

NIVEDITA MAJUMDAR

Professor
Department of English
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Education

- Ph.D., English, University of Florida, 2003
Dissertation: "The Nation and Its Discontents: A Critique of Nationalism in South Asian Literature" (dissertation advisor: Professor John Leavey)
- M.Phil, with distinction, English, Delhi University, 1996
- M.A., English, Delhi University, 1993
- B.A. (Honors), English, Delhi University, 1990

Professional Positions

- Professor, Department of English, John Jay College, CUNY, 2022– present
- Associate Professor, Department of English, John Jay College, CUNY, 2011– 2022
- Assistant Professor, Department of English, John Jay College, CUNY, 2006 – 2010
- Postdoctoral Fellow, New York University, Department of English, 2003-2004

Publications

Books

- *The World In A Grain of Sand: Postcolonial Literature and Radical Universalism*, London: Verso, 2021
- *The Other Side of Terror: An Anthology of Writings on Terrorism in South Asia*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2011/2009

Articles and Book Chapters

- "The Aesthetic Cold War," *Catalyst: A Journal of Theory and Strategy*, 6.4 Winter (2023): pp. 145-159
- "Is Postcolonial Theory's Ethical Turn a Political Dead-End?" in Elena Louisa Lange and Joshua Pickett-Depaolis eds. *The Conformist Rebellion*, London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2022, pp. 201-216
- "The Terrorist Next Door: Kamila Shamsie's *Home Fire* and the Pitfalls of Terrorism Discourse," *The Journal of Global Postcolonial Studies*, 9.1 Spring (2021), pp. 177-190

- “The Novel in the Time of Neoliberalism,” in Vishvas Satgar ed. *The New Imperialism: Limits, Crisis and Resistance*, Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2020, pp. 203-218
- “Labor, Love and Capital,” Review Essay on Sophia Lewis’s *Full Surrogacy Now*, *Catalyst: A Journal of Theory and Strategy*, 3.3 Fall (2019): pp. 154-166
- “The Nation and the World: A Reading of Amitav Ghosh’s *The Shadow Lines*” in Sandip Ain, ed. *Amitav Ghosh’s The Shadow Lines: A Critical Anthology*, New Delhi: Worldview Publishers, 2019/2011, pp. 90-105
- “Silencing the Subaltern: Resistance and Gender in Postcolonial Theory,” *Catalyst: A Journal of Theory and Strategy*, 1.1 Spring (2017), pp. 58-87
- “Commodifying Culture: Language and Exoticism in Indian English Literature” in Lisa Lau and Om Dwivedi, eds. *Indian Writing in English and the Global Literary Market*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, pp. 63-80
- “Literary Engagements with Terrorism: An Intervention,” *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 17.2 (2011), pp. 110-120
- “Speaking with a Forked Tongue: A Rebuttal of Amit Chaudhuri on Indian Anglophone Literature,” *Journal of Commonwealth and Postcolonial Studies*, 17.1, (2011), pp. 103-119
- “The Nation and Its Outcasts: A Reading of Mahasweta Devi’s *Douloti the Bountiful*,” *South Asian Review*, 30.2 (2009), pp. 157-171
- “Can the Woman Speak? A Reading of Ross, Kroetsch and Atwood,” *Indian Review of World Literature in English*, 5.2 July (2009), pp. 1-11
- “When the East is a Career: The Question of Exoticism in Indian Anglophone Literature,” *Postcolonial Text*, 4.3 (2008), pp. 1-18
- “Nationalizing the Woman: Nation and Gender in Tagore’s *The Home and the World*,” *Journal of Commonwealth and Postcolonial Studies*, 12.1, (2005), pp. 24-41
- “Shadows of the Nation: Amitav Ghosh and the Critique of Nationalism,” *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature* 34.4 (2003), pp. 237-258.
- “The Politics of Authenticity: A Reading of *The Golden Notebook*,” *Doris Lessing Studies* 22:2, Spring (2002), pp. 1-9
- “Questioning ‘The Kingdom of Greatness’: *Sister Carrie* as a Critique of American Social Ideals,” *Journal of Indo-American Studies* 1, (2002), pp. 105-120

Review Essays, Translations, and Short Pieces

- “Is Socialism Eurocentric?” in *The ABCs of Socialism*, New York: Verso and Jacobin, 2016, pp. 62-68
- “Reading Jhumpa Lahiri Politically,” Review Essay on Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Lowland*, *Jacobin: A Magazine of Culture and Polemic*, 14 (2014), pp. 78-83
- Thomas Piketty’s *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, Review Essay, *Jacobin: A Magazine of Culture and Polemic* <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2014/07/why-were-marxists/> 7/2/2014
- “Social Justice and Cultural Production in Contemporary South Asia,” Editorial, *South Asian Review*, 27.4, (2007), pp. 1-3
- “Targeting Culture: Reevaluating the Authorial Translation of *Gitanjali*,” *Valley Voices: A Literary Review*, special issue on “Poetic Translation in a Global Context,” 7.1, Spring (2007), pp. 30-34
- “Bijan Bhattacharaya’s *Nabanna*,” in John Thieme ed. *The Table is Laid: An Anthology Of South Asian Food Writing*, Oxford University Press: Delhi, 2006, pp. 48-59

- Sivanandan's *When Memory Dies*, Review Essay in *The Literary Encyclopedia and Literary Dictionary*. Ed. Robert Clark, Emory Elliott and Janet Todd. The Literary Dictionary Company Limited. 12/6/2004. <<http://www.LiteraryEncyclopedia.com>>
- "Voices on the Wings, Telugu Free Verse 1985–95," *Indian Literature* 202, March-April (2001), pp. 199-2

Selected Journalistic Pieces

- "Message from a Mutating Virus," *RAIOT.IN*, 7/19/2021. A modified version of the piece was also published by *Tribune*, "Only International Solidarity Can Defeat COVID For Good"
- "The American Left and the Sanders Legacy," *Tribune*, 4/15/2020
- "The Socialist Case for Gun Control," *Jacobin: A Magazine of Culture and Polemic*, 2/26/18
- "Statist Attacks on Academic Freedom Are a Symptom of Neoliberalism," Nivedita Majumdar interviewed by Daniel Falcone, *Truthout*, 5/13/2017
- "CUNY's Last Lifeline," with Barbara Bowen, *Jacobin: A Magazine of Culture and Polemic*, 7/16/16
- "Bernie and the Left," *EuroNomade: Inventaire Il Comune – Sovvertire Il Presente*, 4/2/16
- "Greece: Against Defeatism," *Jacobin: A Magazine of Culture and Polemic* 7/29/15

Selected Media Appearances

- Jacobin YouTube Chanel, "What's Wrong with Postcolonial theory? – Nivedita Majumdar" in "The Jacobin Show," 7/4/2021
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dfsEhTVaC4s>
- Jacobin YouTube Chanel, "Stay at Home" Public Lecture Series, "Is Marxism Eurocentric?," 5/5/2020
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHHF9m71uPc>
- Ring of Fire with Sam Seder, (on gun control) 3/7/2018.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JuREMmafdxQ&list=PLOC5u3ZE5KnXTGvHqY43dTF2>
- Dead Pundits Society, Marxism and Postcolonial Theory, July 2017
<https://soundcloud.com/deadpundits/ep-18-marxism-and-postcolonial-theory-w-nivedita-majumdar>
- WBAI, "Education at the Crossroads" with Basir Mchawi, 3/24/2016, 7pm
<https://www.wbai.org/archive.php>
- WBAI: Morning Show - Wed, Jan 4, 2017 6:00 AM (listen at 147:45 mark)
<https://www.wbai.org/archive.php>
- BRIC TV, BK Live, 12/3/2015. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5iqq_lcmBdI

Leadership Roles

- Academic Director, Faculty Fellowship Publication Program, CUNY, 2022-present
- PSC Presidential Designee for PSC-CUNY Research Awards Program, 2021-present
- AAUP National Council, 2020-2024

- AFT Higher Education Programs and Policy Committee, 2015-present
- Trustee, PSC-CUNY Welfare Board, 2018-present
- Secretary, PSC-CUNY, 2015-2021
- AFT Asian American & Pacific Islander Taskforce, 2021 – 2023
- AAUP Collective Bargaining Congress, Executive Committee, 2017-2020
- AFT Racial Equity Taskforce, 2015-2017

Academic Awards and Distinctions

- Enhanced Travel Award, John Jay College, 2022-23, 2019-20 & 2014-15
- PSC Research Foundation, City University of New York, Research Award, 2019-20, 2018-19, 2015-16, 2012-13, 2011-12, 2010-11, 2009-10, 2008-09, 2007-08, & 2006-07
- The CUNY Academy Stefan Bernard Baumrin Travel Award for Associate Professors, 2019-20
- Senior Scholar Release Program, John Jay College, 2014-15
- Mid-Career Award, John Jay College, CUNY, 2013-14
- Fellow, Center for Place, Culture and Politics, The Graduate Center, CUNY, 2012-13
- Faculty Scholarly Excellence Reward, John Jay College, CUNY, 2011-12 & 2010-11
- Mellon Fellow, The Center for the Humanities, The Graduate Center, CUNY, 2008-09
- Faculty Fellowship Publication Award, City University of New York, 2007-08
- Research Assistance Program Grant, John Jay College, CUNY, 2009-10, 2008-09, & 2007-08
- Scholarly Activity Grant, John Jay College, CUNY, 2007
- Grant for book completion, John Jay College, 2006-07
- American Association of University Women, International Fellowship, 2000-2001
- University of Florida, Department of Women's Studies, O' Ruth McQuown Fellowship, 2000
- University of Florida, CLAS Dissertation Fellowship, 2000
- University of Florida, Certificate of Award for Academic Achievement, 2001, 2000, 1999, & 1998
- Delhi University, Distinction in M.Phil., 1996

Courses Taught

- LIT 489: Independent Study
- LIT 400: Senior Seminar
- LIT 375: Perspectives in Twentieth Century literature
- LIT 346: Cultures in Conflict
- LIT 327: Crime, Punishment and Justice in World Literature
- LIT 316: Gender and Identity in Literary Traditions
- LIT 300: Text and Context
- LIT 290: Special Topics - Terrorism in Literature and Cinema
- LIT 284: Film and Society
- LIT 260: Introduction to Literary Study
- Lit 237: Literature as Witness
- LIT 233: American Stories

- LIT 232: Reading the Modern World
- LIT 135: Justice and Heroism in Literature
- ISP 101: Ways of Knowing- Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Past

Invited Lectures

- “Ahmad vs. Academia Inc: Looking Back, looking Forward,” Tufts University, September 29, 2023
- “Gender in Postcolonial Theory,” Delhi University, June 27, 2023
- Book Discussion: *The World in a Grain of Sand*, School of Visual Arts, Art and Politics Lecture series, February 10, 2022
- “Postcolonial Theory and its Discontents,” Tufts University, October 1, 2021
- “Critical Perspectives on Transnational Feminism,” Center for Women’s Studies, Zagreb, June 17, 2020
- “Postcolonial Theory’s Faux-Feminism,” School of Visual Arts, New York, February 19, 2019
- “Neocolonialism, Neoliberalism and Novels,” Wits University, Johannesburg, April 14, 2018
- “Socialism as Eurocentric,” Verso, New York, March, 20, 2017
- “Futurity and Resistance in Postcolonial Theory,” University of Florida, Gainesville, October 21, 2016
- “Crisis in Public Higher Education,” Joseph S. Murphy Institute, CUNY, November 4, 2016
- “Contemporary Marxism and Culture,” Center for Marxist Studies, Delhi, July 11, 2014
- “Beyond the Exotic: Reexamining the Politics of ‘Otherness’ in South Asian Anglophone Literature,” Ramakrishna Mission Residential College, Kolkata, February 17, 2012
- “Literature and Terrorism,” Securing South Asia for the People of South Asia Conference, Toronto, April 26, 2009
- “The Postcolonial and the Global,” South Asian Literary Association, Chicago, December 27, 2007
- “Nation and Gender: Feminism in Nineteenth-Century Bengali Literature,” Cambridge University, Cambridge, October 28, 2003
- “Issues of Gender and Nationalism in Tagore’s *The Home and the World*,” Portland State University, Portland, April 20, 2002
- “Whose Nation Is It Anyway? Nationalism in Contemporary Indian Novels in English,” Miranda House, Delhi University, Delhi, July 10, 1999

Selected Conference Presentations

- “Neocolonial, Neoliberal and the Novel,” NEMLA, Boston, March 10, 2024
- “Capital, Climate, and Realism,” NEMLA, Baltimore, March 12, 2022
- “The Politics of Resistance in Postcolonial Theory,” British Commonwealth and Postcolonial Studies, Savannah, February 16, 2021
- “Subalterneity and Resistance in Mahasweta Devi,” Association of Asian Studies Conference, Washington DC, March 25, 2018
- “Class in Postcolonial Theory – An Intervention,” British Commonwealth and Postcolonial Conference, Savannah, February 27, 2016
- “Class, Culture and Postcoloniality,” Historical Materialism, London, November 7, 2014

- “In Pursuit of Just Laws; A Literary Exploration,” The Rule of Law in an Era of Change, Athens, June 12, 2014
- “Performance and the Rule of Law,” Panel chair and discussant, The Rule of Law in an Era of Change, Athens, June 12, 2014
- “Time For Class: Capital in Postcolonial Theory,” American Comparative Literature Association, New York, March 22, 2014.
- “The Politics of Resistance in Postcolonial Theory,” *Rethinking Marxism*, Amherst, September, 20, 2013.
- “What’s left of Postcolonialism?: An Engagement with Gayatri Spivak,” Historical Materialism, New Delhi, April 3, 2012.
- “Poststructuralist Theory and Literary Structures,” Left Forum, New York, March 19, 2011
- “What’s Left of Class: Cultural Production in Liberalized India,” *MLA*, Los Angeles, January 7, 2011. This paper was part of a panel I organized, “Class in South Asian Cultural Production.”
- “Literary Engagements with Terrorism – An Intervention,” Balancing Social Justice, Security and Culture Conference, Marrakesh, Morocco, June 4, 2010.
- “Rethinking Secularism,” American Comparative Literature Association, New Orleans, April 3, 2010.
- “The Question of English in Indian English Literature,” British Commonwealth and Postcolonial Studies, Savannah, February 26, 2009.
- “Culture, What Is It Good For: Questioning the Role of Culturalism in War Discourse,” Justice and Policing in Diverse Societies Conference, San Juan Puerto Rico, June 10, 2008
- “Of Homes and Worlds: An Engagement with the Politics of Diasporic Identity,” Modern Language Association, Philadelphia, December 27, 2006
- “Targeting Culture: Reevaluating Tagore’s Translation of *Gitanjali*,” Association of Literary Scholars and Critics, Cambridge, November 5, 2005
- “Reading Mahasweta Devi in the Time of Call Centers,” South Asian Literary Association, Philadelphia, December 27, 2004
- “The Artist and the World: Indian English Writing in the Postcolonial Context,” *Rethinking Marxism*, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, September 23, 2000
- “Communalism, Secularism, and Social Inequality in Contemporary India,” South Asian Studies conference, University of Wisconsin-Madison, October 15, 1999
- “Re-Orienting the ‘Female Figure’ in Tagore’s Translation of *Gitanjali*,” Translation Themes and Variations conference, New York University, April 17, 1999
- “So What’s Left? Religious Fundamentalism in India Today,” Marx at the Millennium conference, University of Florida, March 20, 1999
- “Reclaiming the Enlightenment: An Alternative Reading of the Enlightenment,” annual Interdisciplinary Borders conference, Illinois State University, October 20, 1997
- “The Subaltern Speaks: A Rooted, Feminist Reading of Thiong’O, Gordimer, and Nasrin,” Transgression of Culture, Identity, Nationality conference, Illinois State University, October 11, 1996

Professional Experience

Discipline

- Editorial board member, *Studies in Humanities*

- Manuscript Reviewer for:
 - Routledge
 - *PMLA*
 - *English Studies in Africa*
 - *Current Sociology*
 - *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*
 - *Studies in Humanities*
 - *ARIEL: A Review of International English Literature*
 - *South Asian Review*
 - *Journal of Labor and Society*
 - *Catalyst: A Journal of Theory and Strategy*
 - *philoSOPHIA: A Journal of transContinental Feminism*
 - *Literature Compass*
 - *Journal of Research (Humanities)*
 - *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies*
- Translation Reviewer, New York State Council on the Arts, 2007 – present
- Organizer, South Asian Literary Association conference, “Social Justice and the South Asian Cultural Sphere,” Chicago, December 26-27, 2007
- Organizer, interdisciplinary conference, *Marx at the Millennium*, University of Florida, March 19-20, 1999

University

- Faculty Fellowship Publication Program, CUNY, Academic Director, 2022-present
- Faculty Fellowship Publication Program, CUNY, Mentor, 2020-21, 2019-20, 2018-19, 2017-18, & 2014-15
- PSC Presidential designee for PSC-CUNY Research awards, 2021-present
- CUNY Committee on Academic Technology (CAT), Member, 2019 – present
- PSC-CUNY Welfare Fund, Trustee, 2018 - present
- Professional Staff Congress-CUNY, Secretary, 2015-2021
- CUNY Leadership Academy, 2014
- ACT Grader for CUNY 2000 – 2006
- Junior Proficiency Exam Grader for CUNY, 2002

College

- Faculty Personnel Committee, At-large member, 2022-2024
- Council of Major/Minor Coordinators, John Jay College, member, 2021-2022
- John Jay PSC Executive Committee, ex-officio member, 2015-2021
- John Jay PSC Chapter co-chair, 2011–2015, 2022-present
- Faculty Personnel Committee, At-large member, 2012-13, & 2013-14
- Research Advisory Committee, 2013
- Appointments Committee, ISP 2012-2013
- Committee for awarding 'Ethics Across the Curriculum' student research grants, 2012
- Working Group, Middle States, 2011-2012
- Faculty advisor, South Asian Students' Club, 2007–2014
- Faculty Senate, 2009-2011
- College Council, 2009-2011
- John Jay College delegate to the PSC Delegate Assembly, 2008-2011

- College Council, Executive Committee, 2009-2010
- International Conference Planning Committee, 2009 -2010
- Committee for Student Participation at the International Conference, Chair, 2009-2010
- Retreat on Student Success, organized by the Provost's office, 2007

Department

- English Major Coordinator, 2021-2022
- Major Advisory Committee , 2021-present, 2008-11
- Outcomes Assessment subcommittee, 2021-2022, 2011-12
- Personnel and Budget Committee, 2011-12
- Chair's Advisory Committee, 2009-2010
- Curriculum Committee, 2007-2008, 2008-2009
- Department Representative to John Jay PSC chapter, 2007 – 2009
- Committee on partnership with junior colleges, 2007-2008
- Search Committee for a faculty position in Latin American literature, 2007
- Task Force for the departmental move to 54th street, 2007
- Workshop on student writing, organized by Professor Mark McBeth, 2006

Languages

- Bengali
- Hindi