

# **SEMINAR: CONVERSATIONS ON SOCIAL REPRODUCTION**

**TITLE:** Unfair and Unjust-The Economic Rights and Entitlements of Separated/ Divorced Women in India

**SPEAKER:** Kirti Singh

**WHEN:** Friday January 14th, 12-1pm GMT/5:30-6:30pm IST

**WHERE:** Teams; [Follow the link to register](#)

**ABSTRACT:** The patriarchal Indian state has ensured that the economic rights and entitlements of separated women remain at a minimum. My study of these women surveys the conditions under which they live and to what extent they are able to access and benefit from the law which anyway gives them limited rights in their homes. It examines the living conditions of the surveyees after their separation and the obstacles faced by them and their children who often reside with them. It also looks at the work status and earning capacities of both the spouses, before and after the marriage, and the assets that these women own.

Though Indian women are governed by different personal laws according to the religious community they belong to, none of these laws provide them any rights apart from a limited right of maintenance (spousal support). In actuality, this right to maintenance does not provide women adequate financial support to be able to live in a manner to which they have been accustomed. The courts' conservatism, the length of time cases take to be decided, and the lack of effective mechanisms to enforce the relief granted makes it extremely difficult for women to access this right. Meanwhile, they have no right to marital property which has been acquired during the subsistence of their partnership/marriage. Neither the Indian law nor government policy, views the work women do within the home as productive work or work of any economic value. Typically women, even working women, are forced to spend long hours in doing household chores and unpaid care work. The non-recognition of household work and "care" work results in reinforcement of gender discrimination and inequality.

**BIO:** Kirti Singh, Advocate, has been working on issues of Women's rights and Human Rights for more than 40 years. She was a Member (part-time) of the 18th Law Commission of India and has worked on reports recommending legal reforms to laws regarding women and children. As a part of the Women's movement in India from the beginning of her career and as the Legal Convenor of AIDWA, a women's organisation with over ten million members, she has fought cases relating to women and children and has initiated and advised on legal reforms in laws impacting women & children in India.

Since the beginning of her career she has extensively practiced Family Law and Laws related to women. She has filed and appeared in a number of public interest litigation cases in the Supreme Court of India which have challenged the constitutional validity of discriminatory laws or asked for directions against the State for its violation of citizens' fundamental rights. In 2015 she argued a writ petition in the Supreme Court against amendments to the Haryana Panchayati Raj Act which restricted citizens from contesting for Panchayat elections on the ground of lack of educational qualification and other grounds.

**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.

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)



@Lawsofsocrep



@Lawsofsocialreproduction



[lawsofsocialreproduction.net](http://lawsofsocialreproduction.net)

