

special issue: community informatics and open government data

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One of the biggest concerns about internet studies in India and other similar developed contexts is the object oriented approach that looks largely at specific usages, access, infrastructure, etc. However, it is necessary to understand that the Internet is not merely a tool or a gadget. The growth of Internets produces systemic changes at the level of process and thought. The technologies often get appropriated for governance both by the State and the Civil Society, producing new processes and dissonances which need to be charted. The contemporary processes that the digital and internet technologies bring, drastically recalibrate the relationship between the State, the Market and the Citizen.

Zainab Bawa's critical interventions, in curating and collecting different ideas around transparency and openness examine the emergence of internet technologies, the rise of e-governance initiatives and the way in which the rhetoric of 'transparency' has informed different modes of citizen engagement with the state in India. The project produces case-studies of various e-governance models that have been variously experimented within India, to see how internet technologies through their material presence, through different paradigms of interaction, and through the imagination in policy have brought about a significant change in the state-citizen relationship. Through the special journal issue focusing on the politics of community informatics, Bawa brings together a multi-sectoral, interdisciplinary dialogue around the nature, content, politics and form of activism and practice, negotiation and contestations of the open and the free.

Researchers @ work

The Centre for Internet & Society's 'Researcher's At Work' is a series designed to build and explore the intellectual resources for mapping and understanding the complex interactions between the rise of digital and communication technologies and the spheres of living that they influence. The monographs in this series, explore embedded approaches, frameworks and historical trajectories to understand the ways in which new technologies shape the nature, form, and texture of life and living in contemporary times. The (CIS-RAW) series was designed to build local intellectual resources for mapping and understanding the complex interactions between the rise of digital and internet technologies and the spheres of living that they influence.