Wednesday May 20, Morning Session (9.30am – 12.30pm)

Film: India’s Daughter
‘India’s Daughter’ in India - Old Questions, New Answers?
Nivedita Menon, Jawaharlal Nehru University

The ban by the Government of India on Leslee Udwin’s documentary ‘India’s Daughter’, as well as the (unrelated) demand for its delayed screening by a group of feminists, has opened up, once again, familiar fault-lines in feminist debates around hate speech and freedom of expression; proliferation of sexualities and violence against women; the meaning and impact of images and words, and the different levels at which representation works, including representation of the Other from neocolonial locations. This lecture will explore the ways in which these political, theoretical and philosophical questions play out more generally, taking as the starting point the controversies over ‘India’s Daughter’.

Respondent: Kiran Grewal, Institute for Social Justice, ACU

Wednesday May 20, Afternoon Session (1.30pm – 4.30pm)

Rethinking Freedom through Islamic Feminisms
Allison Weir, Institute for Social Justice, ACU

In this seminar I take up some contemporary Islamic feminist interpretations of the Qur’an to think about questions of freedom. What can western secular feminism learn from Islamic feminism? To what extent does Islamic feminist scholarship invoke universal and western secular conceptions of individual freedom?

Does Islamic feminist scholarship connect with a different tradition of freedom – the love and justice tradition, in which freedom is grounded in love?
This seminar is a part of my larger project of restructuring work and care by transforming the norms of what responsible adulthood should mean (in well-off societies). My argument is that everyone should do paid work part-time (between 12 and 30 hours) and unpaid care part-time (between 12 and 30 hours). This transformation is necessary to address the unsustainable stress on families, to achieve equality, and to redress the “care-policy divide”.

My focus in this seminar will be on the potential and puzzles of a norm of mandatory participation in care work. I will address questions of what counts as care work, and what it would mean to radically transform its relation to the state, the market, and the family. This inquiry will involve issues of: relations of care, the role of power and the potential for abuse; the problem of freedom and individual preference in the face of norms of compulsory care; the advantages (and demands) of constituting communities of care, which must also be communities of judgment about optimal norms; the benefits of expecting virtually everyone to be both recipients and providers of care; the benefits of recognising the role of care in work as well as the role of work in care, making the demarcation of categories (desirably) difficult.