

People and Cultures of South Asia Spring 2015

BLB 010; M/W/F 9 – 9:50 am

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Description

This course introduces core themes in culture and society in South Asia. Topics include the varied expressions of kinship, gender, and everyday life; religions, nationalism, and identity; and the influence of historical and global forces on the region. The readings in the course will provide us with a general ethnographic background on South Asia, as well as specific examples to analyze and compare for specific ethnographic content and conceptual arguments. The broad-ranging essay collection of Mines and Lamb, (eds.) - “Everyday Life in South Asia” will be accompanied by research articles and a variety of films to help us understand how members of the culturally diverse population of this important world region live and act in their life-worlds. This is a discussion- and participation-oriented class. Assessment criteria are based upon your active contribution to class learning as well as take-home exams and a research paper.

Objectives

1. To enable students to understand the dynamics of various social, political and cultural themes within South Asian societies
2. To help students to develop a critical perspective on the contemporary discourses on South Asia

Required Readings

1. Mines, Diane P., and Sarah Lamb, eds., *Everyday Life in South Asia*, Indiana U. Press, 2010 (second edition)
2. Malala Yousafzai’s (2013) “I am Malala: The girl who stood up for education and was shot by the Taliban”
3. Amitav Ghosh’s (1998) “The Shadow Lines”
4. Readings posted for each class on Blackboard.

Assignments and Grading

1. Attendance and Participation: 15% of your grade
2. South Asia geography and history test: 10% of your grade
3. Take-Home Mid-term Exam: 25% of total grade
4. Take-Home Final Exam: 25% of total grade
5. Media Analysis Paper: 25% of total grade

All grades will be assigned based on the following grading scale:

90-100% A
80-89% B

70-79%	C
60-69%	D
>60%	F

Attendance and Participation Grade: Participation and attendance are a vital part of your learning experience in this discussion-oriented class. Even though it is 15% of your grade, if you do not come to class and participate, the other 85% of your grade will also suffer as a result. Attendance means that you arrive to class on time with the necessary materials (please bring your texts to class). Participation means that you pay attention to the lecture/discussion, and contribute one pertinent question to class discussion in each class. I will take note of who participated in discussions at the end of every class. Your participation/attendance grade is based on these notes, but is a subjective decision I make at the end of the semester. If you come to class every day on time and participate by contributing the question and engaging in class discussion you will receive full credit for attendance and participation. If you are absent or late for six or more classes, you will lose all of your participation/attendance points. You will also lose your daily points for attendance and participation if you are sending text messages during class or not paying attention. In the event you are absent, you are accountable for material covered during class time and any announcements or changes made to the assignment and class schedule. I would appreciate knowing in advance that you're not able to come to class and genuinely want to know about illnesses or other conflicts so that I may help and support you; however, I do not distinguish between "excused" or "unexcused" absences. An absence is an absence: you're either here or you're not. Please try to come to class on time. Arriving to class ten minutes after class begins may be considered an absence. You are expected to come to class every day having read the assignments and prepared to discuss them. You are also responsible for any assignments due in class. I expect you to speak frequently and often in order to facilitate your own learning and add to the class discussion.

Your voice is valuable and everyone will benefit from your participation!

During the class period you will be evaluated on your ability to:

- Ask relevant and productive questions about the readings
- Express your reaction as a reader
- Engage with and thoughtfully respond to other student's comments/opinions
- Participate in small group discussions.

It is highly recommended that for each reading, you fill out a Reading Summary Sheet (Please download from Blackboard and make copies). These will help you contribute to classroom discussion and keep ideas of the readings clear. For some classes, you will be required to fill the Reading Summary Sheet and hand it to me at the end of class. These sheets will contribute towards your attendance and participation grade.

South Asia Geography and History Test: This will be a multiple-choice test given to you in class towards the end of January or beginning of February. I will announce the test date a week in advance.

Take-Home Exams (Mid-Term: Distributed Feb 24th, Due March 7th and Final: Distributed April 28th, Due May 5th): Each exam will include two conceptual and analytical questions, requiring responses in the form of 2-3 page essays. There will be options you may choose from. You are not permitted to discuss the questions or answers with anyone after the exam is distributed and before you turn it in. UNT's academic integrity policy applies. You may use any classroom readings and notes you have taken. Because of the format of the exams, you may not use quotations in your answers longer than one line of text. Please paraphrase and cite! Please see the required format guidelines for answering the exam questions below*.

Media Analysis PAPER: Pick an advertisement, news article, television show episode or piece thereof, a work of fiction, or a personal experience that you can explain in about a paragraph. You would need to submit this paragraph in class on **February 14th**. Explain how your chosen material represents your developing understanding of South Asian cultures and people and how you think it is imagined in popular discourse. What assumptions are made about the people and cultures of South Asia? How does the piece further the understanding of the people and cultures of South Asia or inhibits it? Your paper should have an introduction that explains what you will analyze. I expect that

you will engage with course material in the body of your paper (parenthetical notation is fine). Your analysis should be about 2-3 double-spaced pages. Please provide/bring the source (or url) to class on **February 26th and 28th** for a brief presentation and discussion. You will be graded on the clarity of your analysis, your ability to demonstrate understanding of class material including correct usage of terminology, and your ability to complete the work on time. The dates for submitting the final project is **April 14th**. Please check the guidelines below* for submitting the paper. Late papers will lose points accordingly.

***Required Format Guidelines for Exams and Paper**

All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. You must submit a paper copy – no electronic submissions, please. Without exception, you must use the following guidelines:

- Times New Roman font
- 12 point
- Whole document must be double-spaced
- 1 inch margins on all sides
- Page numbers centered at the bottom of each page (i.e., in footer)
- A title can be included on the first line of the document
- Left header on first page only should contain full name and course title
- All other headers should be blank
- Staple the document in the upper left corner

Bibliography Format: Written assignments that include references to sources such as books, newspaper articles, academic articles, institutional reports, and industry websites and/or reports **must** include a bibliography at the end of the document (not included in page count). The bibliography must contain all sources cited in the text, and only those sources.

All citations must be in-text parenthetical citations, such as (Jain 2013). Direct quotes must include the page number, such as (Jain 2013: 354).

Bibliographical citations should be formatted as follows.

Book or Report

Author. Year. Title. City: Publisher or Institution.

Academic Article

Author. Year. Title. Journal Name Volume #(Issue #):Pages.

Newspaper Article

Author. Year. Title. Newspaper Name, Month Day, Page.

Electronic Document

Organization. Year. Title. Web Address.

Grading Criteria for Exams and Paper

Written assignments will be graded according to the general criteria described below. Written assignments must:

- Be written in a clear and concise manner
 - Directly address the questions that are asked in the assignment

 - Present supportive materials to illustrate arguments

 - Have coherent paragraphs with topical sentences and main ideas

 - Be proofread to avoid spelling and grammatical errors
- A Range
- Excellent in every way
 - Ambitious and perceptive

 - Comprehensive range of relevant evidence used

 - Thorough understanding with an insightful and creative analysis

 - Clear, fluent, integrated, and focused

B Range

- Excellent in some areas or high quality in all
- Good understanding of basic principles and relevant evidence
- Coherent and logical argument showing analytical ability
- Ideas are solid and progressively explored
- Some parts may require more analysis
- Too little evidence may be presented
- May be lacking in creativity or coherence
- May include some grammatical errors

C Range

- Sound understanding demonstrated with some analysis
- Basic requirements have been fulfilled
- Problems with structure or use of evidence
- Unclear or awkward language
- Unclear conception or lack of focus
- May be more summary of materials, not thoughtful engagement with ideas
- May consist mainly of a personal opinion rather than analysis

D Range

- Basic understanding of some issues
- Major problems in aims, structure, use of evidence, language, or other areas
- Analysis limited in depth and breadth, or no analysis
- Inadequately presented and disorganized structure
- Superficial and of low quality in a number of areas

COURSE POLICIES

1. WITHDRAWAL: If you are unable to complete this course you must officially withdraw by the University-designated date (for a “W” with instructor approval). Withdrawing from a course is a formal procedure that YOU must initiate. I cannot do it for you. If you simply stop attending and do not withdraw, you will receive a performance grade, usually an “F.” Your primary responsibility as a student is to master the material presented in class and do the readings. This is an easily achieved objective. Come to class and do the reading! At times concepts or issues raised in class might be unclear. Students come from a variety of backgrounds and have various strengths and weaknesses. If you have any questions or feel unsure about any class material, see me or the TA during office hours as soon as you realize a problem. We will work together to find a solution. DON’T wait until the end of the semester. Please realize that my goal as an instructor is not just to grade, evaluate, and test, but to help you gain a valuable life perspective to carry outside the class, into whatever you do.

2. ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR: Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students’ opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the class and the

instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.unt.edu/csrr.

3. EXTRA CREDIT: No extra credit opportunities will be given, under any circumstances. I am not responsible for making sure that you receive a given grade, even if you need that grade to maintain financial aid, health insurance, university enrollment, etc... If this is the position you are in, communicate with me to make sure that you know how to study.

4. E-MAIL 1.0: The best way to reach me is via email, and I require 24 hours to respond to any emails sent between Monday and Friday. Over the weekends and on holidays I require 48 hours to respond. **Please include the name of the course you are taking with me in the body of your email.** I have many students, and cannot remember which class each individual student is in. If you do not include your course information in your email, my response to you will be delayed because I have to take extra time finding out what class you are in, and uncovering more information about your situation/your request. **If you email me with a question that the syllabus answers, I will not reply to you.**

5. E-MAIL 2.0: Make sure that you use your unt.edu e-mail address. If you do not regularly check this e-mail, **FORWARD** it to your preferred address (such as gmail, Hotmail, or yahoo). You will be held responsible for knowing any information sent to your unt address. **DO NOT use the message system within Blackboard Learn.**

6. ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT: The Department of Anthropology does not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or helping others to cheat. I am furthermore of a mind that your integrity as a person is ALWAYS worth more than getting an "A" in one course – choosing to not cheat and perhaps get a lower grade is choosing to be a person of whom you can be proud. Students suspected of any of these will be provided the opportunity for a hearing; a guilty finding will merit an automatic "F" in the course. For information on the University's policies regarding academic integrity and dishonesty, see the UNT Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, <http://www.unt.edu/csrr/>.

7. ADA: The Anthropology Department does not discriminate based on an individual's disability, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Our program provides academic adjustments or help to individuals with disabilities, and attempts will be made to meet all certified requirements. Please see me if you have a documented disability so that appropriate arrangements can be made to help you get the most out of this class.

8. TURN OFF YOUR PHONE: (if you must keep it on, please set it to silent, NOT vibrate). Anyone seen texting will be asked to leave the classroom.

9. READINGS: Readings for each class are listed in the course schedule below. Most readings are from your textbook (listed as Mines&Lamb) and available on Blackboard (listed as Bb). The readings I post on Blackboard will be identified by the author's last name and year of publication. You are required to read the assigned readings **BEFORE** each class. I will post the class presentations (ppt), if any, on Blackboard at the end of the week.

I reserve the right to change the syllabus (and probably will) as the semester progresses. You will be responsible for in-class announcements made about syllabus changes.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Part One: What is South Asia? Geography, History, Imagination

Date & Topic	Readings
January 21: What is South Asia?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the course • Desis are everywhere! http://sepiamutiny.com/blog/2012/03/08/desis-are-everywhere/ • Desis are growing http://sepiamutiny.com/blog/2011/11/28/its-confirmed-desis-are-growing/#more-7854 • http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desi • South Asia – Geography http://www.essential-humanities.net/world-history/south-asia/#geography

January 23:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film: “The Empire of the Spirit” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Lex_eMC6wE
January 26:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBC South Asia profiles http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-12480707 • Desi traditions in Philly http://articles.philly.com/2011-07-03/news/29733219_1_indian-churches-immigrant-physician-training • Himalayan American http://caamedia.org/blog/2011/08/09/i-think-i%E2%80%99m-himalayan-american%E2%80%A6/ • History South Asia http://dart.columbia.edu/southasia/timeline/index.html • India in popular imagination http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/11/11/what-india-can-teach-the-n_4220142.html
January 28: South Asia Imagined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mannur (2009) “Introduction: Food Matters” (Bb) • Mannur and Sahni (2011) “What can brown do for you?”(Bb) • http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UnqYjKm4y0E
ASSIGNMENT	South Asia in Popular Imagination: Media Analysis Paper (Important dates Feb 14 th , Feb 26 th and 28 th , April 14 th)

Part Two: Everyday Lives – Family, Life Course, Gender

January 30:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mines&Lamb 1-25
February 2: Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excerpts From Raheja and Gold’s “Listen to the Heron’s Words” (Bb) • Film: Dadi’s Family
February 4: Joint families and extended families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excerpts From Raheja and Gold’s “Listen to the Heron’s Words” (Bb)
February 6:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thornton and Fricke (1987) “Social Change and the Family” (Bb) • Discussion: film and readings • Mines&Lamb 275-287
February 9: Families in flux	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mines&Lamb 50-61 • Srinivas (2006) “As Mother Made It” (Bb) • http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d_C6Q9KLJbs • When daycare slips into night care http://india.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/03/27/when-daycare-slips-into-night-care/?_r=0 http://www.dnaindia.com/bangalore/report-day-care-centres-branch-out-to-nights-in-bangalore-1730718
February 11: Marriages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donner (2002): “One’s Own Marriage”(Bb) • Mines&Lamb 110-123
February 13:	Film “Great Indian Marriage Bazaar”

February 16:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dave 2012 “Matchmakers and cultural compatibility”(Bb) • Discussion: film and readings
February 18: Life Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mines&Lamb 62-74 • Cohen 1995 “Old age in Benaras”(Bb)
February 20: Masculinities, Femininities and Queer Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mines&Lamb 40-49 • Abraham 2002 “Bhai-behen...”(Bb)
February 23:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film: Queens! Destiny of Dance <p>MEDIA ANALYSIS PAPER PARAGRAPH DUE</p>
February 25:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mines&Lamb 124-144
February 27: Rethinking Gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mines&Lamb 26-39, 80-93
March 2:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diamond Smith et al 2008 “Too many girls”(Bb) • I am Malala 1-31

Part Three: Everyday Life – Religion, Communities, Nation-Making

March 4:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mines&Lamb 309-311 • Hirschkind and Mahmood 2002 “Feminism Taliban”(Bb) • I am Malala 32-57 <p>MID-TERM DISTRIBUTED</p>
March 6:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am Malala 58-107 • Mines&Lamb 262-274 <p>MEDIA ANALYSIS PAPER PRESENTATIONS</p>
March 9:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am Malala 111-164 <p>MEDIA ANALYSIS PAPER PRESENTATIONS</p>
March 11:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am Malala 165-217
March 13:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am Malala 218-260 <p>MID-TERM TAKE-HOME EXAM DUE</p>
S P R I N G B R E A K	
March 23: Imagining the Nation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am Malala 261-313 • Discussion
March 25:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Runkle 2004 “Making Miss India”(Bb) • Film “The World Before Her”
March 27:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mines&Lamb 343-353 • Film “The World Before Her” • Discussion
March 30: Caste in South Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-term due • Mines&Lamb 145-179
April 1: Living Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mines&Lamb 219-249, 290-308
April 3:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mines&Lamb 328-342 • Film TBA

Part Four: Borders, Belonging, Diaspora, Globalization – Transitions in South Asia

April 6:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mines&Lamb 314-327 • The Shadow Lines 1-31
April 8:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weiner 1993 “Unwanted Peoples” • The Shadow Lines 32-68
April 10:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Shadow Lines 68-112

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Film Midnight's Children/
April 13:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Shadow Lines 115-176
April 15:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Shadow Lines 176-210
April 17:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Shadow Lines 210-252 • Film Midnight's Children/
April 20: Globalizing South Asia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mines&Lamb 399-403 • Mathur 2010 "Shopping Malls Credit Cards"(Bb) • Mines&Lamb 421-435 <p>MEDIA ANALYSIS PAPER DUE</p>
April 22:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mines&Lamb 371-383 • Film and Kalra 2004 "The Political Economy of the Samosa"(Bb)
April 24: Diaspora	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mines&Lamb 472-486 • Mines&Lamb 461-471
April 27:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brettell 2005 "Asian Indian Immigrants in Dallas"(Bb) • Parajuly – short story
April 29:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excerpts from Sharma 2010 "Hip-Hop Desis"(Bb)
May 1:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arora 2007 "Rituals of Queer Diaspora"(Bb) • Film – Chutney Popcorn
May 4:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus Revision • FINAL TAKE-HOME EXAM DISTRIBUTED
May 6:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maira 2010 "Citizenship and Dissent"(Bb) • Reluctant Fundamentalist
May 13:	FINAL TAKE-HOME EXAM DUE BY 8AM

(Acknowledgement: Thanks to Dr. Anubha Sood for sharing her original design of this syllabus.)