



March 9th, 2021

To whom it may concern:

It has come to our attention that one of our colleagues, Professor Audrey Truschke, is being threatened and abused by anonymous individuals on social media. We unequivocally condemn these threats of violence and call for them to stop immediately.

Professor Truschke is an award-winning historian and scholar of Sanskrit. Her work is influential and widely read in South Asia and the United States. While some of her work may be controversial, there are appropriate avenues to engage in debate and discussion over these ideas. As scholars we feel it is vital to make the distinction between critical analysis of particular texts/ ideologies on the one hand and racialized attacks on religious communities on the other. We know that Professor Truschke welcomes serious scholarly debate and critical engagement with her work. However, there is no excuse for abusive language or violent threats.

We also know that there is a broad and diverse community of Hindu students, alumni, staff and faculty at Rutgers. We understand – and many of us have experienced – the slights, micro-aggressions and even racism that is experienced by many people of South Asian descent in the United States. At the South Asian Studies Program we are committed to supporting students of all backgrounds and beliefs, and fostering an appreciation of South Asian societies in all their complexity and diversity. We welcome your input and cooperation in making Rutgers a more inclusive community for all people studying this vital region of the world.

The Executive Committee of the South Asian Studies Program,
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
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