

APALA KUNDU

Department of English
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University of Pittsburgh
 4200 Fifth Avenue
 Pittsburgh, PA 15260

EDUCATION

PhD in English	Expected May 2027
<i>University of Pittsburgh</i>	
Dissertation Title: "T-read-ing Waters: Navigating Postcolonial Mobilities in Indian Ocean novels."	
Committee: Dr. Shalini Puri (Chair), Dr. Troy Boone, Dr. Piotr Gwiazda, Dr. Neepta Majumdar, Dr. Marian Aguiar	
M.A. Certificate in Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies	2022
<i>University of Pittsburgh</i>	
Thesis Title: "When Women Write Men: Reading Scripts of Homosexual Masculinity in Popular Thai Visual Media."	
Advisor: Dr. Todd Reeser	
M.A. in English	2022
<i>University of Pittsburgh</i>	
M.A. in English	2017
<i>Presidency University</i>	
B.A. in English	2015
<i>Presidency University</i>	

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Composition Instructor	2025, 2021, 2020
<i>Department of English, University of Pittsburgh</i>	
- Taught three sections of Seminar in Composition, a required Gen. Ed. writing course to classes of 19-21 first-year undergraduate students; shaped course on the theme "Migration and Identity" - Designed syllabus and assignments to familiarize students with different styles, genres and forms of writing; moderated in-class discussions and workshops to help students cultivate critical thinking and analytical writing skills	
Literature Instructor	2022, 2021
<i>Department of English, University of Pittsburgh</i>	
- Taught two writing-intensive sections of "Imagining Social Justice - on the Move through Literatures of Migration," and one writing-intensive section of "The Short Story (in context): Short Stories across the Globe" - Designed syllabus and assignments to introduce students to global anglophone literatures, and diverse literary contexts; used a variety of multi-modal pedagogical tools and strategies to foster skills such as reading critically, asking questions, making arguments and analyzing evidence	
Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies Instructor	2023
<i>GSWS Program, University of Pittsburgh</i>	
Taught one writing-intensive section of Introduction to Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies; introduced students to basic concepts, definitions, terms and debates in the field of gender and sexuality studies	

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Archival Research	2025
<i>National Archives Department and Indian Immigration Archives, Mauritius</i>	
(Funded by Department of English, Humanities Engage, and World History Center, University of Pittsburgh)	
Collaborated with archivists to curate sources and materials from the archive; collected information, data, and lithographs related to Mauritian history of South Asian indentured labour for use in dissertation	
Research and Programme Assistant	2019
<i>Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group</i>	
Planned, organized and executed a three-day research workshop and two-day international conference on "The State of the Global Protection System for Refugees and Migrants;" regularly corresponded with international collaborators and presenters to facilitate travel and other logistics	

- Presented research paper on “Immigrant Economies and ‘Economic War’: Literary Reflections on the Expulsion of Asians from East Africa”

Research Assistant

2016

Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group

- Worked with Professor and Director Paula Banerjee to compile “Annotated Bibliography on USA-South Asia Relations,” published by Brill

Research Assistant

2016

Presidency University

- Worked with Dr. Anupama Mohan, Assistant Professor in the Department of English, for her journal article “Criticism in the New Century: ‘Lihaaf’ and its Discontents—A Case Study.”
- Curated different versions and editions of Ishmat Chughtai’s short story “Lihaaf” in English, Hindi, and Urdu; made a comparative analysis of the different translations to understand how differences in translation can impact reception of texts by audiences

PUBLICATIONS**Creative Writing:**

Poetry (haiku), “What the Moon heard Last Night,” <https://haikuists.com/blogs/news/what-the-moon-heard-last-night-haiku-feud-winners>, May 2026. (Winner of Haiku Feud for May)

Poetry, “TIPS ON HOW TO SURVIVE COLD PENNSYLVANIA WINTERS [FOR ALIEN STUDENTS FROM INDIA, FROM THEIR WELL-MEANING WHITE AMERICAN UBER],” *Isotopias*, May 2026. <https://www.isotopias.org/tips-on-how-to-survive-cold-pennsylvania-winters/>

Poetry, “Two Poems,” *Isotopias*, May 2026. <https://www.isotopias.org/two-poems-by-apala-kundu/>

Under Review:

“Charting possibilities of ‘Wake Work’ in the Indian Ocean: Ships and other Oceanic Vessels.” (Journal article; *ARIEL*, R&R status)

“Moving through Literatures of Migration with Interactive Storytelling.” (Book chapter, edited volume, under review)

Book Review:

“Boys Love Media in Thailand: Celebrity, Fans, and Transnational Asian Queer Popular Culture.” *Feminist Media Studies*, vol. 26, iss. 5, March 2025, pp. 1659–1661, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14680777.2025.2479150>

Journal Article:

“Re-possessing Her-story: A Reflection on ‘Queer’ Archiving.” *Rejoinder*, Issue 9, “The Archival is Political,” Institute for Research on Women (IRW), Rutgers University, Spring 2024. <https://irw.rutgers.edu/rejoinder-webjournal/issue-9-the-archival-is-political/695-apala-kundu>

Book Chapter:

“Through the Looking Glass.” *Situating Social Media: Gender, Caste, Protest, Solidarity*, ed. by Samata Biswas & Atig Ghosh, Women Unlimited, 2020, pp. 44-62. (with Pragya Paramita)

Interview:

“There is a celebratory tone to all these human rights violations” with Anuradha Bhasin. *RefugeeWatchOnline*, 2018. <https://refugeewatchonline.wordpress.com/2018/08/17/there-is-a-celebratory-tone-to-all-these-human-rights-violations-an-interview-with-anuradha-bhasin/>

Peer-reviewed:

“War and Women’s Health: The Diseased Body of the Comfort Woman.” *Essays and Studies*, Special Issue on “Sexuality, Health and Cultural Narratives,” Department of English, Jadavpur University, 2017, pp. 65-84. Print. ISSN 09753478. (with Sarbani Mohapatra)

Blog Article:

“Traveller, Refugee: The Rohingya Refugee Crisis in the light of the Condé Nast controversy.” *RefugeeWatchOnline*, 2016. <http://refugeewatchonline.blogspot.in/2016/12/traveller-refugee-rohingya-refugee.html>

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

“Art, Performance, and Indigeneity: Asian Archives from the Indian Ocean.” 5th Annual UC Irvine Global Asia International Conference. February 18-19, 2027. (upcoming)

“Building Blocks for care-centred and care-centric Pedagogy.” Roundtable: Centering Emotional Well-Being and Connection in the Classroom. NeMLA 2026. March. **2026**

“Resisting Erasure of Women through Queer Love—Queering the Indian Ocean.” Mini-MELOW International Conference on “The Colours of Pride: Queer Identities in Literature and Culture.” Dibrugarh University, Assam, India. November.

“Sampling the *sampan* in Amitav Ghosh’s *River of Smoke*: Tracing Asian nautical networks in the Indian Ocean.” 53rd Annual Mid-Atlantic Region Association for Asian Studies Conference on “Asian Networks: Transnationalism, Technology and Equity.” November.

“Teaching Literatures of Migration on the Move through Storytelling and Interactivity.” Seminar: Interactive Narratives: Rethinking Interactivity and Digital Archiving. ACLA Annual Meeting 2025. **2025**

“Evolution of ‘Flowerboy Masculinity’ in popular Thai Wai (Y[aoi]) visual media: Implications.” Chair of and presenter in panel on Genders, Sex, and Sexualities: Queer Relationships. Northeast Popular Culture Association Annual Conference. (with Shreya Bhowmik)

“Devi’s and Spivak’s ‘Draupadi’: Looking at Representation and Resistance through the lens of Translation.” 23rd Annual SALA Conference: Ethics of Representation, Forms of Resistance, and Narratives of Discomfort.

“Through Diasporic Eyes: ‘Home’ and/in the Archive.” Kalapani Crossings #3: Across the Oceans: Post-Indentureship Trans-Oceanic Transformations, French Institute of Pondicherry, Union Territory of Puducherry, India. **2024**

“In the Wake of the ‘Ibis’: Charting possibilities of ‘Wake Work’ in the Indian Ocean.” (Re)Imagining the Indian Ocean World: A Symposium on Literature and Culture, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Canada.

“Mate-real-ity of Space: The Postcolonial Oceanic vs the Postcolonial Terracentric.” Reading Conflicts: Bodies, Spaces, Affects, English Graduate Conference, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Massachusetts. **2023**

“When Women write Men: Reading Scripts of Homosexual Masculinity in Popular Thai Visual Media.” 27th Annual Gender & Sexuality Writing Collective, Susan B. Anthony Institute for Gender, Sexuality, & Women’s Studies, University of Rochester, New York. **2022**

“Reading the inclusion/exclusion nexus through an exploration of space in Punyakante Wijenaike’s *Giraya*.” Free Exchange, Interdisciplinary Graduate Conference, Department of English, University of Calgary, Canada. **2020**

“Muted Voices, Gendered Memories.” Linking Scholarship and Activism in Migration Societies: Critical Inquiries, EMMIR Consortium, University of Oldenburg, Germany. **2018**

“The Imperial Exhibition: Contesting multiculturalism through a reading of Andrea Levy’s *Small Island* (2004).” National Students’ Conference on Cross-cultural Encounters and Negotiations: Place, Space, Identity, The Centre of Advanced Study, Department of English, Jadavpur University, West Bengal.

“Hybridity in the Poetry of Wole Soyinka.” International Conference on De-centring English Studies: Studying Literature in the Global South”, PG Department of English, Utkal University, Odisha. **2017**

“The ‘Gay Plague’: Indian Media’s Representation of the AIDS Crisis and its Effects on the Gay Community.” UGC Sponsored National Seminar, Departments of Economics, Political Science, and Journalism and Mass Communication, Gurudas College, West Bengal.

“War and Women’s Health: The Diseased Body of the Comfort Woman.” Wellcome Trust Sponsored International Symposium on Sexuality, Health and Cultural Narratives, Department of English, Jadavpur University, West Bengal. (with Sarbani Mohapatra)

“Memory, History and Identity in Margaret Atwood’s *Alias Grace* and Alice Munro’s *The View from Castle Rock*.” International Conference on No map, no trail, no footprint, no way home: Rethinking, Memory, History and

Representation in India and Canada, The Centre for Canadian Studies, Department of Comparative Literature, Jadavpur University, West Bengal.

“‘O shame, shame, poppy-shame!’: Identity, nation, woman and ‘sharam’ in Salman Rushdie’s *Shame*.” International Conference on New Directions in Postcolonial Studies, Department of English, Kazi Nazrul University, West Bengal. (with Sarbani Mohapatra) **2016**

INVITED EVENTS

- “Queering Archives: ‘Her-stories’ from the Indian Ocean”** **March 2026**
‘Indian Ocean Women: Memory. Resistance. Reimagining.’
Roundtable on Feminist and Queer Indian Ocean Worlds organised by International Institute for Asian Studies, Leiden University, Netherlands
- Talk on “Teaching in the Subdisciplines”** **2024**
Writing Pedagogy I
- Talk on “Teaching Support Systems”** **2023**
Seminar in Pedagogy I
- Presentation on “Postcolonial Migration Literatures of the Indian Ocean.”** **2022**
Humanities Green Speakeasy, presented by Mascaro Center for Sustainable Innovation & the Humanities Council, University of Pittsburgh
- Talk on “Succeeding in Graduate Seminars”** **2021, 2022**
Intro to Grad Studies

INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE & MENTORSHIP

- Graduate Global Ties Mentor** **2024, 2025**
Office of the Provost – Graduate Studies in collaboration with Division of Student Affairs
- Supported international graduate students’ integration into new academic, professional and cultural environment and community through one-on-one mentoring.
- Organiser, ‘Boba and Books Reading Group’ Series** **2023**
Asian American Futures Collective, Graduate Student Organization
- Brought together university-wide cohort of Asian American students for community time through reading events: Anthony Veasna So’s *Afterparties & The Way Spring Arrives and Other Stories*, edited by Yu Chen and Regina Kanye Wang
- TA/TF Mentor for the English Department** **2023**
University of Pittsburgh
- Conducted a survey among first-year graduate students to determine future pedagogical needs; organized, implemented, and supervised the departmental Pedagogy Mentor Program in Spring; one-on-one peer mentoring to 2 first-year graduate students
- CEAT Mentor** **2021-22**
University of Pittsburgh
- Helped CEAT team envision, plan, and implement Orientation Week for first-time graduate student instructors within the Department of English in August 2021; provided one-on-one peer mentoring to 4 first-time graduate student instructors under the purview of Writing Pedagogy I
- Judge for Koloc Writing Awards** **2021**
University of Pittsburgh
- For 1st yr writers in ESL Workshop in Composition & domestic Workshop in Composition courses
- Treasurer for English Graduate Students’ Organisation** **2020**
University of Pittsburgh

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS & HONORS

Fellowships

- Humanities Engage Immersive Research Dissertation Fellowship **2024**
- Andrew W. Mellon Predoctoral Fellowship, University of Pittsburgh **2023**
- Lillian B. Lawler Predoctoral Fellowship, University of Pittsburgh (declined) **2023**

GSWS Teaching Fellowship, University of Pittsburgh	2022
Arts & Sciences Graduate Fellowship, Department of English	2019

Grants

Research & Development Grant, Department of English, University of Pittsburgh	2026
World History Center Research Funding, University of Pittsburgh	2025
Research & Development Grant, Department of English, University of Pittsburgh	2025
Research & Development Grant, Department of English, University of Pittsburgh (declined)	2023

Honors

Ph.D. Qualifying Exams Completed with Distinction	2022
M.A. Gold Medallist, Presidency University	2017

REFERENCES

Professor Shalini Puri
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Professor Troy Boone
 Professor Emeritus and Member of Dissertation Committee
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 Teaching Professor
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