



# Department of Sociology

## Faculty of Arts, University of Colombo

# MONTHLY SEMINAR SERIES

## FEBRUARY 2022

09<sup>th</sup>

February  
2022

3.00 p.m. -  
4.00 p.m.

Via



<https://learn.zoom.us/j/61026046980?pwd=eG83UEdMZHVlYtvcGdJZHB0YmpDdz09>

Meeting ID : 610 2604 6980

Passcode : Q!n7AA0\$

### “Researching Transgender Subjectivities in Contemporary Sri Lanka”

The speaker will discuss her PhD thesis which was a study of contemporary Sri Lankan transgender communities and their identity negotiation. Challenging the conventional dichotomies of private-public, everyday-spectacular, this study explores how transgender communities manoeuvre through the conventional and discriminative systems and craft political spaces in their everyday lives, and how these stories have remained invisible (or suppressed) in the dominant narrations of history. This research adhered to the argument developed by the subaltern studies that dominant histories have a narrow view of the ‘political’. Therefore this research reflects on the ways in which knowledge of transgender identities was produced in colonial and post-colonial Sri Lanka by exhuming written and unwritten transgender voices and histories. This study based on the contemporary Sri Lankan context, will also contribute to decolonising and democratising the existing body of knowledge on gender and queer theory which tends to focus on the Western experience.

## Dr. Kaushalya Ariyaratne

Centre for the Study of Human Rights  
University of Colombo

*Dr. Kaushalya Ariyaratne obtained her Law degree from the Faculty of Law, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka, and Masters in Human Rights and Justice from Keele University, United Kingdom. She completed her doctoral studies at the Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Colombo. Her research areas include women in politics, human rights, gender, queer and subaltern studies.*

