

ARADHANA SHARMA

Department of Anthropology, Wesleyan University, 281 High Street, Middletown, CT 06459
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Current Position

Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT

Associate Professor of Anthropology and Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, July 2008-Present

Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, July 2001-June 2008

Areas of Scholarly Interest: Political Economy, Anthropology of the State and Governmentality, Critical Development Studies, Transnationalism and Nationalism, Feminist Studies, Social Movements, and Tourism.

Education

Stanford University, Stanford, CA

Department of Cultural and Social Anthropology

Doctor of Philosophy, June 2001

Specializations: Socio-Cultural Anthropology with a focus on Political Economy, Theories of the State and Governance, Development Studies, Globalization, Feminist Theories, and Nationalism; South Asia.

Stanford University, Stanford, CA

Department of Anthropology

Master of Arts, June 1997

Specializations: Socio-Cultural Anthropology with a focus on Political Economy, Theories of the State and Governance, Development Studies, Globalization, Feminist Theories, and Nationalism; South Asia.

Columbia University, New York, NY

School of International and Public Affairs

Master of International Affairs, May 1993

Specializations: International Political Economy, Economic and Political Development, International Policy Analysis and Management; South Asia.

The New School for Social Research, New York, NY

Eugene Lang College

Bachelor of Arts, May 1991

Specializations: Economics and Politics, Feminist Studies.

Publications

Book

2008 Logics of Empowerment: Development, Gender, and Governance in Neoliberal India. University of Minnesota Press.

Edited Collection

2006 The Anthropology of the State: A Reader. Co-edited with Akhil Gupta. Blackwell Readers in Anthropology. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

Journal Articles and Book Chapters

2006 Crossbreeding Institutions, Breeding Struggle: Women's "Empowerment," Neoliberal Governmentality, and State (Re)Formation in India" *Cultural Anthropology* 21(1).

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- 2006 Globalization and Postcolonial States, co-authored with Akhil Gupta, *Current Anthropology* 47(2).
- 2006 Rethinking Theories of the State in an Age of Globalization. Co-authored with Akhil Gupta. *In The Anthropology of the State: A Reader*. Aradhana Sharma and Akhil Gupta eds. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.
- In Progress**
- N.d. States of Empowerment. Book chapter in *The State in India After Liberalization* (forthcoming; Routledge Press). K. Sivaramakrishnan and Akhil Gupta eds.
- N.d. In the Interest of the Common Man: Reflections on the Right to Information Act in India (tentative title). Article manuscript.

Conference Papers and Talks

XXXII Indian Social Science Congress 2008, Jamia Milia Islamia University, New Delhi, India, December 20, 2008. Invited lecture on “Interpreting Democracy: The Right to Information Act in India.”

Kamala Nehru College, University of Delhi, India, November 18, 2008. Invited lecture on “In the Name of the Common Man: Some Reflections on the Right to Information Act in India.”

Programme d'Études Avancées, Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme and Columbia University's Institute for Scholars at Reid Hall, Paris, France, June 6-7, 2007. Invited to present paper titled “States and Subalterns, Information and Rights: Reflections on Citizenship Enactments in Contemporary India” for a conference on “Questioning Citizenships” (Questions de Citoyennetés, deux journées d'études dans le cadre du PIEA, “Scales of Citizenship”).

Global Collaboration Center, Osaka University, Japan, May 23, 2007. Invited lecture on “Exhuming Development: Performance, Reality Talk and Subaltern Agency in Contemporary India.”

American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, San Jose, November 14-19, 2006. Presented paper titled “Introducing Power Topographies” for a panel on “Power Topographies.” Discussant for a panel entitled “Intersecting Crisis: In-between Anthropologies of State and Knowledge.”

“The Localization of Global Discourses on Women's Rights” Workshop, Wellesley College, July 30-Aug 2, 2006: invited commentator on India Case.

“The Post-Liberalization State in India” Conference, Stanford University, June 5-6, 2005: presented paper, as invited participant, on “Crossbreeding Institutions, Breeding Struggle: Women's ‘Empowerment,’ Neoliberal Governmentality, and Engendered Statehood in India.”

Yale University, Department of Anthropology, April 22, 2004: presented paper titled “The World Bank is Coming! Performing Development, Enacting Empowerment, and Producing Realities in Rural North India.”

2004 Association for Asian American Studies Conference, Boston, March 25-28, 2004: panelist for a roundtable on “Forging Ties between Asian American and South Asian Diaspora Studies: Strategies for the Classroom.”

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The 32nd Annual Conference on South Asia, University of Wisconsin—Madison, October 24-26, 2003: presented paper titled “Stage-ing Development, Producing Realities” for a panel on “The Politics of Development: Knowledge, Representation, and Power.”

Center for the Humanities, Wesleyan University, December 9, 2002: presented paper titled “Staging Development: Modernity and Mimicry in North India.”

American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, New Orleans, November 20-24, 2002: co-organized and chaired panel entitled “Staging Development”; presented paper entitled “A Contest for Authenticity: Staging Development and Judging Rural Realities in North India.”

Asian-American Month Celebrations, Wesleyan University, April, 2002: invited as a panelist on “Feminism without Borders”; led a workshop on “Gender and Globalization.”

American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, Washington DC, November 28-December 1, 2001: presented paper on “States, Patriarchy, and Women: Unraveling the Conundrum of State-initiated Women’s Empowerment in India” for a panel on “Discursive Formations of Human Rights.”

American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, San Francisco, November 15-19, 2000: Presented paper on “Disciplining Development: Rural Beneficiaries’ Encounters with the State in India” for a panel on “Re-encountering Development.”

American Ethnological Society Annual Meeting, Orlando, March 23-26, 2000: Presented paper on “Talking Back: Rural Indian Women’s Dialogues With Development” for a panel on “After Post-Structuralism: Exploring Futures for the Anthropology of Development.”

MacArthur Consortium Summer Institute, Madison, June 1998: Presented paper on “Women’s ‘Empowerment’ and the State in India” as an invited speaker for the roundtable entitled “How has Feminist Activism Challenged Sovereignty? / How have Nation-states’ Claims to Sovereignty Affected Feminist Activism.”

MacArthur Consortium on International Peace and Cooperation, University of Minnesota, November 1997: presented paper on “Gender, Development, and the State in India” for a Workshop on “Gender in an International Context.”

Fellowships, Grants and Honors

American Institute of Indian Studies, Senior Research Fellowship, 2008-2009

Center for the Humanities, Wesleyan University, Fellow, Fall 2002

Supplemental Support of Scholarship Grant, Wesleyan University, 2002-2003

Inst. for International Studies, Stanford University, Littlefield International Graduate Fellowship, 2000-2001

Stanford University, Graduate Research Opportunity Funds Research Grant, 1999-2000

Stanford University, Mellon Dissertation Write-up Grant, 1999-2000

National Science Foundation, Dissertation Research Grant, 1998-99

Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research Inc., Dissertation Research Grant, 1998-99

Taraknath Das Foundation, Grant for International Students, 1997-98

Stanford Center on Conflict and Negotiation, Pre-Dissertation Fieldwork Grant, 1997

Stanford University, Mellon Pre-Dissertation Summer Research Grant, 1996

Stanford University Departmental Fellowship, 1995-99

Columbia University, Teaching and Research Assistantships, 1991-93

Milano Scholar, Eugene Lang College, The New School for Social Research, 1987-91

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Fieldwork Experience

August 2008 – Present: Initiated research on the politics and ground-level dynamics of the Right to Information Act in India. This Act was passed in 2005 in the name of transparent, accountable and participatory democracy and the empowerment of the “common man” or the ordinary citizen. My New Delhi based urban project examines the interface between three sets of stakeholders: citizens who use the act to demand information, activists who participate in the right to information movement, and government officials. In addition, I have conducted archival research on information/secretcy and the colonial state. My objective is to examine everyday citizenship, statehood, and notions of democracy through the workings of the right to information act.

December 2004 – January 2005: Revisited my primary fieldsite in UP, India, and conducted brief interviews with former *Mahila Samakhya* clients and current program functionaries in Uttar Pradesh and New Delhi, India.

January 2004: Conducted participant observation of the 2004 World Social Forum (WSF) held at Mumbai, India. Seen as an activist answer to and critique of the World Economic Forum, the WSF brings together thousands of self-professed anti-globalization nongovernmental groups annually. I attended NGO workshops, speeches, and general forum activities, which gave me insight into the diversity of ideologies, agendas, and actors included under the general rubric of “the anti-globalization movement” and into the varied visions of India and the world in anti-capitalist imaginaries.

January 2000: Attended the Indian Association of Women’s Studies meeting in Hyderabad, India, and conducted interviews with prominent Indian women activists and *Mahila Samakhya* functionaries attending the meeting.

July 1998 – September 1999: Conducted a multi-sited institutional and rural-level ethnography of the everyday practices of the *Mahila Samakhya* program, a government-of India initiated rural women’s empowerment program in India. This involved work and travel in the following Indian cities: New Delhi, Lucknow, Varanasi, Guwahati, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Jaipur, and Mussoorie. Conducted interviews with government officials, donors, *Mahila Samakhya* staff members, feminists, development professionals, activists, and academics on gender, development, and state policy issues. Observed *Mahila Samakhya* meetings at the national, state, and district levels, accompanied staff members on their daily field trips, and analyzed program documents for their approach to gender and empowerment issues. The rural component of the research examined the effects of the *Mahila Samakhya* program on women’s lives and identities and on gender relations in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh (with additional work in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, and Assam). This included participant observation in village-level program activities and other cultural celebrations, household socio-economic surveys, and semi-structured interviews with rural women (program participants and non-participants) and men, and local development administrators.

June 1997 – September 1997: Conducted a preliminary institutional and rural-level ethnography of the practices and effects of the *Mahila Samakhya* program in the western Indian state of Gujarat and in New Delhi.

June 1996 – September 1996: Conducted preliminary fieldwork on state-initiated women’s development programs in India, with a special focus on the Women’s Development Programme and the *Mahila Samakhya* program. Interviewed academics and development activists on women’s development and empowerment issues.

Professional Service

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Member, Local Editorial Board

Meridians: Feminism, Race, Transnationalism
Fall 2002- Fall 2004

Reviewer

American Ethnologist; Cultural Anthropology: Journal of the Society for Cultural Anthropology; Current Anthropology; Meridians.

Wesleyan University Teaching and Service

New Courses Developed and Taught

Anthropology and Political Economy (ANTH 234): Fall 07
The Anthropology of Development (ANTH 259): Fall 01, 02, 03, 05, 06.
The Anthropology of Globalization/Global Developments (ANTH/CHUM 339): Fall 02; Spring 04, 06, 07.
Introduction to Women's Studies (WMST 101): Fall 03.
Gender and Political Economy in the Developing World (WMST 207): Spring 02, 03.
Gender in a Transnational Perspective (redesigned FGSS 207): Spring 06, 07.
Gender in South Asian Contexts (FGSS 304): Spring 04 (to be taught in Spring 08).
Critical Perspectives on the State (FGSS/ANTH 302): Fall 01, Spring 03, Fall 05.
Senior Thesis Writing Workshop (FGSS 405): Fall 06 and 07.

Colleagueship

Member, Faculty Committee on Rights and Responsibilities, Fall 2006-Present.

Member, Search Committee for Urban Anthropology, Department of Anthropology, 2005-2006.

Member, Steering Committee, Speakers Committee, and Working Group in the Women's Studies Program, 2002-2003. Organized speakers for the Women's Studies Symposium for Fall 2003 and the Diane Weiss Memorial Lecture for Spring 2004. Participated in the History Department's "Gender and Colonialism" job search on behalf of the Women's Studies department.

Coordinator, Southern Asia and Indian Ocean Studies Course Cluster, 2002-2003. Organized a conference on "Lessons on the Conflict in Kashmir" at Wesleyan, April 5, 2003.

Panelist and Workshop Leader, Asian-American Month Celebrations, Wesleyan University, April, 2002 (panelist on "Feminism without Borders"; led a workshop on "Gender and Globalization").

Participant, Faculty Seminar on Intersexuality, 2001-2003.

Other Teaching and Administrative Experience

Stanford University, Stanford, CA

Instructor 2000-2001

Department of Cultural and Social Anthropology
Course: The Anthropology of Development

Columbia University, New York, NY

Departmental Research Assistant 1991-1992

Southern Asian Institute

Responsibilities included organizing a year-long lecture series on various issues relating to South Asia. Edited two issues of the Institute's newsletter. Assisted in organizing a conference on the Narmada Dam Project.

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Other Professional Experience

Mahila Samakhya Program, India

Consultant August 1996

Participated in the 1996 Evaluation Committee meetings for the *Mahila Samakhya*, a rural women's empowerment and development program initiated by the Government of India. Assisted in writing the evaluation report.

Church Avenue Merchants Block Association, Inc., New York

Coordinator, Micro-Enterprise Loan and Assistance Program November 1993 - September 1995

Managed the micro-enterprise loan program for refugees, and women and minorities. This included conducting outreach into refugee and minority communities, managing the revolving loan fund, evaluating loan applications, assisting clients with writing business plans and leveraging other funds, providing business counseling and organizing technical assistance workshops, monitoring business progress, liaising with other economic development agencies, and compiling all statistical/program reports.

Small Sector Development Council Of Belize, Belize City

Planning and Design Consultant December 1992 - May 1993

Assisted the newly formed SSDC, Belize in developing an efficient, appropriate and participatory organizational and administrative structure, and in formulating a five-year development plan. This included researching background information on the Belizean economy, designing various options for the organizational structure, and conducting feasibility/impact analyses for the options.

Share, India & Market Place, Illinois

Consultant May 1992 - July 1992

Conducted participant observation research in Bombay on income generation projects for women. Analyzed financial, production, marketing and collaboration strategies of six nongovernmental organizations involved in these projects. Developed a model for the successful administration of collaborative income generation projects.

Professional Memberships

Member, American Anthropological Association, 1996-Present

Member, American Ethnological Society, 1996-Present

Member, Society for Cultural Anthropology, 2003-Present

Languages

Fluent in Hindi (reading and speaking ability); spoken fluency in Punjabi and Urdu; working oral knowledge of other north Indian languages and dialects, and Russian.