

Department of History
226 Bay State Road
Boston University
Boston, MA 02215.

(617) 353-8316 
siegelb@bu.edu 
benjaminsiegel.org 

BENJAMIN R. SIEGEL

- appointments** Associate Chair, Department of History, Boston University, January 2023–June 2025.
Associate Professor, Department of History, Boston University, 2021–present.
Visiting Fellow, Program in Agrarian Studies, Yale University, Spring 2019.
Assistant Professor, Department of History, Boston University, 2014–2021.
Graduate Fellow, Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies, 2013–2013.
Researcher, Indian Agricultural Research Institute, 2011–2012.
Researcher, Hong Kong University Centre for the Humanities & Medicine, Spring 2011.
- education** Ph.D, History, Harvard University, 2014.
Dissertation: *Independent India of Plenty: Food, Hunger, and Nation-Building in Modern India*.
Winner, Sardar Patel Prize for best doctoral dissertation on modern India, UCLA Center for India and South Asia.
A.M., History, Harvard University, 2010.
B.A., History, Yale University, 2007.
- publications** *Books*
The Ghost Ship: Pharmaceutical Opioids and Political Power in the Modern World (New York: Oxford University Press, forthcoming 2025)
Hungry Nation: Food, Famine, and the Making of Modern India (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).
Reviews in *Agricultural History* (forthcoming), *American Historical Review*, *Asian Affairs*, *Asian Studies Review*, *Economic Times [Mumbai]*, *Environmental History*, *Global Food History*, *Graduate Association for Food Studies*, *H-Environment*, *Indian Economic & Social History Review*, *Kommunikation und Fachinformation für die Geschichtswissenschaften*, *Journal of Agrarian Change*, *Journal of Asian Studies*, *Madison Historical Review*, *Il mestiere di storico: Rivista della Società Italiana per lo Studio della Storia Contemporanea*, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, *South Asian History and Culture*, *Studies in History* (forthcoming).
- Journal articles*
“‘Kans is King and the Cultivator is His Subject’: Weeds and Power in Indian Environmental History,” *Environmental History* 26, no. 1 (January 2021), pp. 102–126.
“The Kibbutz and the Ashram: Sarvodaya Agriculture, Israeli Aid, and the Global Imaginaries of Indian Development,” *The American Historical Review* 125, no. 3 (October 2020), pp. 1175–1204.

- “Beneficent Destinations: Global Pharmaceuticals and the Consolidation of the Modern Indian Opium Regime, 1907-2016,” *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 57, no. 3 (July-September 2020), pp. 327–362.
- “The Claims of Asia and the Far East: India and the FAO in the Age of Ambivalent Internationalism,” *The International History Review* 41, no. 2 (Spring 2019), pp. 427–450.
- “Asian Drama Revisited,” *Humanity* 8, no. 1 (Spring 2017), pp. 195–205.
- “Modernizing Peasants and ‘Master Farmers’: Progressive Agriculture in Early Independent India,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 37, no. 1 (May 2017), pp. 64–85.
- “Self-Help Which Ennobles a Nation’: Development, Citizenship, and the Obligations of Eating in India’s Austerity Years,” *Modern Asian Studies* 50, no. 3 (2016), pp. 975–1018.
- “Learning to Eat in a Capital City: Constructing Public Eating Culture in Delhi,” *Food, Culture, & Society* 13, no. 1 (March 2010), pp. 71–91.

Book chapters

- “Food and Nationalism in India,” Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Food Studies, forthcoming.
- “Woven, Mined, Milled, and Packed: The Global Destinies of Indian Commodities, 1500-present,” in *India in the World: 1500–Present*, eds. Nico Slate and Rajeshwari Dutt (New York: Routledge, 2023), 33-54.
- “The President’s Messenger: American Visions, Indian Citizens, and National Development in the Kennedy Years,” in *Globalizing the U.S. Presidency: Postcolonial Views of John F. Kennedy*, ed. Cyrus Schayegh (London: Bloomsbury, 2020), pp. 221–234.
- “The World Has Changed’: Development, Land Reform, and the Ethical Work of India’s Independence” in *The Postcolonial Moment in South and Southeast Asia*, eds. Gyan Prakash, Michael Laffan, and Nikhil Menon (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), pp. 201–219.
- “Fantastic Quantities of Food Grains’: Cold War Visions and Agrarian Fantasies in Independent India,” in *Negotiating Independence: New Directions in the History of Decolonization and the Cold War*, eds. Leslie James and Elisabeth Leake (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), pp. 21–42.

Journalism and occasional pieces

- “Shree Natnagar Shodh Samsthan, Sitamau, Madhya Pradesh,” *Archives of Economic Life in South Asia*, Centre for History and Economics, Cambridge University, April 16, 2019.
- “Wither Agriculture?: The Green Revolution at 50,” *Public Books*, January 14, 2019.
- “The US Opioid Crisis Started in India”, *Vice*, April 27, 2018.

- “World Food Day: 35 Years On, India Still Struggles Against Hunger,” *WION News / Zee TV*, October 16, 2016.
- “Before Malala,” *Marginalia Review of Books*, September 15, 2014.
- “The Multiple Ideas of India: Narendra Modi and the Meaning of Indian Secularism,” *Marginalia Review of Books*, May 27, 2014.
- “Raagtime,” *Civil Lines 6: New Writing from India*, eds. Achal Prabhala, Kai Friese and Mukul Kesavan (New Delhi: HarperCollins, 2012).
- “Green Revolution,” *Cultural Sociology of the Middle East, Asia, and Africa: An Encyclopedia*, eds. Andrea L. Stanton et al. (London: Sage, 2012).
- “Reluctantly Lahore,” *The Caravan* 4, no. 1 (January 2012).
- “Playing Host is Hard to Do,” *World Policy Journal* 27, no. 4 (Winter 2010/2011), pp. 59–66.
- “India’s Feel-Good Fast,” *World Policy Journal* blog, April 18, 2011.
- “Fighting Harassment on India’s Streets,” *Christian Science Monitor*, August 23, 2007.
- “Stressful Times for Chinese Students,” *Time.com*, June 12, 2007.
- “How to Kill the Tiger,” *Time Magazine*, July 30, 2006.
- “Sweet Nothing: the Triumph of Diet Soda,” *American Heritage* 57, no. 3 (June/July 2006), pp. 42–49.

Book reviews

- “Transplanting Modernity? New Histories of Poverty, Development, and Environment (eds. Thomas B. Robertson and Jenny Leigh Smith),” *British Journal for the History of Science*, forthcoming
- “Hurt Sentiments: Secularism and Belonging in South Asia (Neeti Nair),” *Journal of Church and State*, forthcoming
- “The Hunger of the Republic: Our Present in Retrospect (ed. Ashish Rajadhyaksha),” *Pacific Affairs*, 96, no. 1 (March 2023), pp. 185–187.
- “Lord Cornwallis is Dead: The Struggle for Democracy in the United States and India (Nico Slate),” *The American Historical Review* 127, no. 3 (2022), pp. 1565–1566.
- “Cooperative Rule. Community Development in Britain’s Late Empire (Aaron Windel),” *H-Soz-Kult*, October 13, 2022
- “On an Empty Stomach: Two Hundred Years of Hunger Relief (Tom Scott-Smith),” *Gastronomica* 22, no. 1 (Spring 2022), pp. 100–101.
- “Diet for a Large Planet: Industrial Britain, Food Systems, and World Ecology (Chris Otter),” *Environmental History* 26, no. 4 (October 2021), pp. 814–816.
- “Last Weapons: Hunger Strikes and Fasts in the British Empire, 1890-1948 (Kevin Grant),” *H-Environment*, April 2021.
- “Famine in the Remaking: Food System Change and Mass Starvation in Hawaii, Madagascar, and Cambodia (Stian Rice),” *Agricultural History*, 95, no 1 (Winter 2021), pp. 206–208.

- “The Great Agrarian Conquest: The Colonial Reshaping of a Rural World (Neeladri Bhattacharya),” *Social History* 34, no. 2 (2020), pp. 267–269.
- “People Power”: review essay on *Opium’s Long Shadow: From Asian Revolt to Global Drug Control* (Steffen Rimner), *The New Rambler Review*, December 2019.
- “From Farm to Fingers (ed. Kiranmayi Bhushi),” *Asian Ethnology* 78, no. 2 (2019), pp. 498–500.
- “Governing Islam: Law, Empire, and Secularism in Modern South Asia (Julia Stephens),” *Politics, Religion, and Ideology* 20, no. 3 (2019), pp. 395–397.
- “Empire and Ecology in the Bengal Delta: The Making of Calcutta (Debjani Bhattacharya),” *Environmental History* 24, no. 4 (October 2019), pp. 807–809.
- “Rethinking Revolutions: Soyabean, Choupals, and the Changing Countryside in Central India (Richa Kumar),” *Economic and Political Weekly* LII, no. 36 (September 9, 2017), pp. 36–38.
- “India At War: The Subcontinent and the Second World War (Yasmin Khan),” *The Historian* 80, no. 1 (Spring 2018), pp. 136–138.
- “Democracy Against Development: Lower-Caste Politics and Political Modernity in Postcolonial India (Jeffrey Witsoe),” *Contemporary South Asia* 22, no. 3 (Summer 2014), pp. 326–327.
- “Red Tape: Bureaucracy, Structural Violence, and Poverty in India (Akhil Gupta),” *Contemporary South Asia* 21, no. 4 (Winter 2013), pp. 104–105.
- “Poverty Amid Plenty in the New India (Atul Kohli),” *Contemporary South Asia* volume 20, no. 4 (Winter 2012), pp. 545–546.

Forthcoming writing

Introduction to Sahajanand Saraswati’s *Khet Mazdoor*, in the *Bloomsbury Anthology of Political Thought from the Global South*, ed. Daniel Elam, in progress.

selected
invited talks
since 2011

- “Automatic for the People?: Labor, Machines, and Ecology in Modern India,” (commentary: Professor Nasir Tyabji, formerly Professor and Director, Centre for Jawaharlal Nehru Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, India) New Political Economy Initiative, Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, May 21, 2024.
- “Automatic for the People?: Labor, Machines, and Ecology in Modern India,” Center for the Advanced Study of India (CASI), University of Pennsylvania, February 6, 2024.
- “Pain, Poppies, and Power: Writing Transnational Histories of Capitalism from an Indian Poppy Field,” Department of History, University of Basel, Switzerland, March 13, 2023.
- “Hooked: A Transnational History of the United States Opioid Crisis,” Department of History, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, February 24, 2022.

- Hungry Nation: Food, Famine, and the Making of Modern India* book talk, Pépin Lecture Series in Food Studies & Gastronomy, Boston University, March 26, 2021.
- Hungry Nation: Food, Famine, and the Making of Modern India* book talk, Dipartimento di Studi sull'Asia e sull'Africa Mediterranea, Università Ca' Foscari, Venice, Italy, March 22, 2021.
- "Markets of Pain: Opium and Agrarian Crisis in Modern India," Center for South Asia Fall Lecture Series, University of Wisconsin, Madison, October 3, 2019.
- "Markets of Pain: A Transitional History of the United States Opioid Crisis," Latin America in a Globalizing World Seminar, Johns Hopkins University, April 25, 2019.
- "Democracy and Development in Contemporary Bangladesh," Wellesley Association for South Asian Cultures Spring Series, Wellesley College, April 10, 2019.
- "The Bank and the Weed: Indian Agriculture and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development," 1818 Society World Bank History Thematic Group, World Bank, Washington DC, April 23, 2019.
- Hungry Nation: Food, Famine, and the Making of Modern India* book talk, South Asian Studies Council, Yale University, February 7, 2019.
- "Markets of Pain: Opioids, Agriculture, and Power in Modern Indian History," Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, January 29, 2019.
- "Poppy Politics: Science, Trade, and Medicine in Indian and American History," Maharaja Ranijt Singh College, Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India, January 10, 2019.
- "Markets of Pain: A Transnational History of the United States Opioid Crisis," Colloquium on Global History, Freie Universität, Berlin, December 17, 2018.
- "Markets of Pain: Poppy Politics and the Global Origins of the American Opioid Crisis," Seminar in Environmental and Agricultural History, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, December 7, 2018.
- "The Fall, Rise, and Fall of the Indian Opium Regime," Harvard University South Asia Workshop, November 28, 2018.
- "Markets of Pain: Poppy Politics and the Global Origins of the American Opioid Crisis," Agrarian Studies Colloquium, Yale University, October 26, 2018.
- "The International Origins of the United States Opioid Crisis," at *Humanities Approaches to the Opioid Crisis*, Boston University Center for the Humanities, October 13, 2018.
- Hungry Nation: Food, Famine, and the Making of Modern India* book panel (chair, Sunil Amrith, Harvard University; discussants: Rachel Berger, Concordia University, and Prakash Kumar, Penn State University), Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, September 24, 2018.
- "1971: East Pakistan and the Birth of Bangladesh," Wellesley Association for South Asian Cultures Spring Series, Wellesley College, April 19, 2018.

- “Hungry Nation: Food, Famine, and the Making of Modern India,” at India Political Economy Seminar, University of California, Berkeley, November 16, 2017.
- Keynote Address, “Hunger, Food, and Development in Modern India,” Educators for Teaching South Asia Annual Conference, Cambridge, Massachusetts, May 13, 2016.
- “Rights, Rationing, and the Envisioning of the Postcolonial City,” at *Urbanism, Exclusion and Change in South Asia*, Lahore University of Management Sciences, Lahore, Pakistan, March 5, 2016.
- “Food, Rights, and Hunger and the Making of Modern India,” Department of History, University of California, Berkeley, March 5, 2013.
- “How to Feed the Hungry State,” Department of History, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, January 31, 2013.
- “The Hungry State: Food and Nation in Twentieth-Century India,” *Feast and Famine* speaker series, Department of Nutrition, Food Studies, and Public Health, New York University, November 30, 2012.
- “More Grass than Corn: Indian Agricultural Development in Historical Context,” Department of History and Centre for the Humanities and Medicine, Hong Kong University, April 7, 2011.
- invited
workshop
presentations Panelist, Global Food Security Conference, Jackson School of Global Affairs, Yale University, April 1-2, 2025
- “How Pain Came to Matter: The Global Political Economy of the United States Opioid Crisis,” Colloquium on the History of Psychiatry and Medicine, Department of Postgraduate and Continuing Education, McLean Hospital and Center for the History of Medicine, Francis A. Countway Library of Medicine, May 16, 2024
- Book manuscript workshop for Gabriela Soto-Laveaga, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., July 24, 2023.
- “Confronting Capitalism” workshop, the New Institute, Hamburg, Germany, June 7-8, 2023.
- Book manuscript workshop for Prakash Kumar, Penn State University, State College, Pennsylvania, June 2, 2023.
- “Bengal, Revisited? India’s 1951 Food Crisis and the Quest for Self-Reliance,” *The British Empire and Colonial Famines: History, Culture, Critique*, Royal Society of Edinburgh Research Network Workshop, University of Edinburgh, Scotland, May 24, 2023.
- “Connective Commodities: Indian Narcotics in Transnational Twentieth-Century History,” *Building Global Research Networks in Medical History*, Discipline of World History, Shanghai University, November 11, 2021.
- Fellows’ conversation with Elisabeth Yorke, Sharanya Deepak, and Tansha Vohra, Serendipity Arts Food Lab Residency, Bangalore, India, November 1, 2021.

- Commentator, “Vietnamese Material Worlds and Environmental Challenges” panel, *Silences and Reverberations: Studying Historical and Contemporary Vietnam into the Future* conference, Boston University, May 28, 2021.
- “Feeding India after the Farmers’ Protests,” Global FOOD+ Symposium, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, February 26, 2021.
- Discussant for book talk on Andrew Rotter’s “Empires of the Senses: Bodily Encounters in Imperial India and the Philippines,” Global Decolonization Initiative, Boston University, December 15, 2020.
- “From Field to Capsule: Poppies and Power in Twentieth-Century Mandsaur District?,” *South Asia Unbound: Spaces and Scales of Internationalism* workshop, King’s College London / NIHSA - New International Histories of South Asia network, March 19, 2021.
- Commentator, “Commerce, Economic Ties, and Trans-local Exchange” panel, *Trans-regional Movements of Texts, Ideas, and People* conference, Harvard University, February 22, 2020.
- “The Future of South Asian Food Histories,” *The Past and Future of Food on the Indian Subcontinent: Identity and Cultural Heritage* workshop, K R Cama Oriental Institute, Mumbai, January 12, 2020.
- “Pain, Transnationality, and the Making of the United States Opioid Crisis,” at University College London, Stanford, UC Berkeley, UC Davis, and Boston University workshop on U.S. Global Connections, London, May 23, 2019.
- Discussant, Energy Humanities Workshop, Whitney Humanities Center, Yale University, March 30, 2019.
- “‘Except as Found Necessary for Medicine and Science’: The Fall and Rise of the Indian Opium Regime, 1935-1969,” at *Sovereignty, Economy and the Global Histories of Natural Resources*, Cambridge University, December 19, 2017.
- “Culinary Nationalism in Times of Scarcity: Visions of Plenty and Want in Independent India,” at *Culinary Nationalism in Asia*, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, April 1, 2017.
- “Remaking Rationing in Independent India,” at *Midnight’s Institutions: Rethinking Political Imaginations and Institutional Change after India’s Independence*, Yale University, April 23, 2016.
- “The JNU Row: A Conversation with Tanika Sarkar,” Harvard University, April 2, 2016.
- “On Asian Drama,” at Revisiting Gunnar Myrdal, *Humanity* / Harvard Law School Seminar, January 22, 2016.
- “Land, Labor, and Postcolonial Ethics,” *The Postcolonial Moment*, Princeton University, November 14, 2015.

- “The Indian Merchants’ Chamber and the Idioms of National Development,” at *The Business History of India and South Asia: Recent Trends in Research*, Harvard Business School, October 30, 2015.
- “Swadeshi Spaces / Sovereign Spaces: Scale and Time in the Indian Economic Imaginary” at *Spaces, Scales, and Routes: Region Formation in History and Anthropology*, Harvard University, April 30, 2015.
- “Jayaprakash Narayan and the Ethics of Counter-Development, at Jayaprakash Narayan Reconsidered, Harvard University, April 9, 2015.
- “Agriculture and the Politics of Labor in Nehruvian India,” at Global Midwest Workshop, Penn State University, April 12, 2015.
- Discussant, “Economies & the Reinvention of Space,” Yale South Asia Workshop, April 11, 2015.
- “Indian Independence and the Future of Food,” at Lost Futures in the History of European Empires (Part II), University of North Carolina Chapel Hill / King’s College London, September 14, 2014.
- “Internationalism and the Indian Food Problem,” at *FAO in a Global Context*, Institute for Global Studies, Basel, Switzerland, August 2014.
- “The Fat of the Land: Vegetable Ghee and the Ends of Indian Industry, 1925-1950,” *Fasting to Feasting: The Politics of Provisioning and Consumption*, at NYU Global South Asia Workshop, New York University, February 14, 2014.
- “The Dictator Officials are Losing the Business’: Indian Merchants and National Needs, 1955-65,” *Defining the Economy in Political Crisis: Revolution, Rupture and the Law*, Center for History and Economics, Harvard University, October 4, 2013.
- “Grains and Geopolitics’: American Grain, Soviet Expertise, and Cold War Agricultural Contestations in Nehruvian India,” at *Negotiating Independence*, Cambridge University, May 3, 2013.
- “Self-Help Which Ennobles a Nation’: Rights, Citizenship, and the Obligations of Eating in India’s Austerity Years,” Center for History and Economics workshop, Harvard University, October 12, 2012.
- “Meals for Millions: Food and Citizenship in India’s Scarcity Era,” *Technologies of Bureaucracy and State-Making*, Yale University South Asia Workshop, April 6, 2012.
- “Food, Agriculture, and the State in Modern Indian History,” American Institute of Indian Studies, Gurgaon, Haryana, India, January 1, 2012.
- annual
conference
presentations “Locating the Agrarian Subject in the “New History” of South Asian Food Politics,” Food History in South Asia panel, New England Conference of the AAS, Dartmouth College, November 2, 2019.
- Chair and discussant, “Eating in and out of South Asia: Dynamic Histories of Food in Modernity” panel, Madison South Asia Conference, October 18, 2019.

- “Rethinking Welfare,” in the “Rethinking the Roots of Democracy, Secularism, and Welfare” panel, Madison South Asia Conference, October 12, 2018.
- Narcotic Pasts and Futures in South Asia* panel (co-organizer with Mauricio Najarro), Madison South Asia Conference, October 12, 2018.
- “Race, Drugs, and Spies in the China Burma India Theater: World War II and the Rebirth of the Indian Opium Trade, in the “South Asia and the Second World War” symposium, Madison South Asia Conference, October 11, 2018.
- “Tiller, Owner, Soil: Land and the Indian Postcolonial Ethic,” in the “Postcolonial Moment: Political Economy and the Projects of Indian Nationhood” panel, Madison South Asia Conference, October 24, 2015.
- “Stakhanovites on the Ganges: Krishi Pandits and the Politics of Labor in Nehruvian India,” in the “Revisiting Development in Modern India: Science, Ethics and the Agricultural Landscape” panel, Association for Asian Studies Conference, Chicago, March 29, 2015.
- “Political Imaginaries of Food in a Hungry Decade,” in the “From Colonial to Postcolonial Imaginaries,” panel (co-organizer with Rohit De and Julia Stephens), Madison South Asia Conference, October 2014.
- “Cloth and the Calorie: Scarcity Regimes and Political Power in Independent India, 1947-1967,” in “The Problems and Possibilities of Want: Scarcity and the State in China, India, and Japan,” panel, American Society for Environmental History Conference, San Francisco, March 15, 2014.

- Campus Talks** Moderator, “Teaching as Community” panel, Boston University Faculty Forum, May 16, 2022.
- “End of Empires from India to Afghanistan,” Boston University Undergraduate History Association “Disruption and Destruction” series, October 21, 2021.
- Speaker on food justice, BU Jewish Leadership Team Social Justice Fellowship Seminar, BU Hillel, April 19, 2021.
- Speaker, Boston University Trustee Scholars Program Faculty Seminar, April 14, 2021.
- Panelist, book talk on *Interpreting Politics: Situated Knowledge, India, and the Rudolph Legacy* (eds. John Echeverri-Gent and Kamal Sadiq), Boston University Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies, April 12, 2021.
- Panelist, “Discussing History Outside of Academia,” Department of History Graduate Student Organization, Boston University, March 3, 2021.
- “How to Grow a Poppy,” Faculty Works in Progress Series, Department of History, Boston University, February 17, 2021.
- Panelist, “Publishing in the Humanities” panel, PhD Professional Development program, Professional Development and Postdoctoral Affairs Office, Boston University, December 9, 2020.

- Facilitator for Center for Teaching & Learning / Digital Learning & Innovation “Lightning Talk” on Long-Block and Large Classes in the Remote Environment, Center for Teaching & Learning, Boston University July 17, 2020.
- Panelist, Hub & Pub Series: Conversations on Teaching & Learning, Center for Teaching & Learning, Boston University, January 27, 2020.
- Invited panelist, Future of Food panel, International Education Week, Boston University, November 19, 2019.
- Discussant, “[Beyond the Headlines: Pakistan-India Relations Under Khan and Modi](#),” lecture by Nasim Zehra, Boston University Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies, September 26, 2019.
- “[Internationalizing the United States Opioid Crisis](#),” Annual Gerald and Deanne Gitner Family College of Arts & Sciences Lecture, Boston University, September 20, 2018.
- “Markets of Pain: American Bodies and Indian Pharmaceuticals in an Age of Distress,” Boston University CAS Dean’s Advisory Board Dinner, April 27, 2017.
- Discussant, “Researching the Real World: Practical Strategies for Field Work and Career Building,” Boston University Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies, November 1, 2016.
- Discussant, “Changing Food Systems in the United States and China,” Boston University Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies and Center for the Study of Asia, March 19, 2015.
- “Food and the Indian Political Imagination,” Boston University Center for the Study of Asia, November 7, 2014.
- Chair, *Economic Growth and its Discontents in Post-Independence India*, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs Undergraduate Associates’ Thesis Conference, Harvard University February 8, 2014.
- “Why Food?” *Big Ideas*, Harvard University South Asia Institute, April 4, 2013.
- “Two Blades of Grass: Building Indian Agriculture, 1905-2010,” Center for History and Economics, Harvard University, November 30, 2010.
- “Food and Urban India,” Harvard South Asia Workshop, October 8, 2008.
- media
coverage
- Steve Holt, “[What is the Greatest Threat to Human Health from Climate Change? Three CAS experts weigh in on the human cost of our global environmental crisis](#),” BU Arts and Sciences *The Big Question*, September 23, 2022
- Vikram Doctor, “[Around the Bowl in 75 Years: Time for a different approach to food production](#),” *Economic Times [Mumbai]*, August 14, 2022.
- “[Food in Post-Independence India: Still Hungry After All These Years](#),” guest on *Eat This! Podcast*, June 21, 2021.

Kat J. McAlpine, "Tracking the Path of the Opioid Crisis: BU Historian Benjamin Siegel travels to a tiny poppy farm in India to find the roots of a global crisis," *Bostonia*, Spring 2020.

Vikram Doctor, "Feeding the Republic," *Economic Times [Mumbai]*, January 26, 2020, pp. 14-15.

Interview on *Hungry Nation: Food, Famine, and the Making of Modern India* on *New Books Network: South Asian Studies Channel*, October 5, 2018.

Panelist, "#TKOP (The Kinds Of Pain)," *Syntalk* (Mumbai), September 16, 2017.

grants,
prizes,
& awards

Prizes and Awards

Templeton Award for Excellence in Student Advising and Mentoring, Boston University College of Arts and Sciences, 2022.

Gitner History Prize, Department of History, Boston University College of Arts and Sciences, 2021.

Frank and Lynne Wisneski Award for Excellence in Teaching, Boston University College of Arts and Sciences, 2020.

Sardar Patel Prize for best doctoral dissertation on modern India, UCLA Center for India and South Asia, 2014.

Grants and Fellowships

Pardee Center Faculty Research Fellowship, \$10,000, Boston University, 2024-5.

Travel Award, Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation, Smithsonian National Museum of American History, 2023.

Junior Fellowship, Boston University Center for the Humanities, Spring 2018.

[American Council of Learned Societies Fellowship](#), Fall 2017.

Graduate Fellow, Harvard Academy for International Affairs, 2013–2014.

Graduate Student Associate, Harvard University South Asia Initiative, 2012–2013.

American Institute of Indian Studies Junior Fellowship, 2011–2012.

Clive Fellowship, Harvard University, 2011–2012.

Harvard University South Asia Initiative Research Grants, 2009, 2010, and 2012.

Harvard University Asia Center Research Grant, 2009.

Homer J. Hagedorn Graduate Fellowship Fund, Harvard University, 2009–11.

Graduate Student Fellowship, Harvard University, 2008–2013.

Fox International Fellowship, Jawaharlal Nehru University, 2007–2008.

professional
service,
training, and
memberships

Article manuscript reviewer, *The American Historical Review*, *Arcadia: Explorations in Environmental History*, *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East*, *Global Food History*, *Humanity*, *History Compass*, *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, *Itinerario*, *Journal of Asian Studies*, *Journal of the Pakistan*

Historical Society, Journal of Social History. Journal of War and Culture Studies, Left History, Modern Asian Studies, South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies, ongoing.

Book manuscript and proposal reviewer, Bloomsbury, Cambridge University Press, University of Chicago Press, Columbia University Press, Macmillan / Red Globe Press, Leiden University Press, Lynne Rienner Publishers, the New Press, Princeton University Press, Routledge, Springer Publishing, Yale University Press, ongoing.

External reviewer for *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* (German Research Foundation), Indian Institute of Advanced Study (Shimla), Mellon International Dissertation Research Fellowship, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, ongoing.

Member, American Historical Association (AHA), Association for Asian Studies (AAS), Society for the Advancing the History of South Asia, ongoing.

Member, Local Arrangements Committee, American Association for the History of Medicine 100th Anniversary Meeting, 2023–2025.

External consultant on South Asian history and genetic data, *Ancestry.com*, Spring 2020–present.

Boston University representative, American Institute of Indian Studies, Fall 2019–present.

External promotion reviews, Rhode Island School of Design, Fordham University.

External consultant, K.R. Cama Oriental Institute, Mumbai, India, 2019.

Participant, Adobe Catalyst Program, BU Center for Teaching and Learning, Winter 2018–2019.

Country expert witness (India) for United States Executive Office for Immigration Review, Boston College Law School Immigration Clinic, Fall 2017.

Coordinator, United Nations Foundation Digital History Project, 2009–2010.

Alumni admissions interviewer, Yale University, 2008–present.

Reporter-Researcher, *Time Magazine*, Hong Kong, SAR China, 2007.

Intern, *Time Magazine*, South Asia Bureau, New Delhi, India, 2006.

departmental,
college, and
university
service

Affiliate Faculty, Institute for Global Sustainability, Boston University, 2023–present.

Member, Department of History Graduate Admissions Committee, 2023–present.

Member, Department of History Curriculum Committee, 2023–present.

Member, Boston University Hub Council, 2022–2024.

Steering Committee Member, Center for Innovation in Social Science, 2021–2024.

Judge, Three Minute Thesis Competition, Boston University, Fall 2023

Affiliate Faculty, Global Decolonization Initiative, Pardee School of Global Studies, 2021–2022.

Member, History Department Racial Equity & Diversity Committee, 2020–present.

Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program Faculty Advisory Committee, 2019–present.

Faculty Affiliate, Boston University Global Development Policy Center, 2019–present.

Faculty Mentor, Environmental History Graduate Student Working Group, Department of History, 2019–present.

Chair, East Asia Search Committee, Department of History, 2021–2022.

Member, CAS Teaching Awards Committee, Spring 2021.
 Convener / lead, Hub Teaching Excellence Faculty Fellows Program, Center for Teaching and Learning, 2019–2021.
 Member, Dean’s History Chair Consultation Committee, Fall 2019.
 History Department Liaison, CAS Summer Term, 2019–2021.
 Member, steering committee, Boston University Forum on the Opioid Crisis, 2017–2018.
 Member, planning committee, Boston University Study Abroad in India, 2017–2018.
 Co-planner, History Department Internship Program, 2016–2017.
 Faculty author, South Asia Library Collection Grant, Mugar Memorial Library, 2017.
 Member, Academic Conduct Committee, BU College of Arts and Sciences, 2016–2021.
 Program development lead, Asian Studies Minor proposal, 2016–2017.
 Board member (elected), Boston University Center for the Study of Asia, 2015–2021.
 Director of Undergraduate Studies, Department of History, Boston University, 2015–2017.
 Member, Boston University Department of History Curriculum Committee, 2015–2017.
 Co-convener, Boston University Tertulia Junior Faculty Symposium, 2015–2016.
 History Department representative, CAS Academic Credit Committee, 2014–2015.

student
supervision

Primary doctoral supervision

Niveditha (Nive) Senthilvel, History, Boston University, began 2022, in progress.
 Ayushi Chauhan, History, Boston University, began 2021, in progress.

Doctoral committee member

Ethan Key, Department of History, Boston University, May 2025
 Fathimath Anan (Anu) Ahmed, “Situating Selves: ‘Self-Illness’ (*Nafsānī Bali*) and Living Ethical ‘Modern’ Lives in Contemporary Male, Maldives,” Department of Anthropology, Boston University, April 2024.
 Iris Yellum, “Revaluing Viability: Science and Legumes in Indian Agriculture,” South Asian Studies, Harvard University, May 2022.
 Elizabeth Hameeteman, “Pipe Parity: Desalination, Development, and the Quest for Water in the 1950s and 1960s,” Department of History, Boston University, July 2021.
 Philip Rotz, “Vectors and Viruses in Southeast Africa and the Indian Ocean World: *Aedes aegypti*, Chikungunya, and Dengue in Durban, Natal,” Department of History, Boston University, August 2020.
 Kristen Carey, “Ceding Control: The Origins, Implementation, and Breakdown of Population Management in Tanzania, 1948-1999,” Department of History, Boston University, March 2020.

External examination of doctoral thesis

Maithili Tagare, "Food Matters: Shaping New Gastronomic Culture(s) in Western India, 1875-1947," Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar, February 2025

General examinations for doctoral students

Aixin Yi, History of Development and Modernization, History, Boston University, Spring 2024.

Stan Debruyn, History of Imperialism, History, Boston University, Spring 2023.

Pritika Sharma, South Asian History, Anthropology, Boston University, Spring 2023.

Rachel Monsey, Imperialism, History, Boston University, Spring 2022.

Warren Dennis, Global Environmental History, History, Boston University, Spring 2022.

Cole Parker, Comparative Global Right-Wing Movements, History, Boston University, Fall 2021.

Courtney Smith, British Empire, History, Boston University, Spring 2021.

Henry Tonks, Global Histories of Economics and Development, 1940s to present, History, Boston University, Spring 2021.

Ethan Key, Indian Ocean History, History, Boston University, Fall 2020.

Fathimath, (Anu) Anan Ahmed, South Asian History, Anthropology, Boston University, Spring 2020.

Hafsa Arain, South Asian History, Anthropology, Boston University, Spring 2020.

Thomas John Sojka, British Empire, History, Boston University, Spring 2019.

Jeanna Kinnebrew, Gender and Reproduction in South Asia, History, Boston University, Spring 2018.

Cari Babitzke, Law, Violence, and the Colonial State, History, Boston University, Fall 2017.

Agnes Burt, British Empire and South Asia, History, Boston University, Spring 2016.

Master's theses supervision

Giselle Kennedy Lord, "Kibbi and Kinship: Lebanese Home Cooking in Latin America as a Medium for Memory, Kinship, and the Preservation of Culture," Master of Liberal Arts in Gastronomy (Second Reader), Fall 2018.

Lucy Valena, 'From Fruitcake to Foam: Commodity Fetishism, 'Tradition,' and the Evolution of the Wedding Cake,' Master of Liberal Arts in Gastronomy, Fall 2015.

Undergraduate supervision

Kaasinath Balagurunath, senior honors thesis, Department of History, Boston University, Spring 2023.

- Julian Tran, "Chinese Americans' Sociological and Political Contribution to the Changing Global Order," senior honors thesis, Pardee School of International Relations, Boston University, Spring 2022.
- Maneesha Khalaе, "Water Wars: How Is Climate Change, Specifically Water Scarcity, Affecting Existing Dynamics Between India and Its Neighbors?," senior honors thesis, Pardee School of International Relations, Boston University, Spring 2021.
- Mugdha Gurram, "Secular Justice: Human Rights at the Nexus of Indian National Security and Criminal Justice," Keystone Thesis, Kilachand Honors College, Boston University, Spring 2021.
- Kaasinath Balagurunath, "Physicians' Approaches to the Problem of Pain, 1980s to the Present," UROP Humanities Scholars Program Project, Boston University, Summer 2020.
- Isha Pawar, "What Was 'The Future?': Economics, Environment, and Resource Use in Modern Indian History," UROP Humanities Scholars Program Project, Summer 2019.
- Tenaya N. Goldsen, "Al-Huda: A Study of Revivalist Movements and a Window into the Al-Huda Institute," senior honors thesis, Department of Religion, Boston University, Spring 2017.
- Aisha Chandraker, "Casting Light on Society: Cire-Perdue Bronzes of the Chola Period," senior thesis, Boston University Academy, Spring 2017.
- Fred Schmidt, "Oranges, Caracul Sheep, and Porcelain Teeth: Capital, Capacity, and Economic Development during the Formative Interwar *Yishuv* of 1920–1939," senior honors thesis, Department of History, Boston University, Spring 2016.
- Sydney Hou, "A New Lens: Understanding Taiwanese Identity Through Food," senior honors thesis, Department of History, Boston University, Spring 2016.
- Aabir Pablo Das, "India's Look East Policy: The Opportunities of a Democratic Myanmar," senior honors thesis, Pardee School of International Relations, Boston University, Spring 2016.
- Marlene Stoute, "Development through FTAs: Comparing Panama's Promise with Chile's Experience," senior honors thesis, Pardee School of International Relations, Boston University, Spring 2016.
- Harper Sutherland, "Royalty in Transition," senior honors thesis, Department of South Asian Studies, Harvard University, Spring 2014.

Boston University

courses
taught
2014-on

- HI200: The Historian's Craft
 HI234: Introduction to India and South Asia (BU Hub)
 HI343: Taste, Culture, and Power: A Global History of Food (BU Hub)
 HI347: Bodies, Drugs, and Healing: A Global History of Medicine (BU Hub)
 HI401: Senior Honors Thesis Supervision

- HI500: Getting Around: Transportation & Capitalism (BU Hub), fall 2024
- HI525: Development in Historical Perspective (BU Hub)
- HI526: Poverty and Democracy (BU Hub)
- HI801: The Historian's Craft (Graduate Proseminar in Historical Methods), spring 2024
- HI908: Directed Readings in English History
- HI987: Directed Readings in South Asian History

- languages**
- English (native)
 - Hindi and Urdu (Advanced coursework, Harvard University)
 - Italian (CEFR B1 certificate, Università di Pavia Centro Linguistico, 2022)
 - Hebrew (advanced coursework, Yale University)
 - French (approximately B1-B2 level)
 - Spanish (Reading and basic conversational ability)
- personal**
- United States citizen
 - Italian citizen
 - Married, one daughter

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