Politics of #LoSha: Using Naming and Shaming as a Feminist Tool on Facebook

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the new feminist intervention in India against sexual harassment (SH) through the online weapon of anonymously listing sexual offenders. The publication of the list on Facebook—known as the List of Shame (or #LoSha)—was inspired by the #MeToo campaign following the Hollywood Weinstein affair and was composed through a collection of first-hand survivor narratives. A list of 70 names of alleged academic sexual offenders was first shared by a lawyer based in the US, Raya Sarkar, and became viral on Facebook. This chapter will look at how this campaign used naming as a risk-taking tool to directly point at the lack of effective institutional frameworks within academic spaces. In doing so, it successfully used the online space of Facebook to create a feminist debate around the issue of SH transcending geographical and hierarchical barriers and to raise questions regarding the viability of the established feminist recourses against SH.

Subramanian (2015) had already pointed out a difference in the mode of activism of younger generation feminists in India from their predecessors,

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but #LoSha divided the feminist academic space down the middle. The more experienced feminists rejected it as a public trial or witch hunt—in a reversal to the feminist understanding of witch hunt by the likes of Silvia Federici (see Siapera in this volume)—whose lack of evidence could be a threat to the larger feminist objectives of fairness. An intense backlash to this position came from another school of feminists who upheld the list as a radical and necessary protest against the dependence on institutional procedures which were time-consuming, cumbersome and non-existent in most places. #LoSha thus gave rise to an intense public debate on SH in academia for the first time in India, to be entirely held on the internet. What makes this case unique is the internal discursive debate it created within Indian feminism about radical interpretations of the feminist politics of risk-taking and its implications.

Using the methodological tool of situated critique (Bannerji 1995), in this chapter I will utilize my own experience of participating in the list as well as in the larger feminist debate to discuss the politics of risk-taking and solidarity and the implications of list-activism. In doing so, the list has established the role of cyberfeminism (Daniels 2009) in India and surfaced a new intersectional autocritique of the academia based on caste, class and gender. Though questions regarding the method remain, the use of Facebook, Twitter and Google documents for providing survivors an anonymous voice promises new boundaries of empowerment and fear.

The second section of the chapter discusses the temporal occurrence of #LoSha in Indian digital spaces. The third section discusses the aftermath of the list, especially the ensuing debate within feminist circles about "finger-tip activists" and the cyber activism of new feminists. This debate was also marked by the *Savarna-Avarna*[1] debate discussing the privilege endowed by the caste system on certain sections and the implications of #LoSha on Dalit students entering academic spaces of privilege without the cultural and symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1984, 1989, 1991) that upper-caste students and faculties enjoy. The fourth section is devoted to the debate on #LoSha from a Dalit feminist standpoint and explores these privileges in detail. The fifth section of this chapter discusses this debate and how it has unmasked new feminist practices and critiques through use of digital spaces, leading to a shift in the movement around sexual harassment.

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[1] Savarna refers to those belonging to the upper castes in the hierarchical caste system practised in India. Avarna refers to those in the population who are considered outside the caste system, such as the Dalits and untouchables.

#MeToo in Indian Academia

Riding on the wave of Twitter and social media, the #MeToo movement (Verso Report 2018) arrived in India from the world of Hollywoods and Weinsteins in late 2017. Women soon started sharing their tales of harassment and what soon became apparent was the pervasive nature of such experiences among Indian women. Soon, the movement entered Indian academic sphere when Professor Christine Fair published a list of her sexual harassers in academia over the years on Facebook with the tag #himtoo—prominent Indian historian Dipesh Chakrabarty featured in her post (Fair 2017). Fair's post created a debate within Indian academics, and soon many were sharing their experiences, though the perpetrators remained unnamed.

Two days later, a student of University of California, Davis (UC-Davis)—Raya Sarkar—published a list of sexual harassers in Indian academia as a Facebook post. The list, which she called the list of shame, was sourced from first-hand accounts of survivors who wished to remain anonymous, and soon she was receiving more and more accounts of such experiences. Her post became viral, shared more than a thousand times among students and academicians and activists in India, garnering further media attention but few responses from the accused. The hashtags #thelist and #LoSha were soon circulating on Facebook and Twitter, and debates on the rampant nature of sexual harassment in Indian academic spaces and impunity enjoyed by cis-hetero academic men have continued since then.

By the end of November 2017, 72 names of Indian male academicians were featured on the list (Chadha 2017), including one accused student from the University of Oxford. The public discussion generated from this list continued for months, and at least one of those named, Professor Lawrence Liang of Ambedkar University Delhi, was found guilty by the Sexual Harassment Committee of that university after the survivor filed a complaint (Mandhani 2018). Liang is now reported to have approached the Delhi High Court. However, the critical achievement of #LoSha has been the long-standing debate it has triggered within the Indian academic space about the issue of sexual harassment. Till April 2018, when this chapter is being written, the discourse around #LoSha continues to unfurl. It is with this recognition that I will focus on some aspects of the debate in the coming sections.

"Feminist Civil War" or a Long Due Debate?

I will focus principally on the debate which ensued among feminists in cyberspace by this act. The first organized response from Indian feminists to the list came the same day the list was published, from a group of senior feminists situated in Delhi. It was published in the blog *Kafila*[2] (Menon 2017) and read as follows:

> As feminists, we have been part of a long struggle to make visible sexual harassment at the workplace, and have worked with the movement to put in place systems of transparent and just procedures of accountability. We are dismayed by the initiative on Facebook, in which men are being listed and named as sexual harassers with no context or explanation. One or two names of men who have been already found guilty of sexual harassment by due process, are placed on par with unsubstantiated accusations. It worries us that anybody can be named anonymously, with lack of answerability. Where there are genuine complaints, there are institutions and procedures, which we should utilize. We too know the process is harsh and often tilted against the complainant. We remain committed to strengthening these processes. At the same time, abiding by the principles of natural justice, we remain committed to due process, which is fair and just. This manner of naming can delegitimize the long struggle against sexual harassment, and make our task as feminists more difficult. We appeal to those who are behind this initiative to withdraw it, and if they wish to pursue complaints, to follow due process, and to be assured that they will be supported by the larger feminist community in their fight for justice.

The claim of this statement, signed by 12 feminists on behalf of the whole movement created a debate within the Indian feminist movement that went on for weeks. This was followed by sustained debates and heated discussions mostly on cyberspaces like Facebook, Twitter and blogs like *Kafila*. The debate, even described as a "war" (Ghosh 2017) by some, was seen as between two age-divided feminist groups—one made of experienced older generation of feminists who were in favour of following the due processes available for redressal, and the other group of young

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[2] One of the accused sexual harassers in the list, who was subsequently found guilty by his university committee, was a founding member of this blog, though no mention was made of it in the statement. In ensuing debates in the comments section, questions were raised about this absence of any declaration of association. For more, see Menon (2017) comments section.

feminists with no historical memory who were attempting to "name and shame" those perpetrators who have been successful in escaping the nets of "due process".[3] I agree with Gopal (2018) that this is a "falsely polarized battle"—for one, feminists like V. Geetha and Mary John have stood behind the list, pointing out the despair due to failure of institutional processes which could have led to the students towards a move like this. Second, bearing in mind the complex geographical and political diversity of the Indian women's movement, it is a fallacy to consider a statement issued by 12 intellectuals as representative of the entire movement. This also points towards the marginalization of rural and Dalit feminists and indicates a form of hierarchy biased towards urban, upper-class feminist obfuscation of multiple voices within the movement.[4]

Srila Roy (2017) has also pointed out that this generational reading of the feminist struggle and the angst about the erasure of feminist struggles of previous generations brings along "an assumption that feminist knowledge and practice is one, singular thing that can be reproduced, intact, over successive generations. It is therefore consistent and unchanging".

The construct of a singular victim is also a fallacy of theorizing sexual violation from a position that is almost narcissistic in its approach to marginalization. Until now, the presence of a victim[5] in the form of a surviving body has been necessary as evidence on which the discourse of sexual violence has been based. The visible body of the victim, her narrative, her dress are the voyeuristic pleasures on which cases of sexual violence come to light. Violence and voyeurism are the twin pillars of sexual violence in academia.[6] If a survivor files a complaint, the details of her plight are the basis of her

[3] For an overall summation of the two sides of the spectrum of this debate, see Roy (2017), Chadha (2017) and others in the EPW Engage article series, "Power and Relationships in Academia".

[4] For a elaborated foray into the history of the Indian women's movement, please see documented history, *The History of Doing* by Radha Kumar (1989), *Women's Studies in India: A Reader* edited by Mary E. John (2008) and *The Issues at Stake: Theory and Practice in the Contemporary Women's Movement in India* by Nandita Gandhi and Nandita Shah (1992).

[5] I use the term "victim" here to point at the pleasurable narrations of incidents of sexual violence which imposes the victim role on the survivor, and the portrayal of media of the survivors in that light.

[6] Even though the Sexual Harassment Guidelines 2013 ensures anonymity to the complainants, this is hardly the case in reality. My access to and participation in the student communities of Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi University and Ambedkar University Delhi in Delhi has always revealed to me the identity of the complainants, as it did to many others. This affects

public trial—was she drunk? What was she wearing? What time of the day did it happen? What was she doing with him at that time? Only socially acceptable answers to these questions will lead her to be accepted as a survivor.

It is this aspect of the process surrounding incidents of sexual violence that #LoSha has subverted. There is no visible victim; there is no visible body. What exactly was the intention behind the publication of such a list? In an email interview (28 April 2018), Sarkar states:

> My intention was not to make people aware of how grave the problem of sexual harassment in academia is because every woman in academia already knows its gravity. I created the list to make students wary of creeps in academia, a tool to navigate through the rape culture. The onus should never be on women; however, if women do benefit from knowing who the creeps to avoid are then I'm glad if my list were of help. It also brought closure to the women who suffered through trauma in silence. I did not expect the list to go viral or create a furore, neither did I expect a barrage of sexual harassment apologia from many feminist figures. I did expect the list to be criticised because it was impulsively created however I did not expect 'progressive' people to de-legitimise it using the rhetoric of rape apologists.

As a graduate student in India, I had participated in the 2012 protests and the descriptions of "what was done to the female body" played a crucial role in mobilizing the sustained protest against a brutal rape case. Protest is important and necessary; however, what I am pointing to here is the prerequisite of a violated body in order to raise the compassion necessary for such a protest. Would the anonymous survivors of #LoSha have garnered more support if they revealed their identity and the grotesqueness of the violation done to them? These questions bear in mind when I engage with one of the foremost critiques of the publication of the list: the undisclosed identity of the complainant.

I recognize and agree, it is important to mention here, with the critique that different degrees of sexual violence must not be equated. #LoSha had taken this critique in its stead and the Facebook list published by Sarkar was soon followed by a Google document which listed the alleged harassers but also, in some cases, when the harassment took place and the nature of the incident. Some of the names, however, remained without details. This was done in order to maintain anonymity of the survivors in these

sexual harassment survivors' decision to approach the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) and is contingent on whether they are ready to face the implications of identity revelation.

cases. And it is the importance of this anonymity that is at the heart of the politics around the list. Sarkar (2018) also considers the critique very valid:

> There were various degrees of violence such as molestation, rape, cajoling, sexually coloured remarks, and even attempts to pimp women out to professor's friends that I essentialised into one category of sexual harassment. I understand that doing so does minimise many forms of violence to an extent, as does the law. However when a professor comments on their student's breasts, their behaviour it is still sexual misconduct and not something we should normalise in society just because someone did not get raped and mutilated in the process- grading sexual violence minimises the gravity of sexual misconduct. When sexual violence is graded on terms not set by survivors, it further normalises various behaviours that perpetuate rape culture.

Normalization of violence through gradation is a much-needed conversation in the context of sexual violence. To what extent must the violated body be visible for the violence to be punishable? Here we are reminded of the raging national solidarity during the 2012 protests after the brutal rape of Jyoti Singh (Shandilya 2015; Lodhia 2015), or the rape of eight-year-old Asifa (Independent 2018), and numerous other cases where not the act of sexual violation but rather the degree of brutality became the rallying point of solidarity. What does it say about the politics of solidarity on the basis of which broader societal aspirations of change are manifested? This introspection is long due in the feminist movement both globally and within the specific context of Indian academia. To focus on the crime without an available body on which the crimes were committed, to move the focus from the survivor to the alleged perpetrators is an important step in raising these questions. And in my opinion, this more than anything is the contribution of the list.

Class and Impunity in Feminist Academia

The impunity enjoyed by sexual harassers in academic spaces is due to a variety of reasons. Social, cultural and symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1986) accessible to academics makes it difficult to hold them accountable even in the most verifiable cases. However, the necessity of evidence is in itself a huge barrier to justice in cases of sexual harassment. Survivors are not believable, as Menon (2017) points out:

Why not just accept the word of the complainant? Because we all know there are complex motivations behind complaints of this nature, especially among students themselves. We are aware that sometimes such complaints, for instance, are the easy way out in rivalry among student organizations, or may be motivated by caste hierarchies or other considerations. Each instance must be investigated thoroughly through transparent procedures.

What then do young women—many of whom are first-generation university goers—do to ensure that they are not exposed to the traumatic experience of sexual harassment? If feminists continue debating on the complex motivations which can lead students to make such complaints, then where exactly can students find a space more sensible with their lived reality?

One has to take cognizance of the fact that the debate, still ongoing, is about the effectivity of institutional processes in cases of sexual harassment. Steering the debate towards why such incidences do happen in the first place is difficult. Feminists both for and against the list accept that sexual harassment in Indian academia is a lived reality. Clearly, due process has not proved to be deterrent enough to stop such incidences. In this failure lies the crux of the despair felt by students who support ventures like #LoSha. These are all young men or women with feminist politics, people who clearly share the same ideology and have grown up reading and admiring the people against whom they are lashing out now. The Indian feminist movement within academia has been hierarchical—it has traditionally been feminist faculties who have formulated strategies and processes. Admittedly, students have been made a part of the process, but the processes were themselves formulated by a generation who are not currently exposed to the predatory sexual culture of academia to the extent students are.

This is an important difference to dwell on. While both sides have been interested in addressing the issue of sexual harassment, students want to not only put a halt to it but also call out the hierarchical policy formation in which they have a negligible say. Institutional processes are in place to bring an offender to justice, but what can stop them from committing the offence? Heterosexual, upper-caste cis-men enjoy a form of impunity that has remained unchallenged for long. #LoSha's naming and shaming confronts it by striking the social capital on which their impunity is based. It is not frivolous but a creative political tool which strikes at the heart of the enemy—of what they treasure the most.

V. Geetha (Indian Express 2017) addressed the concern about shaming:

> We need to also be less anxious about 'naming and shaming'. In those routine and horrible instances of sexual harassment and violence that unfold in innumerable villages and towns, of a day, perpetrators are known, but are seldom shamed. In fact they revel in their authority to sexually hurt those they deem subordinate. Yet, for those who fight their impunity, it has been important to speak, name and hold accountable those who have caused such suffering—to point to the utter wrongness of what is often taken for granted, So the question is not what naming in the university can achieve—it might or might not achieve legal redress, but it is the barest acknowledgement that those who take their authority for granted, be shown up for what they are, privileged, entitled, unmindful persons, who draw on their intellectual power to control young minds and bodies.

#LoSha took the instrument of hearsay and Chinese whispers—one that has been used by women for ages to create a defensive barrier against sexual predators—into a wider network. The whispers were taken beyond the limits of immediacy and shared with a wider network of students, incoming students and wider participants in the academia, thanks to the internet.

Caste and Feminist Challenges of #LoSha

There is a huge body of literature on the access of marginalized communities to cyberspace and the potential of transformation promised by such access.[7] The initial transformative potential of the internet has been re-scrutinized after observations such as this one by Sollee (2017):

> …people from marginalized groups face the highest levels of harassment online. Black and Latinx people are more likely to be harassed online than white people; every ten seconds someone calls a woman a "slut" or a "whore" on Twitter; 25 percent of women between the ages of eighteen and twenty-four have reported being sexually harassed online; and 26 percent of women in that age group have been stalked online, too. (p. 138)

A South Asian perspective of how this marginalization plays out is gained from Radhika Gajjala's (2013) *Cyberculture and the Subaltern*. Despite this, women have not given up on the transformative abilities of the internet.

[7] See, for example, Fernandez et al. (2003), Kolko et al. (2000) for a feminist and race critique of political potential of cyberspaces.

As Maari Zwick Maitreyi pointed out at the round-table discussion of the International Feminist Journal of Politics Conference at University of San Francisco on April 3 2018, the accessibility of internet—despite all its issues related to security and uneven exposure—has for the first time given a space to young Dalit feminists. From their positions of marginalized subjectivities discussed by others, they now have their own voices heard across spaces which have been traditionally Savarna and upper class. Academia is only one such space. The role of cyberspace in building solidarity, resistance as well as experimenting with newer forms of identity formations have been investigated in some detail by Gajjala in her forthcoming book (2019).

Before venturing further into the caste-related critique of #LoSha, I would like to turn the readers' attention to some of the statistics on violence faced by Dalit women. According to the UN Special Rapporteur's report on violence against Dalit women published in 2013 (United Nations 2013),

> Dalit women's experience of violence across four Indian states shows that the majority of Dalit women report having faced one or more incidents of verbal abuse (62.4%), physical assault (54.8%), sexual harassment and assault (46.8%), domestic violence (43.0%) and rape (23.2%) In less than 1% of cases were the perpetrators convicted by the courts. In 17.4% of instances of violence, police obstructed the women from attaining justice. In 26.5% of instances of violence, the perpetrators and their supporters, and/or the community at large, prevented the women from obtaining justice. In 40.2% of instances of violence, the women did not attempt to obtain legal or community remedies for the violence primarily out of fear of the perpetrators or social dishonour if (sexual) violence was revealed, or ignorance of the law, or the belief that they would not get justice.

The Diplomat (2016) reports that according to the National Crime Records Bureau, "crime against Dalits—ranging from rape, murder, beatings, and violence related to land matters—increased by 29 percent from 2012 to 2014. In 2014, 47,064 cases of crimes against Dalits were registered, up from 39,408 in 2013 and 33,655 in 2012." The suicides of Dalit students such as Rohith Vemula are too often a result of institutional discrimination and vilification (Chandra 2016). This then is the broader context in which Dalit women aspire to receive education. This is also the broader societal context under which the other participants of academia come into the educational "field", to use the Bourdieusian term. To expect the experience of Dalit women to be radically oppositional to this broader societal context of violence is not only elusive but also positively oppressive.

A campaign against sexual harassment cannot but mark the hierarchical structure on which survivors find their experiences placed. In the Indian academic space, the trajectories of sexual experiences are much safer for heterosexual cis-men than it is for homosexual or trans men or women. In this hierarchy, Dalit women often find themselves in the most vulnerable position—the target of predatory behaviour of both upper-caste and Dalit men. Lying at the intersection of caste-based and gender-based discriminations, they bear the brunt of the ugliest face of the intellectual elites. In fact, teachers with Dalit identities are often marginalized by both students and teachers alike as "quota" teachers. The humiliation faced at the hands of upper-caste academics does not take long to turn sexual in nature. The choices left in front of Dalit women are to either leave the chance of education they had achieved for themselves after a long struggle, or bear the brunt of unwanted sexual advances. Menon's (2017) comment in the previous section already proves what awaits a Dalit woman in case she takes the step of filing a complaint—aspersions on her motivations are quick to come.

Drishadwati Bargi (2017) Dalit critique of Indian academic spaces has been able to powerfully dissect casteist practices in Indian academia. She argues that Dalit bodies can never be casteless, while Savarna bodies are seen as Savarna only in the presence of a Dalit body. The Savarna body can, thus, enjoy the possibility of anonymity, but a Dalit body remains always marked. This notion of being a labelled presence within academia influences not only experiences within the class of humiliation, aggression or sexual violence but makes academia a closely monitored segregated space. In the case of a Dalit sexual harassment survivor, her caste identity continues to label her. Hence, Bargi (2017) points out the importance of consideration of caste in a struggle against sexual harassment:

> Making caste irrelevant is doubly injurious in any such discussion of harassment in university spaces. It not only accepts the logic of exclusion but also puts the onus of bearing the caste on the DBA person. One of the major achievements of the list is that it removes this veil and privilege of anonymity that Savarna men have enjoyed as public intellectuals, scholars, revolutionaries and critics.

Cyberspace and the New Feminist Practices

To forget that #LoSha comes with a history of transnational history of feminist digital movements is to ignore the alternative feminist practices of the new generation of "finger-tip feminists" (Menon 2017). #Losha comes with its

own historical trajectory, memories of battles fought in the field of internet that is different but no less political in its repercussions. #LoSha came in the wake of the #MeToo movement, but it was forerun by campaigns like #Blacklivesmatter where black women took the lead and made their voices visible. Black Twitter has perhaps transformed digital space in the last two years that we will comprehend only in waves—it has made the margins of possibility bigger.[8] So did campaigns like #Whyloiter, the Pink Chaddi campaign and Girls in Dhabas[9] in India. The utility of Twitter and Facebook as political tools became evident in the specific habitus (Bourdieu 1989) of young, first-generation female students who have access to cyberspace. #LoSha is a test of that very same potential. And its success lies in the debate that it was able to generate in the ensuing months, as the squeamish reaction of established patriarchal academicians clearly displays.[10] Use of social media has been at the centre of the debate generated by #LoSha. Who is a real activist? Can cyber activism be counted as "real" feminism?

And, most importantly, can resorting to naming on social media be seen as symptomatic of the complete breakdown of the moral fabric of feminist activism or as a last resort for those facing years of harassment in a space where procedural challenges have remained largely ineffective and confined to urban areas? After all, public trial is not unprecedented in Indian feminist spheres. Even while the debate about #LoSha was raging, feminist activists such as Ayesha Kidwai were holding a *Jan Sunwai* (public trial) of the Jawaharlal Nehru University's vice-chancellor against his various repressive activities, with the support of students from the university. Why then, does one public trial gain more legitimacy than others? Is it again because even as feminists, we continue to expect the visible violated bodies as evidence?

The transnational nature of academic relationships and harassment often puts perpetrators beyond the purview of traditional sources of justice through due process. I interviewed one of the complainants of #LoSha whose assaulter is based in another country. It is incredulous to expect her to "keep faith" because there is no systemic redressal even available to her! Is

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[8] The #MeToo campaign was also started by black activist Tarana Burke.

[9] Girls in Dhabas is a primary example of our cultural contextual familiarity transcending limitations of borders online. An online campaign started in Pakistan demanding women's access to public spaces (dhaba literally means a roadside food stall) and it had soon gained popularity in India as well.

[10] See in particular Shiv Visvanathan's (2018) essay and Priyamvada Gopal's (2018) rebuttal to it.

she expected to travel to another country and file a complaint at the accused's university? And yet, his impunity remains unquestioned, but the credibility of her voice is not. With globalization and neoliberalization, migration and mobility has become a regular aspect of academic life. Both students and teachers live their academic life, access archives and sources, teach, research and imbibe multiple spaces and positions—often in multiple countries. These mobilities grant possibilities of intellectual growth, but at the same time they are operating in an academic world which has not accepted its implications.

For a student living in India sexually harassed by a student of Oxford, what due process is available, she asked (interview on 22 February 2018). A student from a university in Delhi was sexually harassed by a visiting professor from another country for a short period of time. Both the cases point out the limitations in effectively bringing the accused to justice, and either no redressal mechanisms are available, or their social and political capital ensure that the harassed do not even approach any procedural mechanism (Shukla and Kundu 2017). Students in India often travel across states to attend a university of repute. This migration leads to separation from emotional and social structures of support, further adding to their vulnerabilities. Understanding the socio-political vulnerabilities of students in India needs to take into account all these factors—and only then will the burden of the institutional process added to the trauma of sexual harassment be visible. This brings us also to the effect of casteist discriminations in Indian academia and its role in the impunity of sexual harassers.

However, the transnational nature of the creation of the list, the "sharing" of it and the use of spaces of power at specific academic pockets across the world is perhaps the transformative potential that we are yet to fully explore. Sarkar is a student of UC-Davis and she is also not an Indian citizen and this gave her the space to circumnavigate social and legal implications of this action. It would not have been possible for a student participant in the Indian academic space—for legal, social and career reasons. Support for Sarkar's list poured in from academics all over the world—as also for those accused in the list—but this showed that the debate was not confined within national boundaries anymore. Digital feminism was only mirroring the lived reality of transnational spaces through which academic life courses through in today's world.

The #list was often equated with witch hunting, blackening of faces, or Khap Panchayats, the Stalinist gulags and a host of other repressive anti-feminist practices (see for example, Visvanathan 2018). Witch hunting has already been discussed in some detail by Siapera (2019) in this volume.

Suffice it to say that all of these are hypermasculine, violent, repressive patriarchal structures which have been used since the Middle Ages to control and violate women. Uncounted women have been burned, raped and violated. To equate this with a list on social media whose primary aim was to prevent students from facing such violations seem counter-feminist and ignorant of the historical and sociological relevance of such practices. Shukla and Kundu (2017) point at the classist and casteist bias of regular revelation of the identity of accused coming from lower class and lower caste spaces by feminists. Is it more the identity of the accused, rather than the form of accusation, that is the issue of concern here?

CONCLUSION

While thinking about the long struggle of those who are being criticized, we have to also think about the risks that we as students are taking. There are high stakes—careers that might be affected, job opportunities, reference letters, articles to be published—are we also acknowledging how much is at stake in a space like academia for us to mark ourselves publicly as critical of these people? What are the measures available to a first-generation, Dalit student whom due process fails? As Gopal (2018) crucially points out:

> In addition to drawing attention to multiple *institutional* failures on the question of sexual harassment, what the admittedly desperate act of the LoSHA sought was to draw attention to an endemic *culture* of harassment, predation and abuse in academia. If due process is vital for changing institutions, what mechanisms can be deployed to change cultures?

Around 27.5 million women in India are affected by sexual violence, but only 1% of victims report it to police (Raj and McDougal 2014). This endemic culture remains unaddressed by legal recourse for harassment already committed. The cultural, symbolic and intellectual capital in possession of an academic puts them in a position of privilege that remains unquestioned despite long histories of sexual abuse. Class position and upper-class privilege further consolidate this social impunity. This very privilege has been brought into question by the online publication of the list. I do not imagine it as a replacement of the legal and institutional procedures—rather it was seeking to question the privilege of the "normative" heterosexual men in Indian academia. Nishant Shah (2017) and Gita Chadha (2017) has located the importance of the list as a "new site of

protest", and it is indeed one which protests not only an event of sexual harassment but the cultural impunity enjoyed by harassers as a form of symbolic violence that has been silencing its survivors.

This chapter raises more questions than finding answers. It seeks to reveal the fissures in the Indian women's movement—class privileges of activists themselves, socio-economic capital often coming in the protection of the accused from feminist quarters and the urgent need to discard the hierarchy of real feminism versus cyberfeminism, of age and experience versus lived reality of sexual exploitation. These questions are also raised in a creative academic engagement with digital activists from South Asia by Gajjala in her forthcoming book (2019). In her conversation with Sarkar and Ayesha Vemuri (Chap. 7), Radhika Gajjala has pointed at the possibility of the digital becoming a safe space, as it indeed did during the days of #LoSha where survivors could interact and share their experiences with each other without the fear of repercussions. The role of social media as a safe space in the context of sexual harassment needs to be examined further. However, Gajjala's (2019) effort to bring diverse digital voices into a conversation leads the way towards a new practice of feminist activism.

Academic training does not include even a basic degree of gender awareness in Indian academia, unless you are specifically taking courses like gender studies. Hence, the utopian dream of "*bhadralok*" academics whose intellectual training has offset their patriarchal upbringing and heteromasculine performativity is laughable. Can a list like #LoSha be a permanent solution towards eradicating the epidemic of sexual harassment? No. Can it replace institutional processes of justice-seeking in such cases? Also no. However, it points out the complete loss of credibility of institutional processes in Indian academic spaces currently and has pointed out the need to redefine and restructure such processes to make offenders truly accountable. It has revealed a hierarchy within the feminism activist ranks that has to be addressed. And it has proved once again, that "finger-tip" feminism has a role to play in Indian women's movement in the days to come. I conclude with the words of Nivedita Menon (1995), whose feminist works led me to the path of feminist academics, and I still agree with her erstwhile self:

At this historical moment, feminism must reconsider its engagement with the language of rights and the law. The experience of the last decade not only raises questions about the capacity of the law to act as a transformative instrument, but more fundamentally it points to the possibility that functioning in a manner compatible with legal discourse can radically refract from the ethical and emancipatory impulse of feminism itself.

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