

Susan Seizer

Associate Professor, Communication & Culture
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Academic Employment History

Associate Professor, Department of Communication & Culture, Indiana University, 2006-present.

- Affiliate Faculty, Dept. of Folklore & Ethnomusicology, IU, 2006-present.
- Affiliate Faculty, Dept. of Gender Studies, IU, 2006-present.
- Adjunct Faculty, Dept. of Anthropology, IU, 2006-present.
- Associate Professor, India Studies Program, IU, 2006-present.

Associate Professor, Departments of Anthropology and Gender & Women's Studies. Scripps College, 2003-2006.

- Department Chair, Anthropology, Scripps College, 1998-2006.

Assistant Professor, Departments of Anthropology and Gender & Women's Studies, Scripps College, 1998-2003.

- Department Chair, Gender & WS, 1999-2001; co-chair 2002-2003.

Visiting Professor of Anthropology, Occidental College, L.A., CA, 1998.

Visiting Professor of Women's Studies, UC Santa Barbara, 1996.

Education

University of Chicago, Anthropology. MA. 1988, Ph.D. 1997

Barnard College, Columbia University, English. BA *Summa Cum Laude*, 1981.

Hampshire College, Dance. 1976-78.

Areas of Research & Teaching Expertise

Social Stigma (Culture, Deviance, Identity); Humor in Use; Performance Studies; Stand-up Comedy; Ethnographic Narrative; Cultural Anthropology; South Asian Studies; Queer Studies; Disability Studies; Gender & Women's Studies; Ethnographic Field Methods

Honors, Awards, Fellowships

New Frontiers in the Arts & Humanities Fellow, Indiana University, 2008.
 Awarded the A. K. Coomaraswamy Book Prize for the best book on South Asia in
 2007 by the Association for Asian Studies for *Stigmas of the Tamil Stage*.
 College Arts and Humanities Institute (CAHI) Research Travel Grant, Indiana
 University, 2007, 2009.
 Johnson Faculty Award for Excellence in Research, Scripps College 2004-05
 Johnson Faculty Award for Excellence in Teaching, Scripps College 2003-04
 Johnson Faculty Award for Community Service, Scripps College 2002-03
 Scripps College Faculty Research Grants, Summer 1999, Fall 2001, Spring 2006
 American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) Fellow, 2001-02
 Visiting Research Scholar, Dept. of Anthropology, New York University, Fall 1997
 Committee on South Asian Studies, U Chicago, Dissertation Support 1993-4, 1996-7
 Women's Studies Doctoral Dissertation Fellow, UC Santa Barbara, 1995-96
 Sylvia Forman Prize in Feminist Anthropology, Association for Feminist
 Anthropology, 1995
 Charlotte W. Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellow, Woodrow Wilson
 Foundation, 1994-95
 American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS) Junior Research Fellow, India, 1992-93
 Fulbright-Hays Fellow, United States Department of Education, India, 1991-92
 National Science Foundation Graduate Fellow, 1988-1991
 AIIS Advanced Tamil Language Program in India, 1989-90
 Cmte. on Institutional Cooperation Foreign Language Traveling Scholar, 1988
 Jacob K. Javits Fellow, 1987-88
 New York Foundation for the Arts Fellow, "Emergent Forms," 1987
 Barnard College Cabell Greet Award for Excellency in English, 1981
 Elected to PHI BETA KAPPA, 1981

Field Experience and Foreign Exchange

- **India.** 22 mos. doctoral dissertation fieldwork, Tamilnadu, South India, 1991-93
Fieldwork support: Fulbright Scholarship, 1991-2; AIIS Fellowship, 1992-93
Fieldwork supervision: Dissertation committee Bernard S. Cohn (chair), Jean
 Comaroff, Nancy D. Munn, and Norman Cutler; Dr. Mu. Ramaswamy (Tamil
 University, Tanjore, India)
- **India.** 9 mos. intensive language study and research site preparation, 1989-90
Scholarship supervision: AIIS Language Program Director Dr. K. Paramasivam
- **Mexico and Nicaragua.** 3 mos. performance residency w/ The Women's Circus,
 1987. Residency support: Funded in part by the New York Foundation for the Arts, in
 part private donors. Site supervision: El Comite Nicaraguensa del Arte Internationale.
- **Alaska.** Alaskan Internships Program. Craig, Alaska, 1976
- **Finland.** American Field Service Foreign Exchange Program. Helsinki, Finland,
 1975

Professional Memberships

American Anthropological Association (AAA)
 Society for Cultural Anthropology (SCA)
 International Society for Humor Studies (ISHS)
 Society for Linguistic Anthropology (SLA)
 Society for Visual Anthropology (SVA)
 Association for Asian Studies (AAS)
 Society of Lesbian and Gay Anthropologists (SOLGA)
 Association for Feminist Anthropology (AFA)

Language Proficiencies

Tamil, almost fluent (Reading, Writing, Speaking)
 French, passable (Reading, Listening, Speaking)
 Spanish, passable (Reading, Listening, Speaking)

Publications

Books:

- *Stigmas of the Tamil Stage: An Ethnography of Special Drama Artists in South India*. Duke University Press, 2005.

Films:

- *Road Comics: Big Work on Small Stages*. Documentary video. (Prod. Susan Seizer, 2010, 60 min.)
- *The Buffoon-Dance Duet*. 1997. Documentary video, 11 min. (in Tamil). Available at <http://www.stigmasofthetamilstage.com/videoclips.html>

Journal Articles

- "Fuck Vulgarity: On the Non-Referential Use of Obscenity in Live Stand-Up Comedy." *Anthropological Quarterly*. Forthcoming 2010.
- "Roadwork: Offstage with Special Drama Actresses in Tamilnadu, South India." *Cultural Anthropology*, V15N2:217-259, May 2000.
- "Jokes, Gender, and Discursive Distance on the Tamil Popular Stage." *American Ethnologist*, V24N1:62-90, Feb 1997.
- "Playing the Field." Review essay, *Taboo: sex, identity and erotic subjectivity in anthropological fieldwork*, D. Kulick and M. Wilson, eds. In *Transition: An International Review*. Issue 71, V6N3:100-113, Fall 1996.
- "Paradoxes of Visibility in the Field: Rites of Queer Passage in Anthropology." *Public Culture*, V8N1:73-100, Fall 1995.

Articles in edited volumes:

- “Legacies of Discourse: Special Drama and its History,” in *Play-House of Power: Theatre in Colonial and Postcolonial India*. Ed. Lata Singh. Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 70-104. 2009.
- Gender Plays: Social and Spatial Paradigms on the Tamil Popular Stage." In *Tamil Geographies: Cultural Constructions of Space and Place in South India*. Ed. Martha Ann Selby & Indira Viswanathan Peterson. SUNY Press, pp. 253-292. 2008.
- “Roadwork: Offstage with Special Drama Actresses in South India.” In *Everyday Life in South Asia*, ed. Diane Mines and Sarah Lamb. Indiana University Press, pp. 116-131, 2002; 2nd revised edition forthcoming 2010.
- “Post-Field Positionings” and “The Afterlife of Fieldwork Relations.” Issue Guest Editor, *Indian Folklife*, Serial No. 23, National Folklore Support Centre, Chennai, India. 2006.

Invited Lectures & Conference Presentations

“Shake It Up: Narrative Moves into Movement on the Stand-up Comedy Stage.”

- Paper for the panel, “Folklore and Humor.” American Folklore Society annual meetings, Boise, Idaho, Oct. 2009
- Paper for the panel, “Meanings in Motion: Performance, Embodiment and Identity.” American Anthropological Association meetings, Philadelphia PA, Dec. 2009.

“Road Comics: Big Work on Small Stages.”

- Guest lecture, *Anthropology Department, Indiana University*, Feb 2009
- Guest lecture, *Anthropology Department, Bryn Mawr College*, PA, March 2009
- Colloquium presentation, *Communication & Culture, Indiana University*, April 2009

“Fuck Vulgarity: Road Comics Use 'a little bit of language'.”

- *Cultural Studies/Performance Studies Conference*, Indiana University, Feb 6-7, 2009
- *American Anthropology Assn. annual meetings*, San Francisco, CA, Nov 2008

“The Distances Appropriate to Humor: Success and Failure on the Standup Comedy Stage.”

- The 2007 *Obermann Center for Advanced Studies Humanities Symposium on Obsenity: An Interdisciplinary Discussion*. March 1-4, 2007

“Women with Swords, Women with Guns: Fierce Funny Women in South India & the U.S.”

- Invited Guest Lecture, *South Asia Center*, U Wisconsin-Madison, April 2009
- Invited Guest Lecture, *South Asia Institute*, U Texas-Austin, October 2007

"The Grotesque in Sheep's Clothing, Rearing its Head to Make Us Howl."

- *American Anthropological Association annual meetings*, Dec. 2006

“Postfield Positionings: Introductory Remarks & The Afterlife of Fieldwork Relations.”

- *AAA annual meetings*, Dec. 2005

“Everything You See is Part of the History of This Place.”

- *Bernard S. Cohn Memorial Conference*, University of Chicago, May 2005
- Invited Session, “Honoring the Scholarly Vision of B. S. Cohn.” *AAA annual meetings*, S.F., CA, Nov. 2000.

“Laugh ‘til it Hurts: Domestic Violence on the Tamil Popular Stage.”

- Department of Folklore & Ethnomusicology Colloquium, IU, Sept. 2006
- United States Educational Foundation in India, Chennai, India, Nov. 2001.
- Conference on Visual Media, Mass Communication, and Violence in South Asia, Center for Asian Studies, U Texas-Austin, TX, April 2001.
- Feminist Anthropology Speakers Series, Occidental College, L.A., CA, April 2001

"The Drama Tongue and Local Eyes: A Secret Language of Theater Artists in India."

- Asian Studies Speakers Series, Pomona College, Claremont, CA, Feb. 2000
- American Ethnological Society Annual Meeting, Portland, OR, March 1999

“Road Work: Off-stage Scripts for Acting the Ideal Tamil Woman.”

- Scripps College Faculty Seminar, Claremont, CA, March 2000
- South Asian Women’s Conference, 2nd annual, L.A., CA, Sept. 1997
- Graduate Conference on Space in South Asia, Univ. of Chicago, May 1997
- Association for Asian Studies, 49th annual meeting, Chi., IL, March 1997
- Conference on South Asia , 25th annual meeting, Madison, WI, Oct. 1996

“Women with Swords: Matriarchal Queendoms on the Tamil Popular Stage.”

- Women in Religious Studies Salon, Claremont Graduate U, Nov. 1998
- American Anthropological Assoc., 97th Annual Meeting, Phil. PA, Dec. 1998

“Dancing while Wearing Anthropological Glasses.”

- American Anthropological Assoc., 96th meeting, Wash. D.C., Nov. 1997

“Representations of the Reign of Tipu Sultan.”

- Centre of South Asian Studies conference “The Place of the Past: Uses of

History in South Asia," School of Oriental and African Studies, U London, April 1997

"Jokes, Gender, and Discursive Distance on the Tamil Popular Stage."

- Women's Studies Program Public Colloquium, UCSB, Jan. 1996
- American Anthropological Assoc. 94th annual meetings, Wash. DC, Nov. 1995
- Association for Asian Studies 47th annual meeting, Wash. DC, April 1995
- International Society for Humor Studies conference, Ithaca, NY, June 1994

"Gender Plays: Sociospatial Paradigms on the Tamil Popular Stage."

- American Anthropological Association 93rd mtgs., Atlanta, GA, Dec., 1994
- 23rd annual Conference on South Asia, Madison WI, Nov 3-5, 1994
- South Asia Workshop, University of Chicago, Chi, IL, Oct. 1994

"Paradoxes of Visibility in the Field: Rites of Queer Passage in Anthropology."

- Culture, Life Course, & Mental Health Workshop, U Chicago, IL, May 1997
- Graduate seminar on Religious Studies/Queer Studies, UCSB, CA, April 1996
- Gay and Lesbian Studies Workshop, University of Chicago, IL, Nov. 1994
- National Graduate Student Conference on LGBT Studies, UT-Austin, 1994

Professional Service

Policy Committee Member, India Studies, Indiana University, 2009-

Advisory Board Member, GLBT Student Support Services, Indiana University, 2009-

Advisory Council Member, Office of Disability Services, Indiana University, 2008-

Discussant, "Performative Voices and Activist Audiences." American Folklore Society annual meetings, Boise, Idaho, October 2009.

Discussant, "Off Stage and In the Field: Unconventional Theaters of Memory and Historical Presence." Double session, American Anthropology Assn. annual mtgs., Nov. 2008

Discussant, "Sabhas: Changing the Landscape of Chennai's Music, Dance, and Drama," Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies. Boston MA, March 21-24, 2007

Panel Organizer and Chair, *Post-field Positionings*. AAA meetings, Dec 2005

Convener and organizer, *Interdisciplinary Faculty Working Group on LGBTQ Histories*. Funded by a Johnson Faculty Grant, Scripps College, 2005-2006.

Faculty Board Member, *South India Term Abroad* (SITA) program, 2005-2006

Panel Organizer and Co-chair. *The Significance of Live Performance in Media-Saturated Locales*. American Anthropological Assn mtgs, Nov. 2002

Curator, *Gender & Women's Studies Event Series*. Scripps College, 1998-2005

Panel Organizer and Chair, *Embodied Feminisms*. PSWSA Conference, April 2000

Chair, Ruth Benedict Prize Committee, SOLGA, Am. Anthropological Assn, 1999

Curator, *South Asia at Chicago: Fifty Years of Scholarship*. Regenstein Library Special Collections, University of Chicago, 1997

Panel Chair, *Sharing the Dance: Essays on Performance in Memory of Cynthia J. Novack*. American Anthropological Association, 96th Meeting, Nov. 1997

Panel Organizer and Chair, *Worldly Women and Homely Acts: Cultural Codes and Spatial Practices in South Asia*. South Asian Women's Conference, L.A. CA, 1997; Association of Asian Studies annual meeting, Chicago, IL, March 1997; South Asia Conference, Madison, WI, Oct. 1996

Panel Organizer and Chair, *Gendered Cartographies: the politics of space and sexuality in South Asia*. American Anthropological Assn, Atlanta, GA, 1994

Curator and Photographer, *Special Drama: stage artists and publicity materials from South India*. Haskell Hall exhibit, Dept. of Anthropology, U. Chicago, 1994-95