

# **SEMINAR: CONVERSATIONS ON SOCIAL REPRODUCTION**

**TITLE:** Marshall Plan for Moms: A Conversation with Reshma Saujani

**SPEAKER:** Reshma Saujani, Founder and CEO of Girls Who Code

**WHEN:** Friday 9th April 2021 2-3pm (BST)

**WHERE:** via Microsoft Teams; email [annalisa.fagan@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:annalisa.fagan@kcl.ac.uk)



**ABSTRACT:** More than 2 million women in the US have left the labour force in the last year. Millions more have been forced to cut back our hours or work around the clock to keep our jobs and be full-time caregivers. The impact on women of colour is especially devastating. When 30 years of progress can be erased overnight, the underlying system is broken. In January 2021, 50 prominent women called on the Biden Administration to implement a Marshall Plan for Moms, a bold 360-plan to provide direct payments to moms and pass long overdue policies addressing paid family leave, affordable childcare, and pay equity. Reshma will be speaking about The Marshall Plan for Moms, the Biden plan (proposing paid leave, universal prekindergarten and vouchers for child care) and other state level initiatives in the US.

**BIO:** Reshma Saujani is the Founder and CEO of Girls Who Code, the international nonprofit organization working to close the gender gap in technology and change the image of what a computer programmer looks like and does. The organization has reached 500 million people and 300,000 girls in all 50 U.S. states, Canada, India, and the United Kingdom. She is the author of the international bestseller *Brave, Not Perfect* and the New York Times bestseller *Girls Who Code: Learn to Code and Change the World*. Reshma's TED talk, "Teach girls, bravery not perfection," has more than five million views and has sparked a worldwide conversation about how we're raising our girls. In 2010, Reshma surged onto the political scene as the first Indian American woman to run for U.S. Congress. Reshma lives in New York City with her husband, Nihal, their sons, Shaan and Sai, and their bulldog, Stanley.

**SEMINAR SERIES:** This social reproduction seminar series is part of the Laws of Social Reproduction project led by Prof. Prabha Kotiswaran, and based at King's College London and IWWAGE Delhi.

Feminist scholars have long demonstrated the invisibility of women's reproductive labour, with feminist economists striving to get international agencies and national governments to redraw the "production boundary" to ensure the recognition of women's unpaid labour. Today mainstream international institutions acknowledge that women's unpaid labour hinders their participation in the formal economy, particularly in the Global South. Nonetheless, there remains an absence of commitment from states and international institutions to such systemic reforms. Anchored in the context of India, our project thus conceptualises women's reproductive labour to include unpaid domestic work, but also abject forms of labour performed by women outside of the institutional domain of marriage and for the market, namely, sex work, erotic dancing, commercial surrogacy and paid domestic work. Drawing on feminist legal theory and deploying methodologies ranging from doctrinal case law analysis to ethnographies of women's labour markets, this project problematises law's jurisdictional boundaries over women's reproductive labour and critiques the varied, even contradictory, legal regulation of reproductive labour as well as the misguided law reform initiatives that undermine women's economic agency. Given the current interest, nationally and internationally, in unpaid care work, our project offers a timely intervention by proposing a holistic understanding of reproductive labour and exploring prospects for an alternate regulatory matrix to further women's economic justice.

For more information about the project or to join the network, please email [Prabha.kotiswaran@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:Prabha.kotiswaran@kcl.ac.uk). The Laws of Social Reproduction project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (under grant agreement No. 772946)



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