you actively choose to ignore using the correct pronouns, it is really problematic. This will not only show that you are disrespectful, but it will also show that you don't believe or think that gender and sex identities outside the traditional binary should exist!

@AmalBehindtheLens: *We are going to highlight some pronouns down below and teach you how to use them. We want to remind you again that people's gender identities are private. Just because someone is sharing the pronoun they use; you cannot start making assumptions about their gender identity.*

HE/HIM/HIS⁵²

You might think that He pronouns are predominantly dealing with men. That is not correct. Any person, irrespective if their gender identity can prefer being called a He.

He/him example: **He** is an artist. I like both **him** and **his** paintings.

SHE/HER⁵³

Although many would like to think that the She pronouns are used by and for females, it can actually be used by any gender identity. Here again, making assumptions is a big NO!

She/her example: **She** is a journalist. **Her** articles are amazing.

THEY/THEM/THEIR⁵⁴

Here, the pronoun They refer to a person and is not used in a plural sense. This is a more gender-neutral way of identifying and referring to a person. They/Them example: They are a dancer and choreographer the show themselves. I love both them and their ideas."

⁵² 'Resources on Personal Pronoun' (My Pronouns) < <https://www.mypronouns.org/>> accessed 20 January 2021

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

@Shakthilogy: *Sometimes people don't want to use pronouns. They prefer being called their name. I am someone like that. I don't like using pronouns.*

NO PRONOUNS - USE MY NAME

In Shakthi's case, here is what you can use:

Shakthi is a gender equality activist/ freelance digital illustrator/ content writer.
Shakthi's ideas are progressive. Shakthi once wrote a series of blog articles
Shakthi's self.

IMPACT EXERCISE: 1

MYPRONOUNS.ORG is a great resource to know about how to use correct pronouns. Visit the MYPRONOUNS Website ON HOW TO SHARE YOUR PRONOUN and try to complete the following tasks:

1. Figure out the pronoun that you would like to use. Take into account Neopronouns⁵⁵ as well.
2. Think of instances where you can share your pronoun in digital media. Eg: Think about your social media pages or your LinkedIn profile. You can also think about how you use your email signature.
3. Now try to share your preferred pronoun in these new media platforms.
4. Voila! You have now taken a step towards becoming more gender aware and gender sensitive. This will also make you and Ally. Let us talk about being an Ally soon!

⁵⁵ 'Resources on Personal Pronoun' (My Pronouns) < <https://www.mypronouns.org/> > accessed 20 January 2021

Your Role in All of This: Becoming an Ally

@Shakthilogy: *Do you recall the question we asked you to answer at the very beginning of this module? Let's quickly recap to freshen your mind. We asked you to imagine yourself with only 300 rupees to live the rest of your life. Few options, each costing 100 rupees were given to you to choose your basic necessities to live your life. Let me remind you the options again:*

1. Complete your education
2. Find a partner and celebrate your love with your family
3. Having a good job
4. Ability to walk freely and happily on the road
5. Feel safe when you interact with authorities like the Police
6. Be able to visit restaurants and public places without fear
7. Having my parent know and accept my gender and sexuality
8. Inheriting wealth from my family

If you look at your answers now, you would perhaps understand that some of these options might not be too important to you, perhaps because they are already a part of your life. For example, you might already be able to visit restaurants or any place for that matter without fear. Maybe your parents accept your gender and sexual identity because it fits the social norm of the male-female binary. This unfortunately is not everyone's reality. Sometimes, a person might not be able to live with their family because of social stigma and discrimination due to the person's gender or sexual identity. There might be instances where a person might not be able to inherit wealth from their family because of legal implications relating to their gender and sexual identities. Maybe, their identity impacts the kind of job they do. In these instances, what you consider normal and already available basic necessities can actually be a luxury for a non-binary or gender-nonconforming person. Have you ever thought of that before?

This is why it is important to become an Ally and build safe spaces for everyone to feel and be respected!

@AmalBehindtheLens: *Allyship is a verb not a noun. It is all about being supportive and that is not too much to ask for really!*

**Allies can help you with your PIE!
Performance, Image and Exposure.**

⁵⁶ '10 Things Allies can do' (The ywcahbg Greater Harrisburg). Available at: <<http://www.ywcahbg.org/sites/default/files/manager/10%20Things%20Allies%20Can%20Do.pdf>> accessed 17 January 2021

@Shakthilogy: Yes. It is also important to understand that it is not just gender and sexuality related stigma and marginalization that would make it really hard for some people to access their basic needs. Gender and sexual identities can sometimes overlap with religious, caste as well as caste identities. Just imagine yourself being a Transgender male in a minority religious community in a country. The discrimination you face can double and triple due to the intersection of various social identities. This is what we studied as intersectional discrimination. Let us now look in to what you can do as an Ally.

YWCA.org shares 10 tasks that an Ally can do to support a safe space for everyone.⁵⁶ This task list can actually be your own checklist to determine whether you are doing enough as an Ally.

10 Things ALLIES Can Do

An 'ally' is someone who has privilege, but chooses to stand for and with marginalized communities* by taking tangible, ongoing actions to dismantle systems of oppression.

Marginalized communities are those who are targeted by oppression, including but not limited to: people of color, Muslims, immigrants, refugees, LGBTQ people, women and people with disabilities.

1 LISTEN

Listen to what marginalized people are saying - face-to-face, on your social media feed or in the articles you read. It's not about you, your feelings or opinions; it's about hearing theirs.

2 GET EDUCATED

Seek out books, articles, films, etc. about the history and current issues facing marginalized communities, and attend formal anti-oppression trainings.

3 GET INVOLVED

Join local groups working for social justice. Subscribe to their e-mail lists, follow them on social media and show up to support their work.

4 SHOW UP

When someone from a marginalized community invites you to an event, go - be there to listen, learn and show your support.

5 SPEAK UP

When a friend, family member, co-worker or stranger says something hateful or ignorant, call them out on it. Silence allows oppression to continue.

6 INTERVENE

When someone is being targeted - physically or verbally - intervene only with their permission. Focus on supporting them rather than engaging the aggressor.

7 WELCOME DISCOMFORT

When you encounter something that makes you uncomfortable, don't dismiss it. Sit with it, ask yourself 'why?' and welcome it as an opportunity to grow.

8 LEARN FROM YOUR MISTAKES

You will make mistakes. When someone calls you out, don't get defensive. Listen, apologize and change your behavior going forward.

9 STAY ENGAGED

Even when the work gets difficult, stay engaged. Oppression is constant, and marginalized people do not have the privilege of "turning off".

10 DONATE

Commit to financially support a local organization doing social justice work in your community; not just once but on an ongoing basis.

Seeking to be an ally is an ongoing journey, and this list simply represents a starting point. Please refer to the below sources which informed this list, and continue to seek out and practice ways that you can be an ally.

Sources:
 Isobel Debrujah, "So You Want to Wear a Safety Pin"
 Jamie Utt, "So You Call Yourself an Ally: 10 Things All 'Allies' Need to Know"
 Southern Poverty Law Center, "Speak Up: Responding to Everyday Bigotry"

YWCA IS ON A MISSION

IMPACT EXERCISE: 2

@AmalBehindtheLens: In the world you live in today, being an ally is no easy task. This is especially because of the role played by new media in our daily lives. New media tools account for anything and everything that exists in the world of the internet. This includes social media, websites, gaming applications and the works!

However, there are four core principles to becoming an Ally. Let's make it fun and get you to solve some riddles to identify these core principles.⁵⁷

<p>Riddle 1: It belongs to you, but other people use it more often than you do. What is it?</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p>Riddle 2: Make two people out of one!</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
<p>Riddle 3: I can be cracked. I can be made. I can be told. I can be played. What am I?</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>	<p>Riddle 4: Tool of thief, toy of Queen. Always used to be unseen. Sign of joy, sign of sorrow. Giving all likeness borrowed. Who am I?</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>

Have you got the answers? Turn to the next page and look at how these riddles outline the core principles of being an Ally.

⁵⁷ This exercise is inspired by Neelam Jain, the founder of "Peri Ferry", an organization seeking to empower transgender individuals. See more at Jobs and Training Opportunities for Transgender Individuals; <https://www.periferry.com>

Core Principles of Being an Ally

Riddle 1: It belongs to you, but other people use it more often than you do. What is it?

It's your NAME!

It is so important to use appropriate pronouns. Calling people, the way they want to be called is the right thing to do. You can always ask a person what pronoun they use. Sometimes, asking a person a preferred pronoun might sound like you are giving them a choice. Just make sure to be respectful. It is also important to ask a person when and where they feel safe to use a name they have chosen for themselves or pronoun they use.

Riddle 2: Make two people out of one!

It is a MIRROR!

Being an Ally means a lot of self-reflection and confrontation of your own prejudices and biases. Sometimes, you might find it super uncomfortable to confront your own biases. Think of it as looking in the mirror and working on how you look! You want to look good and presentable, don't you?

Riddle 3: I can be cracked. I can be made. I can be told. I can be played. What am I?

This riddle is about A JOKE!

It is not a joke to laugh at a person's gender identity. Equally, making jokes about gender and sexual identities is not fun. It is offensive. As an Ally you should stand up and speak out especially if you experience something like this. A person's reality cannot be a joke.

Riddle 4: Tool of thief, toy of Queen. Always used to be unseen. Sign of joy, sign of sorrow. Giving all likeness borrowed. Who am I?

It is A MASK!

Imagine a masquerade mask! Now think of everyone in society wearing masquerade masks. Do not make assumptions about their gender identities. Someone who might be close to you could be looking out for support in dealing with their own personal struggles relating to gender and sexuality. Assumptions can really do no good here.

Community Impact Project

To complete this module, you are required to take on a community impact project. In this project you are required to come up with a media product aimed at raising awareness on Gender sensitivity and inclusivity in using new media. Don't worry. There are only five simple rules in implementing this project! Here they are:

- » You will be grouped in order to carry out this project;
- » You are required to design and implement this project;
- » Your project should raise awareness on how to be more inclusive and gender sensitive as a new media/ digital citizen;
- » Impact a community of minimum 200 people.
- » You should spend a minimum of 3 hours in implementing this project.

References

Constitution

The Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

Legislation

Computer Crime Act, No.24 of 2007

Intellectual Property Act, No. 36 of 2003

Obscene Publications (Amendment) Act, No. 22 of 1983

Obscene Publications Ordinance, No.04 of 1927

Penal Code (Amendment) Act, No. 16 of 2006

Sri Lanka Telecommunications Act, No. 25 of 1991

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