

MYTHRI JEGATHESAN
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Santa Clara, CA 95053
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EDUCATION

Columbia University, New York, NY
Ph.D., Anthropology, May 2013

Dissertation: Bargaining in a labor regime: plantation life and the politics of development

Columbia University, New York, NY
M.A., Anthropology, May 2005

Thesis: Tamil children in violent moments: martyrdom, mental health ideologies, and communal violence in Sri Lanka

Georgetown University, Washington, DC
B.A., Classics and Anthropology, May 2003

TEACHING AND RELATED EXPERIENCE

Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA
Associate Professor, September 2021 – present

Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA
Assistant Professor, September 2014 – August 2021

The College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA
Visiting Assistant Professor, August 2013 – August 2014

Georgetown University, Washington, DC
Faculty Lecturer, School of Foreign Service, January – May 2014

Georgetown University, Washington, DC
Adjunct Lecturer, Department of Anthropology, August 2012 – August 2013

Columbia University, New York, NY
Teaching Assistant, Department of Anthropology, 2006-2008; 2010-2012

PEER REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

Monographs

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2019. Tea and solidarity: Tamil women and work in postwar Sri Lanka. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

- Winner, 2021 Michelle Z. Rosaldo Book Prize (Association for Feminist Anthropology)
- Winner, 2020 Diane Forsythe Prize (General Anthropology Division (GAD) and Committee for the Anthropology of Science, Technology & Computing (CASTAC))

- Honorable Mention, 2020 Book Prize (Society for the Anthropology of Work) (SAW)
- Taught in the following courses (Selection): *Reading Ethnography* (University of Washington, Winter 2020, Winter 2021); *Anthropological Theory* (St. Olaf's College, Fall 2019, Fall 2020, Fall 2021); *International Development* (American University, Spring 2020); *Introduction to Cultural Anthropology* (Santa Clara University, Winter 2021); *Data, Race, and Capitalism* (University of Washington, Winter 2021); *Feminist Anthropology* (York University, Spring 2021); *Peoples of South Asia* (CUNY, Spring 2021, Fall 2021); *Anthropological Theory* (University of Kentucky, Fall 2021, Fall 2022, Fall 2023, Fall 2024); *Race, Ethnicity, and Caste* (Huston-Tillotson University, Fall 2021); *Gender and Sexuality in South Asia* (Georgetown University, Fall 2022), *Contemporary Anthropological Theory* (Brandeis University, Fall 2023), Reintroduction to Writing: Smoking Technocracies and Privatized Democracies (First Year Seminar) (Fall 2025)
- South Asia edition, Tambapanni Academic Publishers [2023]

Journal Articles

"Milky White Futures." *Limn 16: Unruly Signals* (Eds. Gabriel Dattatreyan, Radhika Govindrajana, and Towns Middleton). *Manuscript in preparation*.

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2021. "Black feminist plots before the Plantationocene and anthropology's "regional closets." *Feminist Anthropology 2*: 78-93. <https://doi.org/10.1002/fea2.12037>

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2019. "State-industrial Entanglements in Women's Reproductive Capacity and Labor in Sri Lanka," Original article. *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal 20* (Online since 18 March 2019) URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/samaj/5095>; DOI:10.4000/samaj.5095

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2018. "Claiming *ūr*: home, investment, and decolonial desires on Sri Lanka's tea plantations" Original article. *Anthropological Quarterly 91*(2): 635-670.

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2015. "Deficient realities: expertise and uncertainty among tea plantation workers in Sri Lanka" Original article. *Dialectical Anthropology 39*: 255-272.

Book Chapters

Jegathesan, Mythri. "Between the plantation's 'peak points': matrifocality and the politics of mothering in Sri Lanka." Under contract for Routledge Handbook on the Anthropology of Gender and Sexuality (Eds. Erica B. Williams and Svati Shah). *Manuscript in preparation*.

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2024. "[Feminist pathways and political possibilities in Sri Lankan plantation studies](#)." in Routledge Handbook on Contemporary Sri Lanka. Edited by Kanchana Ruwanpura and Amjad Mohammed-Saleem.

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2021. "Conversion, fixing faith, and material investments on Sri Lanka's tea plantations." In [Multi-religiosity in Contemporary Sri Lanka](#), Eds. Mark Whitaker, Darini Rajasingham-Senanayake, Pathmanesan Sanmugeswaran. Routledge. 192-203.

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2020 [e-version, 2019]. "Visible grounds: organising unorganized women workers with the Working Women's Front." In [Up-Country Tamils: Charting a New Future in Sri Lanka](#). Eds. Daniel Bass and B. Skanthakumar. Colombo: International Centre for Ethnic Studies: 105-135.

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2011. "Negotiating history and attending to the future: formations of solidarity and community among *Malaiyaha* Tamils in Sri Lanka," in *Tamil Communities and the Sri Lankan Conflict*. 2011. *Géographie et Cultures*. Paris: L'Harmattan. 45-71.

Essays and Commentaries

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2026. "Comment" (Alyssa Paredes' "Plantation Liberalism: a Genealogy of Personhood, Property, and Environmental Litigation between Philippine Mindanao and the Black Atlantic"). *Current Anthropology* 67(1): 15-17.

Jegathesan, Mythri. "Surreal butterflies and alternative kinship futures: revisiting dreams and histories of home through My So-Called Life." May 28, 2025. *Post45* <https://post45.org/2025/05/surreal-butterflies-and-alternative-kinship-futures/>

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2024. "Trenches Equivalent: Waging Sri Lanka's "War of Position"." *Theorizing the Contemporary, Fieldsights*, November 12. <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/trenches-equivalent>

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2024. "The undersurface" American Ethnological Society (AES) Online Collection: Photographic "Returns" to Field Sites. Editors: Ipsita Dey and Christina Kefala. <https://americanethnologist.org/online-content/collections/photographic-returns/the-undersurface-by-mythri-jegathesan/>

Jegathesan, Mythri. "Policing the Patriline" *Polity* 11(1). June 2023. Social Scientists' Association: Colombo. <https://polity.lk/policing-the-patriline-reading-the-current-economic-and-political-crisis-through-the-plantation-mythri-jegathesan/>

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2022. "Comment" (Luke Heslop's "From haunted houses to housed hauntings: ghosts, oracles, and kinship ambivalence in a Sri Lankan merchant family"). *Current Anthropology* 63(4): 420-421.

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2022. "Passing Blood, Consuming Memories: Making Fish Cutlets with Amma." E-flux journal Issue #128: <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/128/474724/passing-blood-consuming-memories-making-fish-cutlets-with-amma/>

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2022. "Plantation errata" *Scroll: Projects on Paper* [in partnership with Colomboscope Interdisciplinary Arts Festival].

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2021. "Watching for caste, commensality, and compatibility on Sri Lanka's tea plantations." *General Anthropology*, 28: 6-9. <https://doi.org/10.1111/gena.12086>

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2021. "Nesting paternalisms: postwar Indo-Lankan diplomacies on Sri Lanka's plantations." *Hot Spots, Fieldsights*, March 16. <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/nesting-paternalisms-postwar-indo-lankan-diplomacies-on-sri-lankas-plantations>

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2020. "a body writing." *Commoning Ethnography* 3(1): 129-135.

Jegathesan, Mythri, and Maya Kaneko. 2019. "Work for a life." *Anthropology News* website, June 12, 2019. DOI: 10.1111/AN.1188

Anderson, Ryan and Mythri Jegathesan. 2019. "The conversation." *Anthropology News* website, March 7, 2019. DOI: 10.1111/AN.1112

Jegathesan, Mythri, and Ryan Anderson. 2018. "Disrupting Silicon Valley's stories." *Anthropology News* website, November 9, 2018. DOI: 10.1111/AN.1034

"Bargaining for a living wage: reflections on the economic rights of Tamil tea plantation workers in Sri Lanka" *HimalSouthasian*. February 2010. 23(2): 38-41.

Book Reviews

Jegathesan, Mythri. Review of Maan Barua's *Plantation Worlds* (Duke University Press, 2024). *Journal of Asian Studies*. Manuscript accepted.

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2024. Review of Arjun Shankar's *Brown Saviors and their Others* (Duke University Press, 2023). *Current Anthropology* 65(3): 577-579.

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2019. Review of Debarati Sen's *Everyday Sustainability: Gender Justice and Fair-Trade Tea in Darjeeling* (SUNY Press, 2017). *Pacific Affairs* 92(3): 613-616.

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2017. Review of Kumari Jayawardena and Rachel Kurian's *Class, Patriarchy and Ethnicity on Sri Lanka's Plantations* (Orient Black Swan, 2015). *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 51(1): 116-119. doi: 10.1177/0069966716677422

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2016. Review of Daniel Bass' *Everyday Ethnicity in Sri Lanka: Up-Country Tamil Identity Politics*. (Routledge, 2012). *Asian Ethnology* 75(1): 263-266.

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2015. Review of Nira Wickramasinghe. *Sri Lanka in the Modern Age* (2nd Edition, Oxford University Press, 2014). *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*. 38 (4): 858-861.

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2013. Review, Sonali Deraniyagala. *Wave* (Vintage, 2013). *Columbia Magazine*.

Public Writing and Media

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2022. "[The Power of Storytelling](#)" Taste of Place Podcast, Whetstone Radio Collective (Hosted by Anna Sulan Masing). November 16, 2022. Radio podcast. 29 min 46 seconds.

Jegathesan, Mythri. 2022. "[Sri Lanka's Crisis: Ethnonationalism and the Legacy of the Civil War](#)." The Real News Network with Maximillian Alvarez. August 30, 2022. Video podcast. 58 min 30 seconds.

Ananda, Kitana and Mythri Jegathesan. 2019. "[What Sri Lanka needs now](#)" CNN website, April 28, 2019.

"[Labor, aspiration, and gender justice on Sri Lanka's tea plantations](#)." October 31, 2017. Podcast. Ignatian Center for Jesuit Education, Santa Clara University, 23 min 39 sec.

"[A year on, Sri Lanka suffers](#)." May 30, 2010. Global Post.

"[Sri Lanka's time of reckoning](#)." May 19, 2009. Global Post.

"[Silenced in Sri Lanka](#)" February 16, 2009. Global Post.

"Reflections on development in the Hill Country." *Satyodaya Centre for Social Research and Encounter Bulletin* April 2009 208: 20-22.

PANELS AND PRESENTATIONS

Invited Lectures (2013-present)

“Mothering the Children of Tamil Thai: Disrupting Sri Lanka’s Lexicon of Matrifocality.” Invited lecture, Institute of South Asia Studies (ISAS), University of California, Berkeley, October 16, 2025.

“Mothering the Children of Tamil Thai: Disrupting Sri Lanka’s Lexicon of Matrifocality.” Invited lecture, University of Texas, Houston, February 4, 2025.

“Life beyond Plaster: Plot Lines in and beyond Malaiyagam.” Invited lecture, University of Kentucky’s Department of Anthropology Distinguished Lecture Series. February 15, 2024.

Invited lecture, Hunt Lecture in Economic Anthropology. Brandeis Anthropology Research Seminar. September 22, 2023.

Plots beyond *Malaiyakam*: in search of land and livelihood in Sri Lanka’s Northern Province. Invited lecture. Department of Anthropology Senior Seminar Series, Cambridge University. April 28, 2023.

Feasting on Debt: Sri Lanka’s Plantations and the Errata of Fantasy. Anthropology Colloquium. Stanford University. April 10, 2023.

Feasting Scripts: the Haptics of Debt and Fantasy on Sri Lanka’s Plantations. Hoch Cunningham Lecture Series. Tufts University. April 6, 2023.

Keynote lecture, Society for the Anthropology of Food and Nutrition (SAFN), and Culture, Agriculture, Food and Environment (CAFÉ). American Anthropological Association, Seattle. November 11, 2022.

Sensing beyond the scripts: plantation errata and the politics of debt in Sri Lanka. Tamil Worlds Initiative. University of Toronto. April 13 2022.

“Plantation effects” Series. Invited lecture. Department of African American Studies Faculty-Graduate Seminar. Princeton University. March 1, 2022.

Debt and the plantation errata of politics in Sri Lanka. Invited lecture. South Asia Center. University of Washington, Seattle. February 3, 2022.

For every line of fatherly faces: in search of matrifocal labor histories on Sri Lanka's tea plantations. Lecture, South Asia Research Cluster. Nanyang Technological University, November 11, 2021.

Of matchbooks and gold jewelry. Objects Across Borders: Conversations on South Asian Materialities lecture series. University of College London and Princeton University. April 29, 2021.

'Fortune and glory': the speculative afterlives of Sri Lanka's tea plantations in Hollywood film. Lecture, South Asia Institute Seminar Series. University of Texas Austin. April 8, 2021.

'Fortune and glory': Sri Lanka's plantation labor archives in Hollywood film. Lecture, South Asian Studies Programme Lecture Series. National University of Singapore. February 26, 2021.

January 2026

Visible ground: labour solidarity and organising the unorganised on Sri Lanka's tea plantations. Lecture, Sociology Seminar Series, South Asian University. December 16, 2020.

Plotting Malaiyakam: life and work among Northern Hill Country Tamils in postwar Sri Lanka. Lecture, South Asia Seminar. University of Chicago. February 6, 2020.

Fortune and glory: questioning the plots of anthropology. Keynote Lecture. "Solidarities." Annual Johns Hopkins Graduate Student Conference. September 21, 2019.

When the water stops flowing: dispossession by certification on Sri Lanka's tea plantations. Tea High and Low: Elixir, Exploitation and Ecology Conference, Cornell University. October 27, 2018.

When the water stops flowing: the legal-industrial technics of certifying labor dispossession on Sri Lanka's tea plantations. Opticalities, University of California San Diego. March 16, 2018.

Unfixing language and landscape: decolonial desires on Sri Lanka's tea plantations. Invited Lecture. Geballe Workshop: Worlds of Work and the Work of Networks. Stanford University. March 8, 2018.

'Why we work': labor aspirations and the unfixing of imperial imaginaries on Sri Lanka's tea plantations. Department of Anthropology Lecture Series. San Francisco State University. November 6, 2017.

Moral economies of gender, labor, and ritual on Sri Lanka's tea plantations. Invited NSF and Wenner-Gren Workshop: Social Upheaval and Religious Innovation. Funded by National Science Foundation (Award # 1657684) and Wenner Gren Foundation. Open University. Colombo, Sri Lanka. July 11-13, 2017.

Coolie landscapes: the pragmatics of community. Invited workshop. Chicago Tamil Forum: Poesis/Politics of Language and Place in Tamilagam (A colloquium in honor of Bernard Bate). University of Chicago. May 27, 2017.

Coolie poesis: plantation sounds and labor heritage on Sri Lanka's tea estates. Invited Lecture for 2nd Annual Global Tea Initiative for the Study of Tea Culture and Science. University of California, Davis. January 19, 2017.

Stately discomforts: labor, reproductive rights, and sexuality among minority women workers in postwar Sri Lanka. Carol Mukhopadhyay Feminist Lecture Series. San Jose State University. November 7, 2016.

The unbecoming coolie: connectivities of labor and landscape among Malaiyaha Tamils on Sri Lanka's tea plantations. Centering Mobility in Tamil Worlds. National University of Singapore. October 15, 2015.

What to do? Plantation life and the politics of development, visibility, and risk in Sri Lanka. Department of Anthropology. Georgetown University. February 8, 2013.

Research Presentations (2010 to present)

"Beyond the sluice and in the soil: Malaiyaka Tamils' search for water in Sri Lanka's Northern Province." Abstract submitted for review to 2026 Annual Conference on South Asia. Madison, WI.

"Summa: lifelines of *oivvu* (rest) and *vilaiyattu* (play) on Sri Lanka's plantation." Paper presented at Annual Conference on South Asia Madison, WI. October 22, 2025 (Symposium) Play, Non-Work and Leisure in South Asia (Organizers: Namita Dharia and Krupa Shandilya)

January 2026

"Milky White Futures: Surviving Caste in Northern Sri Lanka." Paper presented at Annual Conference on South Asia Madison, WI. October 30, 2024 (Symposium) Rightwing Aesthetic Grammars (Radhika Govindrajan, Gabriel Dattathreyan)

"Consenting lines of a "common sense" asset: taking shelter in Sri Lanka's tea trenches." Panel paper presented at Annual Conference on South Asia. Madison, WI. October 31, 2024.

"Vampire bats, white blood, and thirsty elephants: fabulating ethnonationalism on Sri Lanka's plantations." Paper presented in Rethinking Fables in the Age of Global Environmental Crisis Seminar Series. May 27, 2024. University of Kent (Virtual Panel).

"Beyond the sluice and in the soil: finding water in Sri Lanka's Northern Province." Paper presented the American Anthropological Association General Meeting. Vancouver, Canada. November 18, 2023.

"Malaiyaga Tamil gender, caste and class dynamics on the plantations and beyond" Paper presented at Pengal Santhippu (Women's Forum). Zurich, Switzerland (Virtual). October 28, 2023

Roundtable Participant. Roundtable: On V. V. Ganeshanathan's Brotherless Night: justice, war and fiction in Sri Lanka. Annual Conference on South Asia. Madison, WI. October 21, 2022.

"Plantation paternalisms: nationalism, patriarchy and the stakes of accounting for caste in Sri Lanka." Paper presentation. British Association for South Asian Studies (BASAS), March 31-April 2, 2022.

"Reading for life beyond tea" Workshop leader, Colomboscope Interdisciplinary Art Festival, Lakmahal Community Library, Colombo (Virtual participant), January 23, 2022.

Remarks for "Grief, memorialisation and the anthropological feminism of Malathi De Alwis" roundtable, "As if Gender and Sexuality Mattered," Ethnography Winter School 2022. National University of Ireland, Maynooth. January 18, 2022.

Discussant, AAA Executive Session Roundtable: Everyday Politics and Praxis of Truth, Responsibility and Honesty. American Anthropological Association. Baltimore, MD. November 18, 2021.

"Displaced attachments: resettlement, land claims, and home Investment in Sri Lanka's Northern Province." Paper presentation. "Land Relations in Flux: New Land Investments and Precarity." American Anthropological Association. Vancouver, Canada. November 23, 2019.

"Gender, language, and conflict at work: new books on post-war Sri Lanka." Roundtable Presentation. Annual Conference on South Asia. Madison, WI. October 19, 2019.

"Refusing inheritance: the optics and aesthetics of dispossession of Sri Lanka's tea plantations." Paper presentation. American Anthropological Association. San Jose, CA. November 17, 2018.

"Doing research under emergency and in postwar transition: the optics of surveillance on Sri Lanka's tea plantations." Paper presentation. Annual Conference on South Asia. Madison, WI. October 13, 2018.

"Decolonial motivations: labor heritage and career aspirations among Hill Country Tamil youth on Sri Lanka's tea plantations." Paper presentation. Annual Conference on South Asia. Madison, WI. October 27, 2017.

January 2026

"Industrial demands and intimate exposures: negotiating reproductive capacity and kinship investment among Tamil women on Sri Lanka's tea plantations." American Institute for Sri Lankan Studies Workshop (Family, Kin, and the State in Sri Lanka). July 24-25, 2017. Workshop. Colombo, Sri Lanka.

"Coolie landscapes: industrial instrumentalities of language and nature on Sri Lanka's tea plantations." American Institute for Sri Lankan Studies Workshop (Imaginations of the Rural). July 14-15, 2017. Invited Workshop. Open University. Colombo, Sri Lanka.

"Like a cross": rational sentiments and industrial intimacy on Sri Lanka's tea plantations. Paper presentation. American Ethnological Society Meeting. Stanford University. April 1, 2017

"Discomforting the state: minority women's labor, reproductive capacity and sexuality in postwar Sri Lanka. Paper presentation. Association for Asian Studies; Toronto, Canada. March 17, 2017.

"The folklore of yoga." Third installment of Critical MASH Lecture Series in conjunction with Takeshi Moro (Art History). Edward M. Dowd Art and Art History Gallery. Santa Clara University. March 3, 2017.

"Rupture and risk: the discredited woman subject in transnational rights-based models of gender development." Paper presentation. American Anthropological Association; Minneapolis, MN, November 20, 2016.

"Securing Colombo *vēlai*: intimacy and prestige in Sri Lanka's informal labor sector." Paper presentation. Annual Conference on South Asia. Madison, WI. October 22, 2016.

"Discomforting the state: narratives of women's labor, reproductive capacity and sexuality in postwar Sri Lanka." Paper Presentation. Feminist Pre-Conference: Gender, Sexuality, and Sedition. [Organizers Svati Shah and Krupa Shandilya]. Annual Conference on South Asia. Madison, WI. October 20, 2016.

"Is a progressive politics possible? Intersections of industrial sustainability and political shifts in Sri Lanka's plantation sector." Paper presentation. Sri Lanka Roundtable. University of Edinburgh. May 27, 2016.

"Unbecoming coolie: deconstructing colonial ideals on Sri Lanka's tea plantations." Paper presentation. American Anthropological Association. Denver, CO. November 18, 2015.

"Organizing the unorganized: negotiating solidarities among working women in Sri Lanka." Paper presentation. Annual Conference on South Asia. Madison, WI. October 23, 2015.

"Falling short of the ideal: negotiating a woman's worth from age attainment to marriage among Malaiyaha Tamils on Sri Lanka's tea plantations." Paper Presentation. American Institute of Sri Lankan Studies. September 5, 2015. Kandy, Sri Lanka.

"Labor, landscape, and (de)colonial desires on Sri Lanka's tea plantations." Department of Anthropology Lecture Series. Santa Clara University. April 29, 2015.

"The unbecoming coolie: constructing "home" among Tamil plantation residents in Sri Lanka." Paper Presentation. University of Hawai'i Manoa Center of South Asia Symposium. April 15-17, 2015.

"Reimagining development: forging transnational solidarity through rights-based programming in Sri Lanka's tea plantation sector." Paper presented at Sri Lanka Roundtable. Universiteit van Amsterdam. December 11-12, 2014.

"In search of solidarity: transnational connections and rights-based programming on tea plantations in Sri Lanka." Paper presented at 2014 Annual Conference on South Asia. Madison, WI. October 17, 2014.

"Deconstructing the plantation labor regime and the politics of development, visibility, and risk in Sri Lanka." Department of Anthropology Speaker Series. The College of William and Mary. October 30, 2013.

"Neither *ūr* nor owned: deconstructing the plantation labor regime and the politics of development, visibility, and risk in Sri Lanka." Paper presented at the Annual Conference on South Asia. Madison, WI. October 18, 2013.

"The stigma of plantation labor: marking undesirability among development workers in Sri Lanka. Paper presented at 2012 American Anthropological Association. San Francisco, CA. November 18, 2012.

"Documenting place among Hill Country Tamils in Sri Lanka." Panel organized/paper presented at the Tamil Studies Conference. Toronto, Canada. May 14, 2011.

"Taming uncertainty: the signification of doubt and belief in a healing ritual among Hill Country Tamil tea estate residents in Central Sri Lanka." Paper presented at 109th Annual American Anthropological Association. New Orleans, LA. November 17, 2010.

"Articulating life choices and attributing value among Hill Country Tamil women in Sri Lanka." Paper presented at the Tamil Studies Conference. Toronto, Canada. May 14, 2010.

"A community 'on the move': perceptions of belonging and possibility among Hill Country Tamil tea estate residents in Sri Lanka." Conference co-organized and paper presented at Sri Lanka in South Asia: Future Horizons for Scholarship. Indo-China Institute, New School for Social Research, New York, NY. April 16, 2010.

"Negotiating history and attending to the future: formations of solidarity and community among *Malaiyaha* Tamils in Sri Lanka." Paper presented at Tamil Communities and the Sri Lankan Conflict Conference organized by *Espaces, Nature, and Culture Research Laboratory*. Paris IV (Sorbonne) France. February 13, 2010.

Conference/Conference Panel Organization

"Unsettling South Asia's 'Regional Closets': Craft, Legibility, and Survival in Times of Genocide and Nationalist Violence." Roundtable co-organized with Debarati Sen (Submitted for review) for 2026 Annual Conference on South Asia. Madison, Wisconsin.

Sociality, Science and Surveillance: Plantations in the 21st Century. Two-Day Workshop at University of California, Santa Cruz (co-sponsored by Santa Clara University). October 9-10, 2025. Co-organized with Sanjay Barbora and Dolly Kikon.

Rethinking Value, South Asia, Part II. Panel Organizer and Chair. Annual Conference on South Asia. Madison, Wisconsin. November 1, 2024.

The work of inheritance: the relational labor of investment and aspiration. American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting; San Jose, CA, November 18, 2018 (Panel Organizer).

January 2026

Fieldwork, women's work: identity, surveillance, and the ethics of research in and after Sri Lanka's civil war. Annual Conference on South Asia. Madison, WI, October 13, 2018 (Panel Organizer).

Language, labor, and politics in South Asian public spaces: a panel inspired by the works of Bernard Bate. Annual Conference on South Asia; Madison, WI, October 22, 2016 (Co-organized with Christina Davis).

Labor, landscape, and (de)colonial desires: rethinking the plantation as a socio-ecological category. American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting; Denver, CO, November 18, 2015 (Co-organized with Sarah Besky).

Decolonial futures: gender, trust, and solidarity in South Asia. Annual Conference on South Asia. Madison, WI, October 23, 2015 (Panel Organizer and Chair).

Destabilizing "Tamilness" in Sri Lanka. Tamil Studies Conference, University of Toronto. Toronto, Canada. May 14, 2011. (Panel Organizer and Chair).

Sri Lanka in South Asia: future horizons for scholarship. New School for Social Research and American Institute for Sri Lankan Studies, New York. April 16, 2010. (Conference Co-Organizer).

Guest & Public Lectures Talks

["The Hidden Histories behind Hollywood Filming Locations."](#) Big Brain SF. Forthcoming (May 26, 2026). San Francisco, CA.

Invited Public Lecture, Tamil Labor on the Plantations. Lal Salam (New York, NY). April 22, 2023

Roundtable remarks. [Crisis and Struggle in Sri Lanka: One Year On](#). York University. March 30, 2023.

Roundtable remarks. International Dialogue Series: Economic Justice. Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA). Colombo, Sri Lanka. February 23, 2023.

Webinar on Sri Lanka: [Crisis and Change. Institute for South Asian Studies](#). University of California, Berkeley. February 16, 2023.

The Crisis in Sri Lanka: Perspectives from Economics, Political Science and Anthropology. Georgetown University. October 5, 2022.

[Gender, Peace and Security Seminar Series: Uneven Experiences of Gender and the State](#). Monash University. September 9, 2022.

Remarks for symposium: Converging across oceans: approaches to logistics, environment, and power. University of Pennsylvania Center for Advanced Research in Global Communication (CARGC) - Center on Digital Culture and Society (CDCS). April 14, 2022.

Religious Intolerance, Media, and Surveillance in Sri Lanka. Undergraduate course, Religion and Ethnography (Department of Religious Studies, Michelle Mueller). November 8, 2018.

Human Rights and Coolie Labor in Sri Lanka. Undergraduate course, Human Rights and Humanitarianism (Department of History, Naomi Andrews). May 1, 2018.

January 2026

Deficient realities: using ethnographic methods to study religion in Sri Lanka. Undergraduate course, Religion and Ethnography (Department of Religious Studies, Michelle Mueller). February 22, 2018.

The politics of the researcher and ethnographic methods. Undergraduate course, Music, Writing, and Research (Department of Music, Christina Zanfagna). April 19, 2016 and May 15, 2018.

Housing and land rights on Sri Lanka's plantations. Undergraduate course, International Environment & Development (Department of Environmental Science & Studies, Patrick Gallagher). May 28, 2015.

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

External Research Grants

- National Science Foundation (NSF), Senior Research Award (\$140,000), June 2020-present
- Postdoctoral Research Fellowship, American Institute for Sri Lankan Studies, 2014-2016
- Dissertation-to-Book Grant, American Institute for Sri Lankan Studies (AISLS), October 2013
- American Dissertation Fellowship, American Association of University Women, 2012-2013
- Green Harbor Financial (GHF) Prize for Anthropological Fieldwork, July 2009
- National Science Foundation (NSF) Dissertation Research Improvement Grant, October 2008
- Foreign Language Area Studies (FLAS) Summer Fellowship Award (AIIS, Madurai), May 2007
- Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship (FLAS) Award (Tamil, South Asia), AY 2003-2005

Internal University Grants

- Course Release, Spring 2024 (deferred until Spring 2026)
- JEDI Grant, Summer 2024
- Publication Grant, Office of the Provost, September 2018 and September 2021
- Hackworth Grant, Markkula Center for Applied Ethics, January-December 2019
- Junior Faculty Development Leave Support, Undergraduate Research Assistance, 2017-2018
- Summer Stipend, July-August 2017
- Roelandts Research Grant, Miller Center for Social Entrepreneurship, 2016-2017
- Bannan Institute Scholar, Ignatian Center, Santa Clara University, 2016-2018
- Penstemon 2.0 Project Sustainability Faculty Award, Santa Clara University, July 2015
- Deans Grant, Santa Clara University, Dec 2014, May 2016, May 2017
- Travel Grant, Reves Center for International Studies, The College of William and Mary, October 2013

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Panel Content Consultant and Label Editor, *Rooted: Histories of the Malaiyaga Tamils*. Collective for Historical Dialogue and Memory (CHDM) Exhibition. Nuwara Eliya (May 19-21, 2023) and Colombo (August 18-27, 2023), Sri Lanka.

Co-Editor, *Anthropology of Work Review* (Peer-Reviewed Journal); November 2021-March 2025
Associate Editor, *Anthropology of Work Review* (Peer-Reviewed Journal); December 2020-November 2021

Editorial Board Member, *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review*, 2022-2024

Reviewer, Peer-Reviewed Journals: *American Ethnologist*; *American Anthropologist*; *Cultural Anthropology*; *Contributions to Indian Sociology*; *Economic Anthropology*; *Modern Asian Studies*; *Gender, Place, and Culture*; *Food, Culture, and Society*; *Political Ecology*; *Anthropological Quarterly*; *Anthropology of Work Review*, *Journal of Asian Studies*, *Journal of South Asian Development*; *Journal of Colonialism and*

January 2026

Colonial History; International Labor and Working-Class History, South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies, Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, Current Anthropology, Engaging Science, Technology, and Society (ESTS), Journal of Agrarian Change, Political Geography

Monographs: *Routledge University Press, Rutgers University Press, University of Washington Press, Stanford University Press*

Panelist Reviewer, National Science Foundation (Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant, Cultural Anthropology Division), 2016-2021

Thesis Examiner: Ranjana Raghunathan (PhD, National University of Singapore), Mallika Yeleswarapu (B.A., Santa Clara University), Lucy Schmidt (B.A., Santa Clara University), Ipsita Dey (External Dissertation Committee Member), Julia von Gertsdorff (B.A., Santa Clara University), Deborah Phillips (External Dissertation Committee Member, CUNY)

President, *American Institute for Sri Lankan Studies (AISLS)* 2023 to present; Secretary/Member of Executive Committee, Oct 2018 – Oct 2023; Member, Board of Directors, 2016-2018

Member, *American Anthropological Association (AAA)*

Section and Interest Groups: Association for Feminist Anthropology (At-Large Board Member (2023-present), Juror for Michelle Z. Rosaldo Book Prize 2023, Dissertation Grant Committee Chair 2024 and Committee Member 2025, Senior Career Award Committee Member 2025); Society for the Anthropology of Work (Treasurer, 2019-2020; Dissertation Travel Grant Reviewer 2023); American Ethnological Society (graduate student mentor, Juror for AES Senior Book Prize 2022)

Member, *Maynmai*. Scholarly and activist collective on Sri Lanka. Writing, asylum seeker expert testimony and organizer for political education meetings (2020—2023)

Co-Founder and Member. *Lanka Solidarity*. Scholarly and Activist Collective on Sri Lanka. Writing, solidarity network-building, policy analysis collective (2009 – 2013)

UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENTAL SERVICE

Chair, Department of Anthropology, January 2026 - present

Faculty Development Associate, Office of the Provost 2023-present

Member, Student Affairs Committee, Santa Clara University, 2021-2022, Fall 2022, 2023-2024

Member, Center for Arts and Humanities Advisory Council, Fall 2022, 2023-2024

Member, Departmental Advising Pilot Program, 2021-2022

Mentor, Stanford DARE Fellows Program, 2016-2022

Member, Culture, Power and Difference Writing Group and Speaker Series (SCU), 2016-2019

Member, Alternative Resolutions to Sexual Misconduct Task Force, March to July 2021

Member, Culture and Ideas Curriculum Committee, Santa Clara University, 2019-2022

Member, Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR), Santa Clara University, 2018-2020

Chair, Inclusive Excellence Postdoctoral Committee (Department of Anthropology, SCU), 2018-2019

Member, Bannan Institute on Gender and Justice, Santa Clara University, 2016-2018

Department Accepted Students Preview Days Representative, 2014-2016, 2019, 2022-2024

Faculty Co-Advisor (SCU Anthropology Student Club), 2014-2017, 2019-2021

Member, Tenure-Track Search Committee (Department of Anthropology), 2021-2022

Chair, Tenure-Track Search Committee (Department of Anthropology, SCU), 2016-2017

Faculty Senate Representative (Department of Anthropology, SCU), 2014-2016, Fall 2024