

Popular Lecture Series 2012-2013: Introduction

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Introduction: Prof. Malashri Lal, Dean Academics

The Popular Lecture Series is visualised as a mode of disseminating specialist knowledge in a generalist way, a mode that makes complex ideas belonging to a subject area comprehensible to knowledge seekers from other fields. A University by its very name denotes a search for the universe, for principles that bind its inhabitants to the common cause of understanding as well as generating knowledge. In that sense, the Popular Lecture Series initiated about 4 years ago at Delhi University sought to reach out across disciplines and break through traditional boundaries that keep knowledge makers in the university in separate zones called departments, institutes, colleges and such others. No doubt, the intense attention to one's subject specialisation and the teaching and research that accompanies it leads to the expansion of a discipline, but in a university it seems also important to share that knowledge and lead into discussions beyond .

The Popular Lecture Series is moreover a means of satisfying intellectual curiosity. In the www environment one may claim that curiosity may be satisfied through the click on a computer. But is this true? The web has brought in quantities of unsorted information which cannot be mistaken for knowledge. Who then strings the right sequence together to bring about a responsible understanding? Here the teacher, the mentor, the specialist researcher has a crucial role to play for he or she guides the knowledge seeker. At the University of Delhi we are fortunate in having teachers and scholars of high eminence. The lecture series is an opportunity to hear them outside their own classrooms, outside international and national conferences. Here we can learn from them, put our questions to them. Such a forum where the audience holds eminent persons from various subject areas, interdisciplinary dialogue becomes meaningful and exciting. The series will be video recorded and webcast to the world through the ILL e-learning initiatives.

The Popular Lecture Series starts this academic year with Professor Dinesh Singh, professor of Mathematics and our Vice Chancellor who will speak on "Infinity and the Art of Counting." See the [webcast](#).