

## **ISAS Public Lecture Series**



### **The Doctor and Mrs. A: Ethics and Counter-Ethics in an Indian Dream Analysis**

a talk by

**Sarah Pinto**

Professor of Anthropology  
Tufts University

#### **Abstract**

In the years leading up to India's independence, a young Punjabi woman known to us only as Mrs. A. joined psychoanalyst Dev Satya Nand for an experiment in his new, "Oriental" method of dream analysis. Her analysis contained a surge of emotion and reflections on sexuality, gender, marriage, ambition, and art as she turned to female figures from the Hindu epics to reimagine her world and its ethical arrangements. These stories, taken up in surprising ways, helped her envision a future beyond marriage, colonial rule, and gendered social constraints. This talk explores Mrs. A.'s case and the mythic landscapes she entered for the ways they put ethics in motion, finding repertoires for the creative transformation of ideals and highlighting self-conscious and effortful work to enliven forms typically engaged for their durability.

#### **Speaker Bio**

Sarah Pinto is Professor of Anthropology at Tufts University. She is author of *Where There Is No Midwife: Birth and Loss in Rural India* (Berghahn 2008) and *Daughters of Parvati: Women and Madness in Contemporary India* (University of Pennsylvania Press 2014), and works on gender, kinship, and the intersection of medical practices with intimate lives. She is currently researching the history of hysteria in India and anticipates the release of *The Doctor and Mrs. A.: Ethics and Counter-Ethics in an Indian Dream Analysis* in the fall of 2019 (Fordham University Press and Women Unlimited).

**Friday, February 08, 2019**

**2 - 4 pm**

**10 Stephens Hall, ( For directions look up "Institute for South Asia Studies" on Google Maps )**