

## Benjamin Robert Siegel

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### Positions Held

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Assistant Professor, Department of History, Boston University 2014–present  
Graduate Fellow, Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies 2013–2014

### Education

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Ph.D. Department of History, Harvard University 2014  
Dissertation: *Independent India of Plenty: Food, Hunger, and Nation-Building in Modern India*  
Advisor: Sugata Bose; Committee: Emma Rothschild, Sunil Amrith  
Examination Fields: South Asian History, British Empire and History of Modern Africa, Anthropology of South Asia, Early Modern Intellectual History  
A.M., Department of History, Harvard University 2010  
B.A. (Honors), Department of History, Yale University 2007

### Publications

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#### Manuscript

*Independent India of Plenty: Food, Hunger, and Nation-Building in Modern India*

#### Peer-Reviewed Articles

“Self-Help Which Ennobles a Nation’: Development, Citizenship, and the Obligations of Eating in India’s Austerity Years,” *Modern Asian Studies* (forthcoming)  
“Learning to Eat in a Capital City,” *Food, Culture, & Society* 13.1 (March 2010), 71-91.

#### Book Chapters and Reference Entries

“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* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015)  
“Raagtime,” *Civil Lines 6: New Writing from India*, eds. Achal Prabhala, Kai Friese and Mukul Kesavan (New Delhi: HarperCollins, 2012). Contribution highlighted in *The Hindu*, *Mint*, the *Sunday Guardian* (Delhi) *DNA* (Mumbai), and *Elle* (India).  
“Food,” “Green Revolution,” *Cultural Sociology of the Middle East, Asia, and Africa: An Encyclopedia*, eds. Andrea L. Stanton et al. (London: Sage, 2012).

#### Journalistic Articles and Occasional Pieces

"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  
“Reluctantly Lahore,” *The Caravan* 4.1 (January 2012).

“Playing Host is Hard to Do,” *World Policy Journal* 27.4 (Winter 2010/2011), 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* 57.3 (June/July 2006).

### **Book Reviews**

Democracy Against Development (Jeffrey Witsoe),” *Contemporary South Asia*, 22.3 (Summer 2014).  
 Red Tape (Akhil Gupta),” *Contemporary South Asia* 21.4 (Winter 2013).  
 Poverty Amid Plenty in the New India (Atul Kohli),” *Contemporary South Asia* 20.4 (Winter 2012).

### **Prizes, Grants, and Awards**

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Junior 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
Teaching Fellow, Department of History, Harvard University	2010, 2012–2013
Harvard University South Asia Initiative Research Grant	2009, 2010, 2012
Harvard University Asia Center Research Grant	2009
Homer J. Hagedorn Graduate Fellowship Fund, Harvard University	2009–10, 2010–11
Graduate Student Fellowship, Harvard University	2008–2013
Fox International Fellowship, Jawaharlal Nehru University	2007–2008

### **Invited Talks, Conference Presentations, and Panels Chaired**

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“Land, Labor, and Postcolonial Ethics,” at The Postcolonial Moment Conference, Princeton University, November 14, 2015  
 “Jayprakash Narayan and the Ethics of Counter-Development, at Jayprakash Narayan Reconsidered, Harvard University, April 2015  
 “Agriculture and the Politics of Labor in Nehruvian India,” at Global Midwest Conference, Penn State University, April 12, 2015  
 “Stakhanovites on the Ganges: Krishi Pandits and the Politics of Labor in Nehruvian India,” in “Revisiting Development in Modern India: Science, Ethics and the Agricultural Landscape” panel, Association for Asian Studies Conference, March 29, 2015  
 "Political Imaginaries of Food in a Hungry Decade,” in “From Colonial to Postcolonial Imaginaries,” panel (co-organizer with Rohit De and Julia Stephens), Madison South Asia Conference, October 2014  
 “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 Conference, Institute for Global Studies, Basel, Switzerland, August 2014

- “Cloth and the Calorie: Scarcity Regimes and Political Power in Independent India, 1947-1967,” The Problems and Possibilities of Want: Scarcity and the State in China, India, and Japan, American Society for Environmental History Conference, San Francisco, March 15, 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 Conference, New York University, February 14, 2014
- Chair, Economic Growth and its Discontents in Post-Independence India, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs Undergraduate Associates’ Thesis Conference, February 8, 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,” Negotiating Independence Workshop, Cambridge University, May 3, 2013.
- “Why Food?” Big Ideas Conference, Harvard University South Asia Institute, April 4, 2013
- “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,” invited presentation as part of Feast and Famine speaker series, Department of Nutrition, Food Studies, and Public Health, New York University, November 30, 2012.
- “‘Self-Help Which Ennobles a Nation’: Rights, Citizenship, and the Obligations of Eating in India's Austerity Years,” Center for History and Economics, 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 Junior Fellow Conference, Gurgaon, Haryana, India, January 1, 2012.
- “More Grass than Corn: Indian Agricultural Development in Historical Context,” Department of History, Hong Kong University, April 7, 2011 (co-sponsored by the Centre for the Humanities and Medicine).
- “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.

### **Student Supervision**

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Graduate readings, South Asian / Imperial History (2 Ph.D. students)	2014–present
Master’s thesis supervision, Boston University Gastronomy program	2014–2015
Undergraduate history major advising (9 B.A. students)	2014–present

## Professional Service and Engagement

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Peer reviewer, <i>South Asia</i>	2014–present
Contributing editor, <i>Marginalia Review of Books</i>	2014–present
B.A. Thesis Supervisor (Harper Sutherland) Department of South Asian Studies, Harvard University	2013–2014
Member, Association for Asian Studies	2014–present
Member, American Historical Association	2012–present
External reviewer, history manuscript proposal, The New Press	2011
Coordinator, United Nations Foundation Digital History Project	2009–2010
Alumni admissions interviewer, Yale University	2008–present

## Non-Academic Professional Experience

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Reporter-Researcher, <i>Time Magazine</i> , Hong Kong	2007
Intern, <i>Time Magazine</i> , South Asia Bureau, New Delhi	2006

## Languages

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Hindi, Urdu, French, Hebrew, Spanish (Reading), Russian (Elementary)

## Research and Teaching Experience

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Citizenship, governance, and statehood; comparative colonial and global history (Africa, South Asia, Southeast Asia); development, technology, and the politics of expertise; history of economic thought; history of South Asia, 1500 – present; food politics, famine, and hunger; modern South Asian politics, economy, and culture

## Courses Taught

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*Boston University*: Introduction to India and South Asia; The Historian’s Craft; Culture, Taste, Power: A Global History of Food; Development in Historical Perspective; Directed Readings in South Asian History

*Harvard University*: Modern South Asia (Sugata Bose and Amartya Sen); Asia After Europe (Sugata Bose); Reason and Faith in the West (Ann Blair); Gender and Migration in United States History (Lili M. Kim)