Feminist Principles of the Internet
An Evolving Document

Training Module

#ImagineaFeministInternet

As feminists, what kind of internet do we want, and what will it take for us to achieve it?

At a Global Meeting in April 2014, 50 activists from across the world came together to discuss the intersections of gender, sexuality, and the internet as a new public space.

://EROTICS
Sex, rights and the internet

What is a feminist approach to the internet?

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

Audre Lorde

Image: Out Now Youth

Intersectionality

- Human rights are indivisible, inalienable, interconnected and interrelated.

- In practice, who has access to rights is impacted by intersecting social systems that give rise to particular forms of power and privilege, based on certain identities.
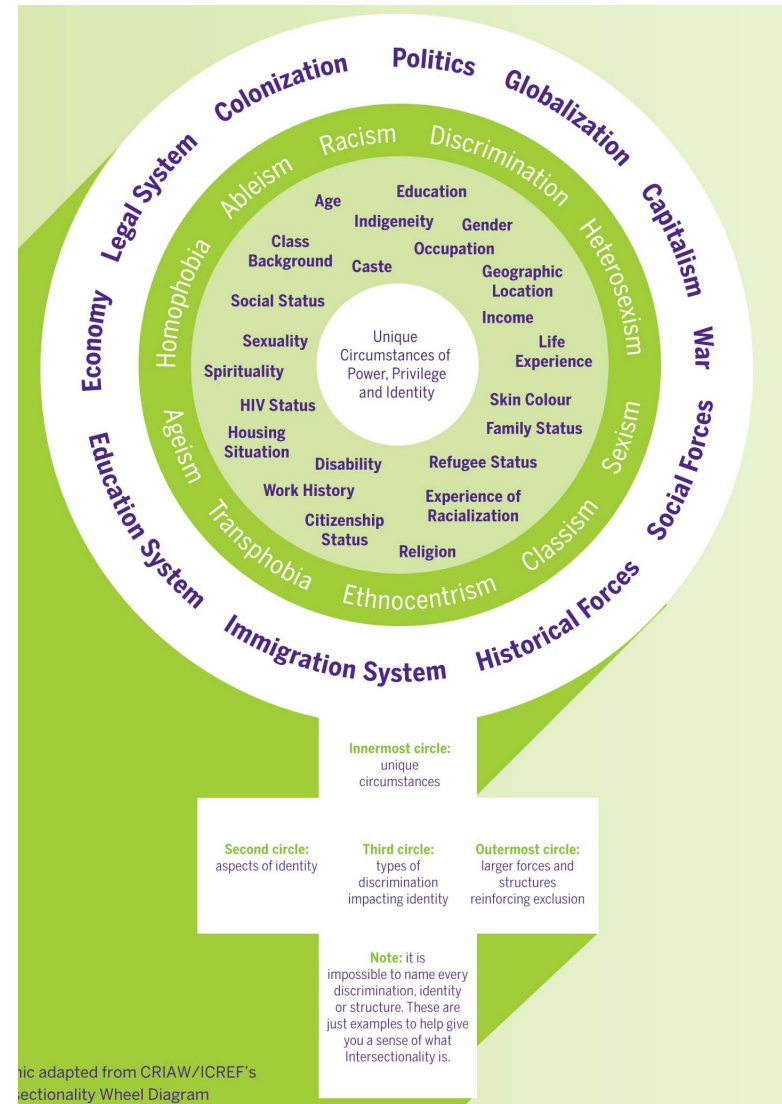

Image: VAW Learning Network

Developing the 15 Feminist Principles

"From falling in love to demanding accountability from our government, [the internet] is becoming part of the texture of our everyday social, political, economic, and cultural life.

It's not just an inert tool that we wield when we have access to it, but a space where things happen, where identities are constructed, norms reified or disrupted, action and activities undertaken.

As such, it cannot help but be a space of intersectionality where many things collide and connect".

Jac Sm Kee

ACTIVISM

DALIT WOMEN'S SELF-RESPECT MARCH- MADHYA PRADESH

#DALITWOMENFIGHT

11/1-10/2014

Images: #DalitWomenFight

In March 2015, #DalitWomenFight organized a 'Wikipedia Hackathon' to bring their campaign for rights and awareness to the internet as a transformative sphere for the realization of rights.

#DalitWomenFight are seeking to dismantle the centuries old caste system that excuses high rates of sexual violence, discrimination, and the social, economic and cultural exclusion of Dalit women daily.

During the hackathon, participants were met with abusive comments and attempts to delete the wikipedia entries from Hindu nationalists trolls.

Such trolling is a recognition of the transformative power of the internet as a space to demand rights.

Activism

- The Kenyan campaign #MyDressMyChoice, was launched in response to two women being stripped and beaten by a group of men in Nairobi. The men claimed they were justified in their violence because the women were "dressed indecently".

Image: IB Times, 17 November 2014.

- Women in Nairobi held a protest on 17 November 2014, many of whom came out in miniskirts, to raise awareness, demand justice, and call for an end to violence against women.

  The online Twitter campaign saw people from all over tweeting their support for the women's protest, demanding justice, denouncing the idea that dress codes are ever an excuse for violence against women.

ACCESS: Participation & Decision-Making

The **Gender Report Card** at the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) found:

- **1 out of 71** rated **sessions made gender the main theme** in 2012 (1% vs. 6% in 2013).

- **Gender was seen as not relevant** or not related **for 50 sessions (**70% of the total, as against 49% for 2013.
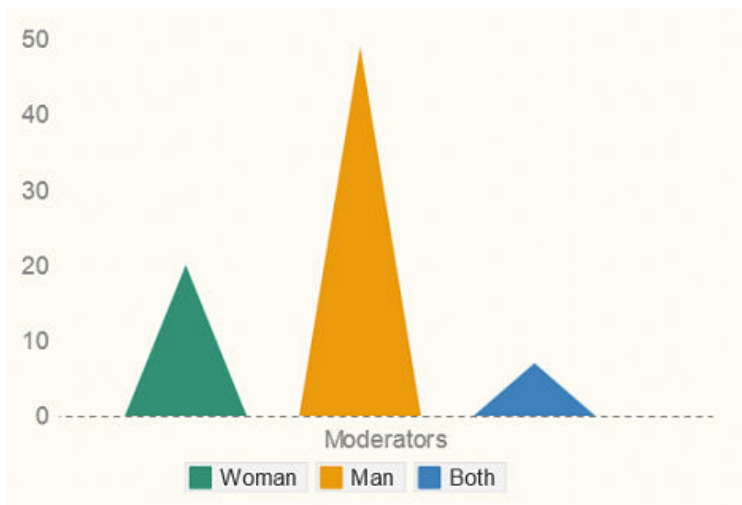
There was also **a clear majority of male panellists, moderators and remote-moderators**, from 2011 – 2013, and the majority of women in these roles were civil society representatives, rather than government or private sector

Images: GenderIT.org

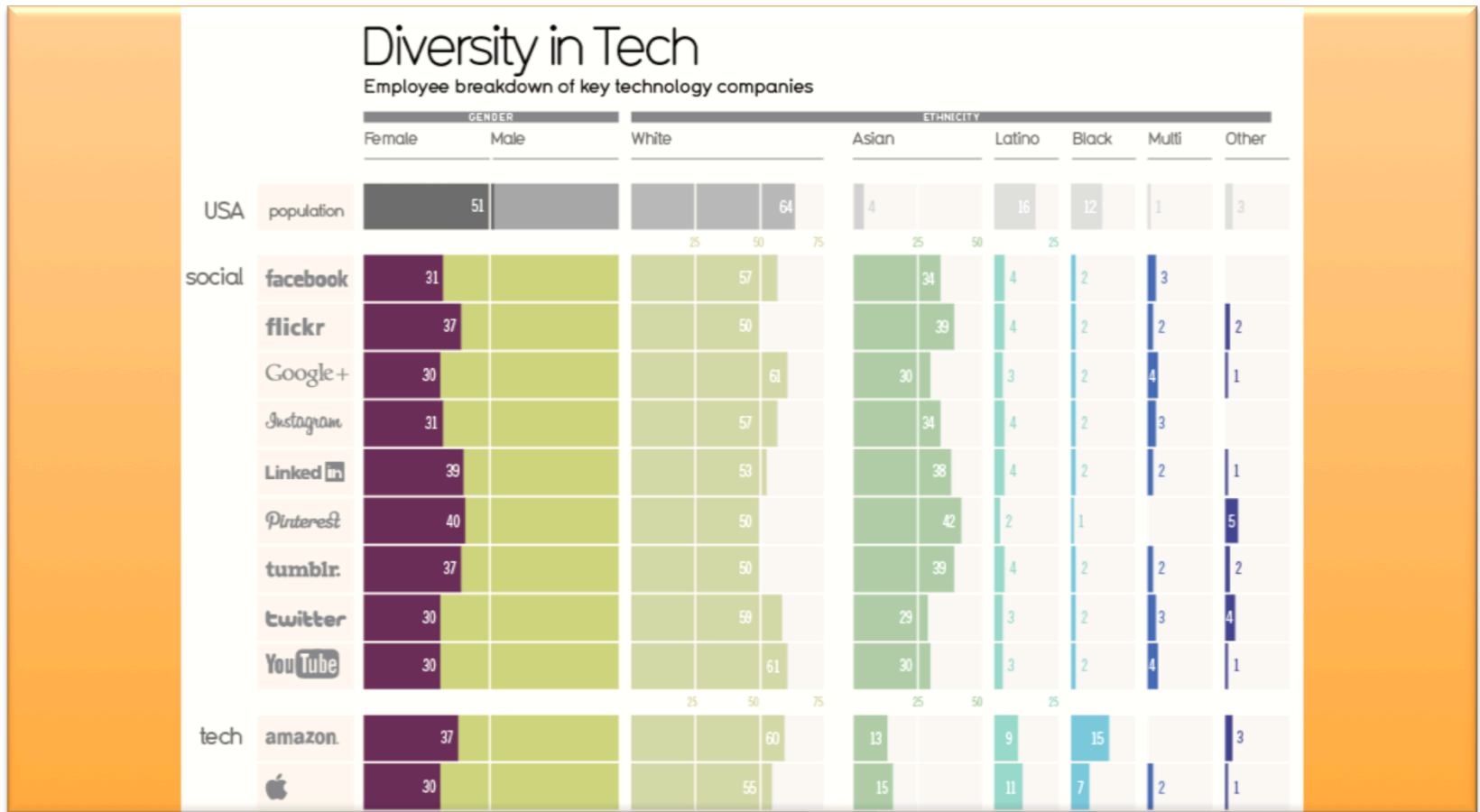# ACCESS: *Participation & Employment*

Diversity in Tech
Employee breakdown of key technology companies

		GENDER		ETHNICITY					
		Female / Male	White	Asian	Latino	Black	Multi	Other
USA	population	51	64	4	16	12	1	3
social	facebook	31	57	34	4	2	3	
	flickr	37	50	39	4	2	2	2
	Google+	30	61	30	3	2	4	1
	Instagram	31	57	34	4	2	3	
	Linked in	39	53	38	4	2	2	1
	Pinterest	40	50	42	2	1		5
	tumblr.	37	50	39	4	2	2	2
	twitter	30	59	29	3	2	3	4
	YouTube	30	61	30	3	2	4	1
tech	amazon.	37	60	13	9	15		3
	apple	30	55	15	11	7	2	1

Image: The Guardian

ACCESS: *Participation & Usage*

- According to International Telecommunications Union (ITU) statistics, the disparity between women and men's access to internet is decreasing, with more countries near parity, and only a few countries where there is a significant difference (i.e. a 20-point difference) between men and women.

- Gender-disaggregated US data on popular social media platforms (2013) showed near parity between women and men, and significantly more women users on Facebook, Pinterest in Instagram.

Among internet users, the % of men vs. women who use the following sites

	Women	Men
Facebook	72%	62%
Pinterest	25%	5%
Instagram	16%	10%
Twitter	17%	18%
Tumblr	6%	6%
reddit	4%	8%
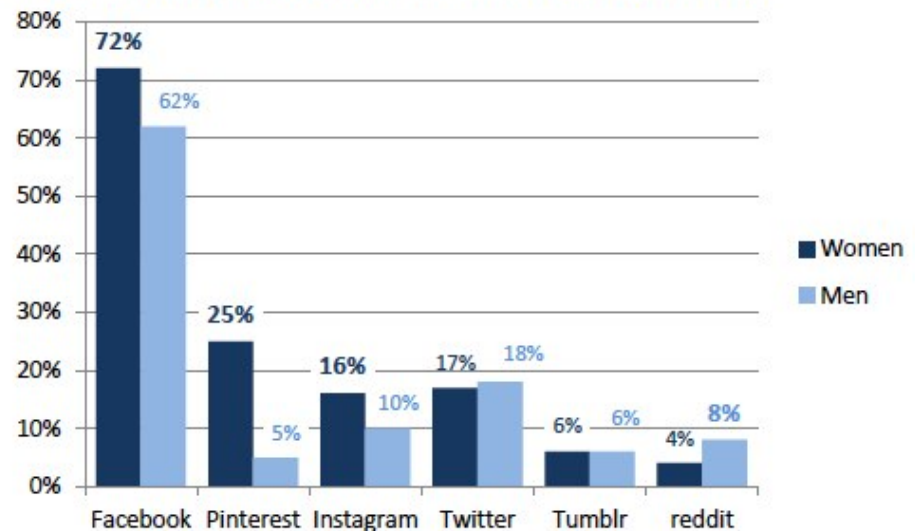
Source: Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project Tracking Surveys, 2012-2013.
Note: percentages in bold, larger font indicate statistical significance between men and women.

Image: Pew Research Centre statistics on US internet users (N=1802)

ACCESS: Rights Violations & Governance

- Holding companies and governments accountable to their responsibilities to uphold human rights online.
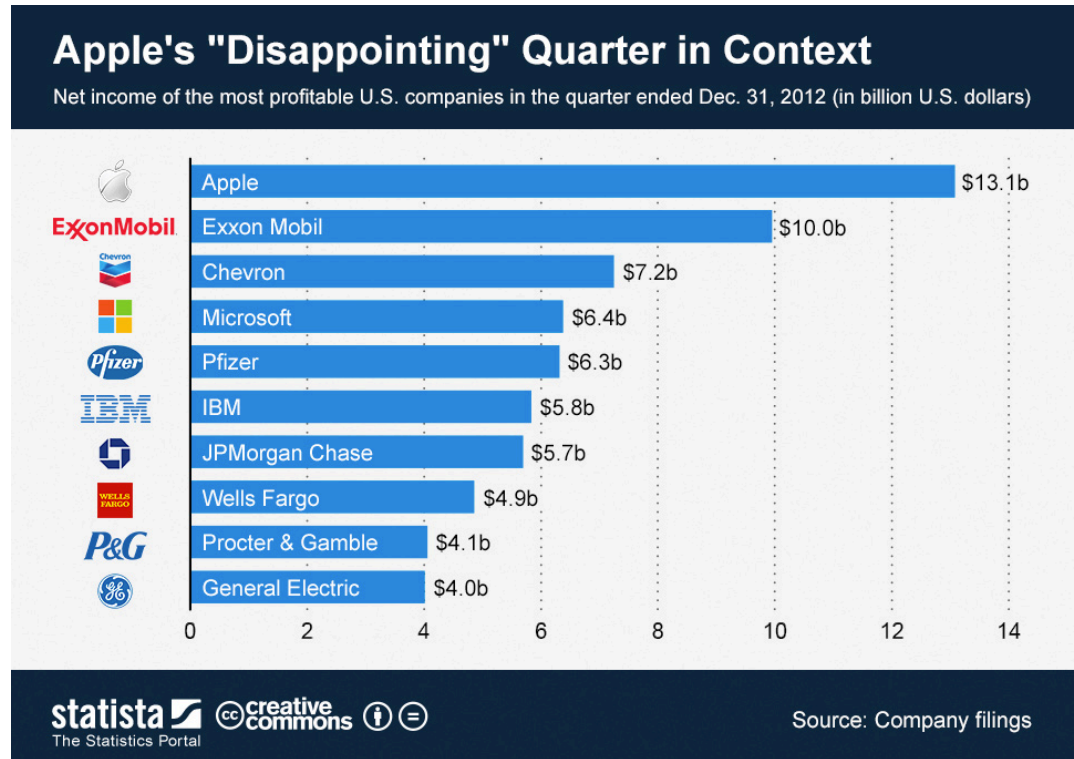
- Bringing marginalized voices of women and LGBTIQ people in all their diversities to the decision-making tables on internet and tech governance.

ECONOMY: *Profits & User Population*

In March 2015, QQ, WhatsApp, Skype, Google+, Instagram, and Twitter all had active monthly user populations in the hundreds of millions of people.
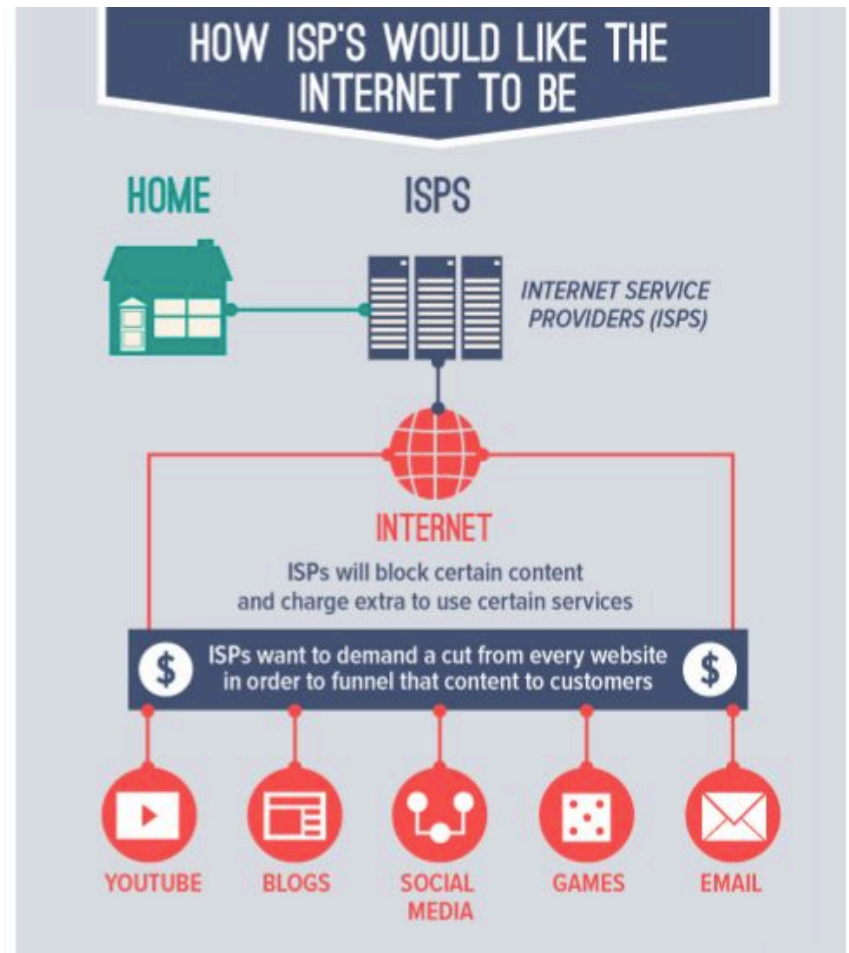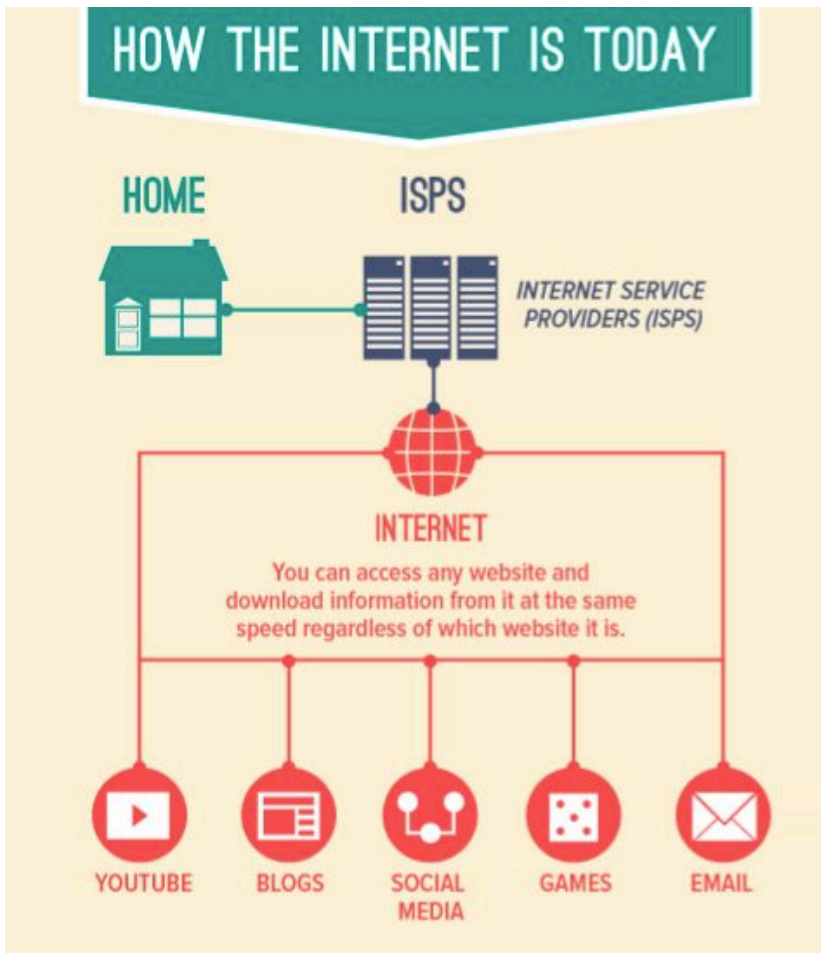
Facebook had over one billion.

These companies' USD billions in annual revenue and profit relies on how, and how often, their users are interacting with the internet.

Apple's "Disappointing" Quarter in Context

Net income of the most profitable U.S. companies in the quarter ended Dec. 31, 2012 (in billion U.S. dollars)

Company	Net income
Apple	$13.1b
Exxon Mobil	$10.0b
Chevron	$7.2b
Microsoft	$6.4b
Pfizer	$6.3b
IBM	$5.8b
JPMorgan Chase	$5.7b
Wells Fargo	$4.9b
Procter & Gamble	$4.1b
General Electric	$4.0b

statista
The Statistics Portal

creative commons

Source: Company filings

As their user populations grow, their Terms of Service and company policies increasingly dictate what forms of expression, access to information, privacy and other rights are accessible to a global population online.

ECONOMY: Access and Net Neutrality

HOW THE INTERNET IS TODAY

HOME — ISPS

INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS (ISPS)

INTERNET

You can access any website and download information from it at the same speed regardless of which website it is.

YOUTUBE · BLOGS · SOCIAL MEDIA · GAMES · EMAIL

HOW ISP'S WOULD LIKE THE INTERNET TO BE

HOME — ISPS

INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS (ISPS)

INTERNET

ISPs will block certain content and charge extra to use certain services

$ ISPs want to demand a cut from every website in order to funnel that content to customers $

YOUTUBE · BLOGS · SOCIAL MEDIA · GAMES · EMAIL

ECONOMY: Marketing Vs. Effects

- Problems with 'humanitarian', 'charitable', 'non-profit' endeavour Internet.org:

  - Marketed falsely as providing access to the internet, when it only provides limited access to the websites of Internet.org partners

  - Disrupts net neutrality; users have no choice in which sites and content are offered in their country

  - Bans basic encryption, such as SSL or TLS, making users more vulnerable online

  - Marketed as 'non-profit', while companies involved in the service stand to gain billions of dollars in revenue from user data.

ECONOMY: *Privacy, Profits, Collective Ownership*

- Companies directly benefit from the increased flow of personal and private information into the public realm online (e.g. storing user habits, creating targeted advertising profiles, buying/selling user data to marketers, tracking user locations to send them nearby offers, etc.)
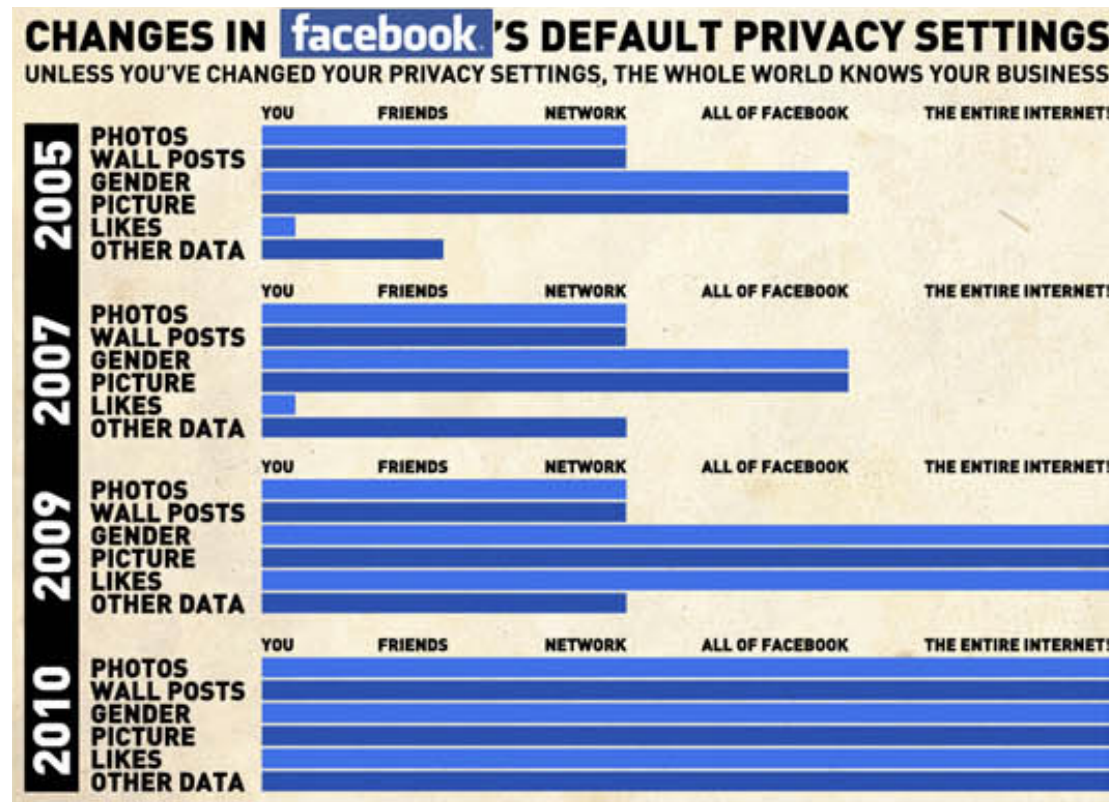
ECONOMY: *Privacy, Profits, Collective Ownership*

- Open source software tends to buck high costs that come with proprietary software development. Many open-source platforms place a deeper focus on online privacy, anonymity, collective access and ownership.

PRIVACY

The right to privacy and to exercise full control over our own data is a critical principle for a safer, open internet for all.

Privacy is intimately connected to the issue of online security; the two are distinct, but their relationship reciprocal.

In a basic sense, online security aims to stop unauthorized access to information, while making a choice about what information we do want to make public, to whom, and through what channels. What helps us differentiate between these forms of access is a consideration of privacy.

AGENCY: Context, Consent, Voices

- Sifting through the moral panics that govern the internet—especially around sexuality online.

- Replacing protectionist & moralist 'catch-all' approaches to 'harmful content' online, with rights-affirming, nuanced policy making.

- Agency is also about centring the voices and experiences of the intended beneficiaries of policies that seek to prevent harm and provide redress—especially for young people.

WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE NEED

PROGRAMS THAT TEACH SKILLS LIKE CONDOM USE AND TALKING ABOUT HIV WITH A PARTNER
A VOICE IN DECISIONS THAT AFFECT THEM TO BE YOUNG LBGT PEOPLE HONORED AND VALUED FOR WHO THEY ARE
COMPREHENSIVE, SEX EDUCATION
YOUTH FRIENDLY AND AFFORDABLE HEALTH EFFORTS THAT SERVICES INCLUDE YOUNG PEOPLE
COMMUNITY

APRIL 10 IS YOUTHAIDSDAY.ORG
NATIONAL YOUTH HIV + AIDS AWARENESS DAY

Digital Security as a Feminist Practice

Image: Take Back the Tech!

START HERE TO EXPLORE YOUR DIGITAL TRACES:

Digital shadow?

Every time we interact by using technologies, our digital shadows get bigger. Go on a visual journey to learn about our digital shadows.

LEARN MORE

Trace my shadow

This interactive visualisation helps you to find out how your online activities can endanger your privacy. It also provides tips on what you can do to manage it better.

SHOW ME!

Shadow tracer's kit

A carefully selected set of tools that help you learn more about your digital traces and what you can do to reduce them.

GET EQUIPPED
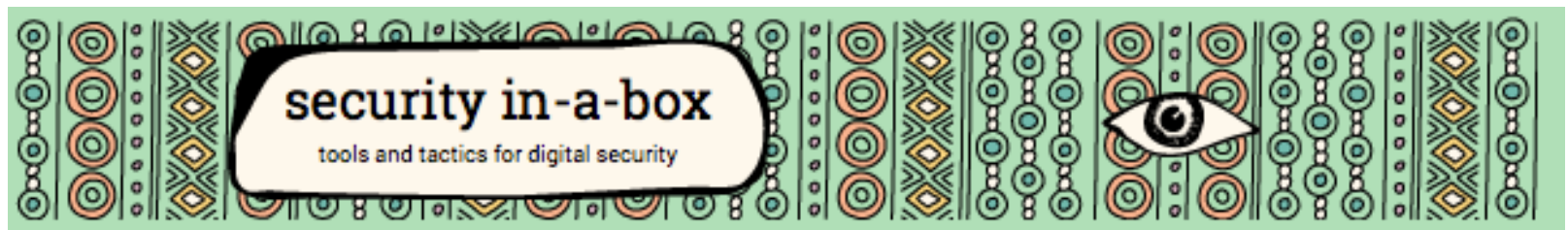
Image: Me and My Shadow

security in-a-box
tools and tactics for digital security

Image: Tactical Technology Collective