

SARAH BESKY

ILR School
Cornell University
sb2626@cornell.edu

363 Ives Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853
www.sarahbesky.info

EDUCATION

2012 Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of Anthropology
2006 M.A., University of Wisconsin-Madison, Department of Anthropology
2003 B.A., Connecticut College; New London, CT

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2024 - Professor of the Anthropology of Work, Department of Global Labor & Work. ILR School, Cornell University
 Graduate Faculty in Anthropology and Development Studies
 Affiliations: South Asia Program, Environment & Sustainability

2023 - 2026 Director, South Asia Program, Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies, Cornell University

2020 - 2024 Associate Professor, Department of Global Labor & Work. ILR School, Cornell University

2015 - 2020 Charles Evans Hughes 1881 Assistant Professor of Anthropology & International and Public Affairs. Department of Anthropology and Watson Institute, Brown University

2012 - 2015 Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology and School of Natural Resources and Environment. University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

2012 - 2015 Postdoctoral Fellow, Michigan Society of Fellows

PUBLICATIONS

Books

2020. *Tasting Qualities: The Past and Future of Tea*. Oakland: University of California Press. Atelier: Ethnographic Inquiry for the Twenty-First Century.

Reviewed in: [Allegra Laboratory](#) (Book Symposium, October 2020); *American Anthropologist*; *American Ethnologist* 49:1; *Anthropological Quarterly* 95:1; *Anthropology of Work Review* (March 2022); *CHOICE* (January 2021); *Digest: A Journal of Foodways & Culture* 9:1; *Food, Culture, and Society* 24:3; *Nature* vol. 579; *Isis* 112:2; *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 52:1; *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 27:3; *Organizational Studies* (July 2022); *Tea Journey Magazine* (July 2020); *Times Literary Supplement* (August 21, 2020); *The Lamp Magazine* (May 2021)

2014. *The Darjeeling Distinction: Labor and Justice on Fair-Trade Tea Plantations in India*. Berkeley: University of California Press. California Studies in Food and Culture.

---- Winner, 2014 Society for Economic Anthropology (SEA) Book Award

---- Honorable Mention, 2015 Society for Anthropology of Work Book Award

---- 2018. Mandarin translation of *The Darjeeling Distinction* with new preface. Translated by Huaqing Huang. Tsinghua University Press.

Reviewed in: [Allegra Laboratory](#) (May 2015); *Asian Ethnology* 78:1; *American Anthropologist* 117:1; *American Ethnologist* 42:3; *Comparative Labor Law & Policy Journal* 33; *European Bulletin of Himalayan Research* 52; *Food & Foodways* 25:1; *Gastronomica* 15:1; *Himalaya* 39:1; *Human Ecology* 43:3; *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 55:4; *International Sociology* 31:2; *Journal of Agrarian Change* 16:2; *Journal of Asian Studies* 71:1; *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 22:2; *Mountain Research and Development* 35:2; *Pacific Affairs* 88:2; *The Pangean* (February 2019); *Review of Agricultural, Food, and Environmental Studies* 97:1 [reprinted on "[Culture and Capitalism](#)" Blog]; *Social Anthropology* 23:2; *Taiwan Journal of Anthropology* 12:1 (in Mandarin); "[Tea for Me Please](#)" Blog (July 2014); *Work, Employment & Society* 30:5.

Edited books

2019. *How Nature Works: Rethinking Labor on a Troubled Planet*. Sarah Besky and Alex Blanchette, editors. Santa Fe, NM: School for Advanced Research (SAR) Press.

---- Winner, 2021 Society for the Anthropology of Work Book Prize

Reviewed in: *Anthropology of Work Review* 42:2; *CHOICE* 57:9; *Current Anthropology* 61:6; *Environment and Society* 11:1; *Economic Geography* 96:5; *Journal of Anthropological Research* 77:1; [SfCrowsnest.info](#) (March 2020); Society for the Anthropology of Work [book forum](#) (October 2023); *Svetovi/Worlds* 1:2 (in Slovenian)

Other edited collections

2025. [Limn 12](#): "Climate's Interiors." Co-edited with Alex Nading and Jason Cons

2022. "Multivocal Spaces: An Exploration of Everyday Life in the Darjeeling Himalaya" special issue of *Himalaya* 41(1), co-edited with Dipti Tamang and Rinzi Lama

2018. "[The Naturalization of Work](#)" collection for the Society for Cultural Anthropology's "Theorizing the Contemporary" series, co-edited with Alex Blanchette

Peer-reviewed articles

Forthcoming. "Regeneration and its Discontents: Biodynamic Agriculture and Darjeeling Tea Plantations." *Social & Cultural Geography*.

2024. "Reproducing the Plantation." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 114(10): 2212-2215.

2022. "Lobsters, Whales, and Traps: The Politics of Endangerment in the Gulf of Maine." *Environment and Planning E* 5(4): 1994-2010.

2021. "The Plantation's Outsides: The Work of Settlement in Kalimpong, India." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 63(2): 433-463.

2021. "Teawords: Experiments with Quality in Industrial Tea Production." *American Anthropologist* 123(1): 96-107.

2020. "Empire and Indigestion: Materializing Tannins in the Indian Tea Industry." *Social Studies of Science* 50(3): 398-417.
2017. "Fixity: On the Inheritance and Maintenance of Tea Plantation Houses in Darjeeling, India." *American Ethnologist* 44(4): 617-631.
2017. "The Land in Gorkhaland: On the Edges of Belonging in Darjeeling, India." *Environmental Humanities* 9(1): 18-39.
2017. "Tea as 'Hero Crop'? Embodied Algorithms and Industrial Reform in India." *Science as Culture*. 26(1): 11-31.
2016. "Placing Plants in Territory" (co-authored with Jonathan Padwe). *Environment and Society: Advances in Research* 7: 9-28.
2016. "The Future of Price: Communicative Infrastructures and the Financialization of Indian Tea." *Cultural Anthropology* 31(1): 4-29.
2015. "Agricultural Justice, Abnormal Justice? Fair Trade's Plantation Problem." *Antipode* 47(5): 1141-1160.
2015. "Looking for Work: Placing Labor in Food Studies" (co-authored with Sandy Brown). *Labor: Studies of Working-Class History of the Americas* 12(1-2): 19-43.
2014. "The Labor of *Terroir* and the *Terroir* of Labor: Geographical Indication on Darjeeling Tea Plantations." *Agriculture and Human Values* 31(1): 83-96.
- Won the 2014 Anthropology & Environment Society Junior Scholar Award
- Republished in: Melissa Caldwell, ed. 2021. *Why Food Matters*. Bloomsbury.
2008. "Can a Plantation be Fair? Paradoxes and Possibilities in Fair Trade Darjeeling Tea Certification." *Anthropology of Work Review* 29(1): 1-9.

Chapters in peer-reviewed books

- Forthcoming. "Indian Tea and the Uses of Transparency." In *How Transparency Works: Ethnographies of a Global Value*, edited by Elizabeth Ferry, Matthieu Bolay, and Filipe Calvão. Cambridge University Press.
2023. "Seaweed." In *Solarities: Elemental Encounters and Refractions*, edited by Cymene Howe, Amelia Moore, and Jeff Diamanti. Pp. 277-286. Santa Barbara, CA: Punctum Books.
2023. "[Plantations](#)." *Oxford Bibliographies in Anthropology*, edited by John Jackson. New York: Oxford University Press.
2022. "Tea." In *The Routledge Companion to Northeast India*, edited by Jelle J.P. Wouters and Tanka B. Subba. Pp. 429-433. London: Routledge. [South Asia edition with Manohar Publishers]

2020. "Can't Get There from Here? Writing Place and Moving Narratives." In *Writing Anthropology: Essays on Craft and Commitment*, Carole McGranahan, editor. Pp. 83-86. Durham: Duke University Press.
2020. "Monoculture." In *Anthropocene Unseen: A Lexicon*. Cymene Howe and Anand Pandian, editors. Pp. 277-280. Santa Barbara, CA: Punctum Books.
2019. "Introduction: The Fragility of Work" (co-authored with Alex Blanchette). In *How Nature Works: Rethinking Labor on a Troubled Planet*, Besky and Blanchette, editors. Pp. 1-22. Santa Fe: SAR Press.
2019. "Exhaustion and Endurance in Sick Landscapes." In *How Nature Works: Rethinking Labor on a Troubled Planet*, Besky and Blanchette, editors. Pp. 23-40. Santa Fe: SAR Press.
2018. "Subnational Occupations: Managing Darjeeling Tea." In *Darjeeling Reconsidered: Histories, Politics, and Environments*. Townsend Middleton and Sara Shneiderman, editors. Pp. 197-218. New Delhi: Oxford University Press India.
2010. "Colonial Pasts and Fair Trade Futures: Changing Modes of Production and Regulation on Darjeeling Tea Plantations." In *Fair Trade and Social Justice: Global Ethnographies*. Sarah Lyon and Mark Moberg, editors. Pp. 97-122. New York: NYU Press.

In preparation

- "Himalayan Pastoral: Colonialism, the Countryside, and Life Beyond the Plantation." Book manuscript in preparation for University of California Press.
- "Raymond Williams and *The Country and the City*." Invited essay for "Key Texts for a Socialist Anthropology." *Dialectical Anthropology*.

Essays and commentaries

- Forthcoming. "Tasting Qualities." *Daily Star* (Dhaka, Bangladesh)
2025. "[Escape to the Country](#)" (with Yojak Tamang). *Limn 12* (Nading, Cons, and Besky, editors).
2025. "[Preface: The Impossible Interior](#)" (co-written with Nading and Cons). *Limn 12*.
2024. Response to Canay Ozden Shilling's "Real Time in Rear View: Techno-Economic Acts in Markets of Electricity" in *Current Anthropology* 65:5: 787-809.
2023. "[The Country and the City in the Himalayas](#)." "India in Translation." September 11. [Invited essay] Republished as "[How the collapse of farming in Kalimpong has given rise to the 'homestay' tourist economy](#)." *Scroll.in*. October 14
2023. "Agrarian Crisis, Affect, and Accumulation." *Dialogues in Human Geography* 13(2): 207-210.
2023. "Crisis is in the Details." *Anthropology of Work Review* 44(1): 38-41

2023. "Teawords: Rendering Quality in the Indian Tea Industry." Invited essay for 25, a magazine published by the Specialty Coffee Association.
2023. "[Plantation Nation](#)." *Cultural Anthropology* Fieldsites series on the "Plantationocene," edited by Maan Barua, Rebeca Ibáñez Martín, and Marthe Achtnich. January 24
2022. "Stories of Everyday Life in the Darjeeling Hills." Guest editorial commentary for special issue of *Himalaya* 41(1): 8-11.
2021. "[Opening Access to AAA's Publishing Future](#)" (co-written with Ilana Gershon, Alex Nading, Christopher Nelson, Katie Nelson, Heather Paxson, and Brad Weiss). Society for Cultural Anthropology "Fieldsites" essay, June 30
Translated into Mandarin on "Tying Knots." September 2021
2021. "[A Dress Code for the Revolution](#)." *Cultural Anthropology* Hot Spots series on "Majoritarian and Populist Politics in South Asia," edited by Radhika Govindrajan, Bhoomika Joshi, and Mubbashir Rizvi. March 16
2020. "What's in a Cuppa?" *Queen's Quarterly* (Winter): 554-565.
2020. "Afterword: Work, Place, and the Value of Ethnography." *Anthropology of Work Review* 41(2): 129-132.
2018. "[Sickness](#)" In "The Naturalization of Work," edited by Besky and Blanchette. Theorizing the Contemporary, *Cultural Anthropology* website. July 26
Translated into Mandarin on "Tying Knots." May 2021
2018. "[Introduction: The Naturalization of Work](#)." In "The Naturalization of Work," edited by Besky and Blanchette. Theorizing the Contemporary, *Cultural Anthropology* website. July 26
2017. "[Monoculture](#)." In "Lexicon for an Anthropocene Yet Unseen," edited by Cymene Howe and Anand Pandian. Theorizing the Contemporary, *Cultural Anthropology* website. June 28.
2017. Preface to the Mandarin edition of *The Darjeeling Distinction*. Chapati Mystery. May 16.
2017. "[Ten Questions with Sarah Besky](#)." Chapati Mystery. January 27
2016. (with Ned Dostaler) "[The Materiality of Finance: An Interview with Sarah Besky](#)." Dialogues, *Cultural Anthropology* website. March 17.
2016. [Response to Daniel Münster's review of The Darjeeling Distinction](#) on Allegra Laboratory. January 25.
2015. "[Inheriting the Hill Station](#)." Essay for "Edge Effects." Center for Culture, History, and Environment, University of Wisconsin-Madison (www.edgeeffects.net). May 19.

2015. "[Can't Get There from Here? Writing Place and Moving Narratives.](#)" Essay in the "Writer's Workshop" Series on "Savage Minds." March 26.
2014. "[The Promise of Fair Trade for Plantation Laborers.](#)" *For a Better World*. Fair World Project: Portland, Oregon. Issue 9 (Fall): 15-16. (<http://fairworldproject.org>)
2008. "Old Grievances." Letter to the Editor in response to "Unrest in India's Hill Country." *New York Times* (Sunday Travel Section). July 13.

Invited book reviews

- Forthcoming. Review of Tania Li and Pujo Semedi. *Plantation Life: Corporate Occupation in Indonesia's Oil Palm Zone* (Duke University Press, 2021). *Anthropological Quarterly*.
2024. Review of Sophie Chao. *In the Shadow of the Palms: More than Human Becomings in West Papua* (Duke University Press, 2022). *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 14(1): 220-223.
2022. Review of Arnab Dey. *Tea Environments and Plantation Culture: Imperial Disarray in Eastern India* (Cambridge University Press, 2018). *Agricultural History* 96(4): 627-628.
2020. Review of Mythri Jegathesan. *Tea and Solidarity: Tamil Women and Work in Postwar Sri Lanka* (University of Washington Press, 2019). *Anthropology of Work Review* 41(2): 140-141.
2020. Review of Erika Rappaport. *Thirst for Empire: How Tea Shaped the Modern World* (Princeton University Press, 2017). *Journal of Asian Studies* 79(2): 524-526.
2018. Review of Sarah Ives. *Steeped in Heritage: The Racial Politics of South African Rooibos Tea* (Duke University Press, 2017). *Environment and Society* 9: 175-176.
2017. Review of Townsend Middleton. *The Demands of Recognition: State Anthropology and Ethnopolitics in Darjeeling* (Stanford University Press, 2015). *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 23(2): 432-433.
2016. Review of Kamran Asdar Ali. *Communism in Pakistan: Politics and Class Activism, 1947-1972* (I.B. Tauris, 2015). For Chapati Mystery book forum. [\[LINK\]](#)
2016. Review of Jeffrey Witsoe. *Democracy against Development: Lower Caste Politics and Political Modernity in Postcolonial India* (University of Chicago Press, 2013). *Political and Legal Anthropology Review*. [\[LINK\]](#)
2016. Review of Andrew Willford. *Tamils and the Haunting of Justice: History and Recognition in Malaysia's Plantations* (University of Hawaii Press, 2014). *American Ethnologist* 43(1): 173-174.
2015. Review of *Empire of Tea: The Asian Leaf that Conquered the World* (Reaktion Books, 2015). In *Times Literary Supplement*. 7 October.
2015. Review of Jinghong Zhang. *Puer Tea: Ancient Caravans and Urban Chic* (University of Washington Press, 2013). In *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 21(3): 696-697.

2015. Review of David Gellner, editor. *Borderland Lives in Northern South Asia* (Duke University Press, 2013). *American Ethnologist* 42(1): 195-196.
2014. Review of Paige West. *From Modern Production to Imagined Primitive: The Social World of Coffee from Papua New Guinea* (Duke University Press, 2012). *Journal of Anthropological Research* 70(3): 457-458.
2013. Review of Jayeeta Sharma. *Empire's Garden: Assam and the Making of India* (Duke University Press, 2011). *Gastronomica: The Journal of Food and Culture* 13(3): 81-82.
2013. Review of Neil White. *Company Towns: Corporate Order and Community*. (University of Toronto Press, 2012). *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 55(4): 1021-1022.

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

External Research Fellowships

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 2022-2026 | Principal Investigator for Department of Education South Asia Foreign Language and Area Studies and South Asia National Resource Center at Cornell University. |
| 2023-2026 | National Science Foundation, Standard Research Grant, Science and Technology Studies Program |
| 2023-2025 | National Science Foundation, Track 2 Grant, "Global Centers: Use-Inspired Research Addressing Global Challenges in Climate Change and Clean Energy." Project Co-Director with Alex Nading (Cornell) |
| 2022-2023 | American Institute of Indian Studies/National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship |
| 2022 | Central New York Humanities Corridor Grant for "Social and Cultural Sustainability in South Asia." (with Iftikhar Dadi, Daniel Bass [Cornell], Mona Bhan [Syracuse], and Llerena Searle [Rochester]). Supplemental funding for "The Next Monsoon" conference. |
| 2021-2023 | National Endowment for the Humanities Collaborative Research Grant (with Iftikhar Dadi (PI) Sonal Kullar, and Rupali Gupte) for "The Next Monsoon," a conference on climate change in South Asia and associated publications. |
| 2019 | Hunt Postdoctoral Fellowship, Wenner Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research |
| 2016-2017 | School for Advanced Research (SAR) Advanced Seminar Grant for "How Nature Works." (co-organized with Alex Blanchette [Tufts University] and Naisargi Dave [University of Toronto]) |
| 2015-2017 | European Commission Marie Curie Actions Fellowship [Declined] |
| 2012-2015 | Michigan Society of Fellows Postdoctoral Fellowship |
| 2011-2012 | Andrew W. Mellon Foundation/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship |

- 2011-2012 American Association of University Women (AAUW) Dissertation Fellowship [Declined]
- 2008-2009 American Institute of Indian Studies Junior Fellowship
- 2007-2008 Fulbright Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Fellowship – India
- 2007-2008 Fulbright Institute for International Education Fellowship – India [Declined]

HONORS AND PRIZES

- 2025 SUNY Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Faculty Service
- 2023 MacIntyre Award for Exemplary Teaching and Advising, ILR School
- 2021 Society for the Anthropology of Work Book Prize
- 2014 Anthropology & Environment Society Junior Scholar Award
- 2014 Society for Economic Anthropology Book Award (awarded every 3 years)
- 2012 Miller-Hitchcock-Weinstein Award, Department of Anthropology, UW-Madison
- 2011 Dor Bahadur Bista Prize, Association for Nepal and Himalayan Studies
- 2011 Finalist for the Early Excellence in Teaching Award, UW-Madison
- 2011 University Housing Honored Instructor Award, UW-Madison
- 2011 Honorable Mention, Genevieve Gorst Herfurth Award for Outstanding Research in Social Studies, Office of the Secretary of the Faculty, UW-Madison
- 2010 Roy A. Rappaport Graduate Student Prize Winner, Anthropology & Environment Section of the American Anthropological Association

INVITED LECTURES

- 2025 “Climate Methodologies: A Dialogue on the Social Life of Environmental Knowledge,” with Shaila Seshia Galvin (Graduate Institute, Geneva). Department of Geography and Environment, London School of Economics. June 10.
- 2025 “Home Values: Land, Labor, and the Economy of Retreat in the Eastern Himalayas.” Department of Anthropology, Rice University. April 18.
- Also presented at:*
Department of Anthropology, History, and Science and Technology Studies (HASTS), MIT. March 17

- 2025 “Gender and Climate in the Global South.” Plenary talk for a Critical Ecologies Group/Gender Institute Workshop. University of Buffalo
- 2024 “Estate Logics.” Department of Anthropology, Oxford University, December 11.
Also presented at:
Department of Geography, Cardiff University, April 24.
- 2024 “A Space for ‘Native Cultivators’.” Dirty History Workshop, University of Georgia, October 25.
- 2024 “Home Values: Crisis, Speculation, and the Making of a Climate Haven.” Hau of Finance Lecture Series, University of Bologna, April 30.
- 2024 “After the Country: Agrarian Life and the Plantation’s Outsides.” Department of Geography, Wageningen University, April 8.
Also presented at:
- Sociology & Anthropology, National University of Singapore, January 17
- 2024 “Theorizing Development, Inequality and the Agrarian in Contemporary Asia.” (with Jonathan Rigg, Geography, University of Bristol). Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, January 16.
- 2024 “Thermal Resilience.” Department of Architecture, National University of Singapore, January 16.
- 2022 “Estate Logics and the Making of an Agrarian Enclave in the Bengal Himalaya.” Center for the Advanced Study of India (CASI), University of Pennsylvania, December 1.
Also presented at:
- Cluny College (Kalimpong, India), June 3, 2023
- Darjeeling Hills University (India), May 30, 2023
- 2022 “The Past and Present of Agricultural Extension in Kalimpong.” Keynote lecture for 6th International Conference on “Current Issues in Agricultural, Biological & Applied Sciences for Sustainable Development (CIABASSD), Kalimpong Science Center (India), June 11.
- 2022 “Indo-China Borderland Pasts and Futures.” Invited Commentator for “Book Adda” for *The Deoliwallahs: The True Story of the 1962 Chinese-Indian Internment*. Center for Contemporary South Asia, Brown University, April 22.
- 2022 “The Plantation’s Outsides: The Work of Settlement in Kalimpong, India.” Ethnography and Social Theory Colloquium, Department of Anthropology, Yale University, April 18.
Also presented at:
- Kalimpong College (India), June 20, 2022
- Calcutta Comparatists (Zoom). December 18, 2021
- Department of Global Development, Cornell University, March 11, 2021

- South Asia Program, Cornell University, September 14, 2020.

2021 “Teawords: Experiments with Quality in Industrial Tea Production.” David A. Walsh Seminar, Clarkson University, October 15

Also presented at:

- Department of Anthropology and Sociology, Graduate Institute, Geneva (Switzerland), April 20, 2021
- Department of Economics, Sikkim University (India), March 4, 2021
- Department of Anthropology, Cornell University, October 30, 2020
- School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins University, March 5, 2020
- Department of Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania, March 3, 2020
- Department of Anthropology, Indiana University, February 3, 2020

2021 “Sick Plantations and the Future of Work in the Dooars.” Royal Thimphu College (Bhutan), April 9.

2021 Discussion of Mythri Jegathesan’s “‘Fortune and Glory’: The Speculative Afterlives of Sri Lanka’s Tea Plantations in Hollywood Film.” South Asia Institute, University of Texas-Austin, April 8

2021 “Can a Plantation be Fair? Fair Trade Certification in India.” Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Ambedkar University (India), March 19.

2021 “Quality, Taste, and the Persistence of the Plantation.” South Asia Institute, University of Texas-Austin, February 11

2021 Discussion on the “Plantationocene” with Maan Barua. Center of South Asian Studies, Cambridge University. February 10

2020 “Tasting Qualities: The Past and Future of Tea.” Book talk and discussion. South Asia Research Group, Yale University, September 15

Also presented at:

- Communication, Media and Performance (CaMP) Anthropology Reading Group, Indiana University, July 31, 2020

2019 “The Future of Work on Sick Plantations in India.” ILR School, Cornell University, November 11.

2019 “The Plantation’s Outsides: Absorption and Replenishment in Colonial Agricultural Experimentation.” International Development Group, MIT, November 5.

2019 Roundtable on “Laboring Bodies” with Ruth Wilson Gilmore and Sasha Turner. “Interrogating the Plantationocene.” Mellon Sawyer Seminar, UW-Madison, Oct. 10.

2019 “Fixity: On the Inheritance and Maintenance of Tea Plantation Houses in Darjeeling, India.” Himalayan Studies Centre, North Bengal University (India), May 29.

Also presented at:

- Department of Anthropology, Sikkim University (India), May 12, 2019.

- 2019 Commentary on Amy Cohen’s “Negotiating the Value Chain: A Study of Surplus and Distribution in Indian Food Markets.” Urban and Regional Planning, MIT, April 18.
- 2019 “Can a Plantation be Fair?” Connecticut College, April 4.
- 2019 “The Quality of Cheap Tea: Industrial Reform in the Dooars, India.” Program in Organizational Behavior, Stanford Graduate School of Business, February 13.
[Part of a one-week residency at the Stanford Center for Global Poverty and Development]
- 2018 “Market Qualities: The Cost of Cheap Tea.” Centre for Diasporic and Transnational Studies, University of Toronto, October 2.
- 2018 “Cheap Tea and the Problem of Quality: Mass-Markets and Industrial Reform in the Dooars.” Department of Anthropology, Emory University, March 19
- 2017 “Can a Plantation Be Fair? Fair Trade in the Tea Industry.” World Tea Expo (Las Vegas, Nevada), June 15
- 2017 “Cheap Tea and the Endurance of Monoculture in the Dooars, India.” Annual Hunt Lecture in Economic Anthropology. Dept. of Anthropology, Brandeis University, April 28
- 2017 “Exhaustion and Endurance in Sick Landscapes.” Department of Anthropology, Rice University, January 24
- 2016 “Can a Plantation Be Fair? Fair-Trade Certification in Darjeeling Tea.” Seattle Museum of Art’s Asian Art Museum, December 3
- 2016 “Spaces for Labor: Inheritance, Inequality, and Infrastructure on Darjeeling Tea Plantations.” Jackson School of International Studies, U. of Washington, December 2

Also presented at:

- Institute for Work and Employment Research. Sloan School of Management, MIT, November 1, 2016
- Legal History Colloquium, Brown University, October 28
- Department of Geography, Dartmouth College, April 18, 2016
- Center for Asian Studies, Southern Methodist University, April 12, 2016
- Watson Institute, Brown University, April 7, 2016
- Department of Anthropology, UW-Madison, March 7, 2016

- 2016 “The Land in Gorkhaland: On the Edges of Belonging in India.” Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago, March 14

Also presented at:

- South Asia Center, University of Heidelberg, April 26, 2016
- Center for South Asia, UW-Madison, Dec. 3, 2015

- Brown-India Initiative, Brown University, October 16, 2015
- Department of Geography, University of Zürich, March 3, 2015
- Agrarian Studies Colloquium, Yale University, January 16, 2015

- 2015 “Financializability: On the Changing Nature of Numbers in Kolkata’s Tea Auction.” Invited Speaker at “Transformations in the Global South -- Taking Stock.” Global South Studies Center, University of Cologne (Germany), May 26-28
- Also presented at:*
- Dept. of Sociology & Anthropology, NC State University, April 17, 2015
 - Environmental Studies Department, UC-Santa Cruz, January 21, 2015
- 2015 “Can a Plantation be Fair?” Ethics of Consumerism Symposium. University of New Hampshire, April 23
- 2015 “Agriculture and Ethical Standards.” Global Economic Geographies of Agriculture and Food Systems Seminar. Dept. of Geography, University of Zürich, March 4
- 2015 “Fair Trade, Subnational Politics, and Environmental Justice in Darjeeling, India.” Environmental Studies Program, University of Colorado, Boulder, January 25
- 2014 “Decolonizing Tea? Industrial Reform and the Governance of Price in India.” Watson Institute and Department of Anthropology, Brown University, December 12
- 2014 Society for Economic Anthropology Book Prize Lecture, American Anthropological Association Meetings (Washington, DC), December 4
- 2014 “Can a Plantation Be Fair? Fair Trade and Darjeeling Tea Production.” Peace & Justice Studies Program, Michigan State University, November 14
- 2014 “Socially Responsible Tea: Labor Conditions, Corporate Branding, and Indian Tea Plantations.” Co-panelist with Max Bearak (*New York Times*), Ashwini Sukthankar (Columbia), and Phyllis Robison (Equal Exchange). Human Rights Institute, Columbia University Law School, March 24
- 2014 “‘Large Farms’ and the Limits of Fair Trade: Value-Added Relations on Indian Tea Plantations.” Department of Human Ecology, University of California, Davis, January 29
- 2013 “Composing Value: Brokerage and the Politics of Taste in the Indian Tea Auction.” Department of Anthropology, University of Michigan, November 25
- 2013 “Inheriting the Plantation: Tripartite Moral Economies and Gendered Understandings of Labor and Landscape in Darjeeling, India.” Department of Women’s Studies, University of Michigan, November 18
- 2012 “Gender, Affective Labor, and the Home/Work Paradox on Darjeeling Tea Plantations.” Department of Anthropology, University of Michigan, September 28.

- 2012 “Fair for All? Fair Trade Plantations and the Implications of Hired Labor Standards in Indian Tea Production.” Talk at the “Global Ethical Consumption: New Dimensions of Fair Trade” Symposium. National Museum of Ethnology (Osaka, Japan), March 24-25
- 2012 “Nostalgia, Revitalization, and the Meaning of Justice on Darjeeling Tea Plantations.” Dept. of Environmental Science, Planning, and Management, UC-Berkeley, March 9
- 2012 “Labor, Tea, and Fair Trade in India.” Human Rights Institute, Columbia University Law School, February 29
- 2008 “Environmental Change and Tea Production in Darjeeling.” Environmental Science Department, St. Paul’s School (Darjeeling, India), August 5

INVITED WORKSHOPS

- 2026 “Frontiers of Disgust.” Aarhus University/Klitgaarden Refugium. May 30-June 6.
- 2025 “International Standards, Industrial Upgrading, and Innovation.” Brown University. May 30-31.
- 2023 Atelier Ethnographic Writing Workshop. Hosted by University of California Press and University of Toronto. April 28-29.
- 2022 “Plantation Nation.” Presented at workshop on the “Plantationocene,” Department of Geography, Cambridge University, October 27
- 2022 “Intimacy as Affect and Accumulation: Biodynamics on Darjeeling Tea Plantations.” “Plant Intimacies: Proximity, Care, and Violence.” Freie Universität Berlin & Leibniz Zentrum Moderner Orient (Berlin, Germany). October 18-21.
- 2022 “Plantation Sickness.” Presented at workshop on “Plantation Futures” British Academy Knowledge Frontiers Seed Fund Workshop (Zoom). January 17.
- 2021 “The Work of Taste.” Webinar hosted by the History departments at UC-Santa Barbara and Ramakrishna Mission Vidyamandira (India), “Global Capitalism, Colonial Politics, and Publicity: The Past and Present of Tea in South Asia” (Zoom). May 4-5.
- 2021 “The Plantations that Never Went Away.” “A Conversation on the Plantationocene.” Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies, Cornell University, April 15 and 16
- 2019 “Indian Tea, Postcolonial Governance, and the Uses of Transparency.” Transparency in Extractive Industries Workshop. Graduate Institute (Geneva, Switzerland), June 1.
- 2018 “Perenniality, Perishability, and Indian Tea.” Symposium on tea in Asia. Mario Einaudi Center, Cornell University, October 26.
- 2017 “Environmental Change and Landscapes of Digestion: Tea Tannins, Industrialization, and Human Health, 1900-1940.” CHE@10 Symposium. UW-Madison, November 4

- 2016 “Spaces for Labor: Inheritance, Inequality, and Infrastructure on Darjeeling Tea Plantations.” Department of Anthropology, University of Freiburg (Germany), April 22
- 2016 “Cheap Tea and the Work of Monoculture in India.” Advanced Seminar on “How Nature Works.” School for Advanced Research (Santa Fe, NM), September 24-30
- 2016 Commentary on Research Program: “Moving Crops and the Scales of History.” Max Planck Institute for the History of Science (Berlin, Germany), July 18-19
- 2016 Keynote roundtable participant at “E is for Environment” Symposium, Center for Culture, History, and Environment (CHE), UW-Madison, March 4-6
- 2014 “Sustainability at Industrial Scales?” Sustainable Food Initiative’s “Fast Food for Thought.” University of Michigan, October 21
- 2014 “Brokering Taste: Meanings and Metrologies in the Indian Tea Auction.” Presented at the symposium: “When Nature and Numbers (Don’t) Meet.” Holtz Center for Science and Technology Studies, UW-Madison, April 4-6

WORKSHOPS & CONFERENCES ORGANIZED

- 2024 Agrarian Studies, Climate Change, and the Future of Work. Two-day conference. ILR School, April 26-27 (co-organized with Hadia Akhtar Khan, Cornell ILR)
- 2023 Workshop on the Thermal Future. Two-day conference. Einaudi Center for International Studies, Cornell University, December 1-2 (co-organized with Alex Nading, Cornell Anthropology)
- 2016 “How Nature Works.” Week-long workshop held at the School for Advanced Research, September 25-29. Co-organized with Alex Blanchette (Tufts University) and Naisargi Dave (University of Toronto).

PRESENTATIONS

Conference Panel Organization

- 2017 “How Nature Works:” a set of three panels co-organized with Alex Blanchette. American Anthropological Association Meeting (Washington, DC), November 29-December 3.
- 2015 “Labor, Landscape, and (De)colonial Desires: Rethinking the Plantation as a Socio-Ecological Category.” [Co-organized with Mythri Jegathesan] American Anthropological Association Meeting (Denver, CO), November 18-22.
- 2014 “Beyond the Material/Immaterial Divide: Aesthetics, Affects, and the End(s) of Work.” [Co-organized with Alex Nading] Society for Cultural Anthropology Meeting (Detroit, MI), May 9-10.
- 2014 “Categories, Difference, and In/Visibility.” [Co-organized with Reighan Gillam] American

Ethnological Society Meeting (Boston, MA), April 10-12.

- 2014 “New Directions in Human-Environment Relations in the Himalayas.” [Co-organized with Shaila Seshia Galvin] Association for Nepal and Himalayan Studies Conference (New Haven, CT), March 14-16
- 2013 “Doing Justice?” American Anthropological Association Meeting (Chicago), Nov. 20-24
- 2012 “Enumerating Environments: Ethnographies of Brokers, Middlemen, and Analysts.” [Co-organized with Nicholas D’Avella] American Anthropological Association Meeting (San Francisco, CA), November 14-18
- 2011 “People, Plants, and Practice: Garden Variety Investigations of Domesticated Nature.” [Co-organized with Jonathan Padwe] American Anthropological Association Meeting (Montreal, QC), November 16-20
- 2011 “The Darjeeling and Sikkim Himalaya: Interfaces and Interrogations.” Association for Nepal and Himalayan Studies Conference (St. Paul, MN), October 28-30

Paper Presentations (recent)

- 2024 “Home Values.” Presented on the panel “Rethinking Feminist Political Economy.” American Anthropological Association Meeting (Tampa, FL), November 20-23.
- 2024 “Changing Occupations: Land, Labor, and Politics of Retreat in the Eastern Himalayas.” Presented on the panel “The Stitching and Sticking of Majoritarian Politics in South Asia.” Annual Conference on South Asia (Madison, WI), October 30-November 2.
- 2024 Panelist for book discussion of Navyug Gill’s *Labors of Division: Global Capitalism and the Emergence of the Peasant in Colonial Panjab*. Annual Conference on South Asia (Madison, WI), October 30-November 2.
- 2023 Roundtable participant for the panel “Thermal Transitions: Towards an Anthropology of the Thermal Future.” American Anthropological Association Meeting (Toronto, ON), November 15-19
- 2023 “After the County: Agrarian Change in the Eastern Himalayas.” The Next Monsoon: Climate Change in South Asia,” Cornell University, October 27-28.
- 2023 Discussant for “Multispecies Labor in Emerging Agricultural Practices.” American Anthropological Association Meeting (Toronto, ON), November 15-19
- 2023 “Reading Raymond Williams in the Himalaya.” Presented on the panel “Reading Agrarian Transition Through the Lens of Raymond Williams.” Annual Conference on South Asia (Madison, WI), October 18-21.

- 2023 Discussant for the panel “Living Through the Meanwhile.” Annual Conference on South Asia (Madison, WI), October 18-21.
- 2022 “Science and Settlement on the India-Bhutan Border.” Presented on the panel: “Lives Worth Living in Unsettled Landscapes.” American Anthropological Association Meeting (Seattle, WA), November 9-13
- 2021 Commentator for Society for the Anthropology of Work’s Conrad Arensberg Prize Panel for Jane Collins. American Anthropological Association Meeting (Baltimore, MD), November 17-21
- 2021 Discussant for the Anthropology and Environment Society’s Roy Rappaport Graduate Student Prize Panel. American Anthropological Association Meeting (Baltimore, MD), November 17-21
- 2021 “Holdfast.” Presented on the panel: “Solarities.” American Anthropological Association Meeting (Baltimore, MD), November 17-21

ACADEMIC SERVICE

Service to the Profession (selected)

Editorial and Advisory Boards

- 2025-2027 Mellon Foundation Project on “University Ecologies and the Question of the Commons.” Tufts University
- 2023-present Advisory Board, *The Johns Hopkins Guide to Critical and Cultural Theory*
- 2020-present Editorial Board, Modern South Asia book series, Oxford University Press.
- 2018-2021 Advisory Board Member. “Sustainability’s Infrastructure” Danish Social Science Foundation (Sapere Aude). PI: Martin Skrydstrup (Copenhagen Business School)

American Anthropological Association Service

- 2025-2027 President-Elect, Anthropology & Environment Society (President, 2027-2029)
- 2022-2024 Executive board member, Society for the Anthropology of Work
- 2022 Chair, Society for the Anthropology of Work Book Prize Committee
- 2019-2022 President, Society for the Anthropology of Work
- 2018-2019 President-elect, Society for the Anthropology of Work
- 2017 Christine Wilson Award Panel, Society for the Anthropology of Food and Nutrition
- 2016 Rappaport Prize Panel Reviewer; Anthropology and Environment Society
- 2016 Junior Scholar Award Reviewer; Anthropology and Environment Society
- 2016 Co-Chair, Society for Economic Anthropology Book Prize Committee
- 2015-2018 Board Member; Society for Economic Anthropology
- 2014 Faculty Mentor, Anthropology and Environment Society Dissertation Workshop
- 2011-2013 Board Member, Anthropology and Environment Society
- 2011-2013 Organizer, Anthropology and Environment Society Dissertation Workshop

EMAIL sb2626@cornell.edu for full CV