

8th Dr. Jasbir Singh Saini Chair in Sikh Studies Conference



Sikhs in North America:

Remembering Key Historical Events, Challenges and Responses

May 5-6, 2023

Conference Program

Friday, May 5th

***Note:** All panels will be in the Interdisciplinary Building Symposium Room, INTS 1113*

7:45 am Hotel Pickup Begins

8:30 am Registration and Tea/Coffee

9:00 am Welcome – Dr. Daryle Williams, Dean, College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (CHASS), University of California, Riverside, CA, USA

Introduction – Dr. Pashaura Singh, Distinguished Professor & Dr. J.S. Saini Chair in Sikh and Punjabi Studies, University of California, Riverside, CA, USA

Keynote Speech I – “Migration, Creativity, Innovation: Sikh Migrants and Values Define the 21st Century”

– Dr. Parminder Bhachu, Professor of Sociology, Clark University, Worcester, MA, USA

Respondent: Dr. Louis E. Fenech, Professor of History and Sikh Studies, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, IA, USA

10:10 am Panel # 1: Public Perceptions, Multiculturalism, Race and Gender

Chair: Tejpal Singh Bainiwal, Doctoral Candidate, UC Riverside, CA, USA

“Explaining Different Public Profiles of Sikhs in Canada and the U.S.”

– Dr. Prema Kurien, Professor of Sociology, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY, USA

“Multicultural Exceptionalism and the Limits of Racial Inclusion: Race and Gender in the Sikh Diaspora of the Transnational Pacific Northwest”

– Dr. Sasha Sabherwal Postdoctoral Fellow, Center for the Humanities at Tufts University, Medford, MA, USA

“Race & Class: Early South Asian Arrivals in North America”

– Dr. Amritjit Singh, Langston Hughes Professor Emeritus of English & African American Studies, Ohio University, Athens, OH, USA

Respondent: Dr. Doris Jakobsh, Professor of Religious Studies, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

11:30 am Break

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11:50 am Panel # 2: American Fascism and Sikh Precarity – Roundtable Discussion

Chair: Adam Tyson, Doctoral Candidate, Department of Religious Studies, UC Riverside, CA, USA

Panelist 1: Dr. Guriqbal S. Sahota, Associate Professor of Literature and Aurora Chair in Sikh/Punjabi Studies, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA, USA

Panelist 2: Dr. Arvind-Pal Singh Mandair, Professor and Tara Singh, Balwant Kaur Chatha, Gurbax Singh and Kirpal Kaur Brar Professor of Sikh Studies, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Respondent: Dr. Anneeth Kaur Hundle, Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Dhan Kaur Sahota Presidential Chair in Sikh Studies, University of California, Irvine, CA, USA

1:10 pm Lunch

2:00 pm Panel # 3: Race, Citizenship, and the Sikhs

Chair: Tejpal Singh Bainiwal, Doctoral Candidate, Department of Religious Studies, UC Riverside, CA, USA

“The Past is Yet to Come: Race, Citizenship, and a Century of Diasporic Outlaws in the United States”

– Dr. Tavleen Kaur, Assistant Professor, Department of Asian American Studies, California State University, Fullerton, CA, USA

“‘Gilded Cages’: Race, Labor, Citizenship, and the Fabrication of the ‘Hindu’ in the American West”

– Dr. Amrit Deol, Lecturer in the Anthropology and Asian American Studies Department, California State University, Fresno, CA, USA

Respondent: Dr. Robin Rinehart, Professor of Religious Studies, Lafayette College, Pennsylvania, PA, USA

3:10 pm Break

Conference Program

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3:30 pm Panel # 4: Roundtable on Sikh Dharma International and *Gora* Sikh-Punjabi Sikh Relations: Fifty Years On

Chair: Dr. Amritjit Singh, Langston Hughes Professor Emeritus of English & African American Studies, Ohio University, Athens, OH, USA

“Reflections on Sikh Dharma at Fifty”

– Dr. Verne A. Dusenbery, Professor Emeritus, Department of Anthropology, Hamline University, Saint Paul, MN, USA

“Sikh Dharma/3HO: Activism, Outreach, and a Global Sikh Panth”

– Dr. Sangeeta Luthra, Independent Scholar, CA, USA

“Remembering 3HO as a New Religious Movement”

– Philip Deslippe, Doctoral Candidate, University of California, Santa Barbara, CA, USA

“Exploring 3HO-Sikh identities: Communal Relations and Abuses of Power”

– Dr. Nirinjan Kaur Khalsa-Baker, Instructor of Theological Studies, Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, CA, USA

“Legitimacy in 3HO/Sikh Dharma”

– Dr. Simranjit Khalsa, Assistant Professor of Sociology, University of Memphis, Memphis, TN, USA



Conference Program

Friday, May 5th

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6:00 pm Reception Dinner at Alumni Visitors Center

6:30 pm

Special Remarks

Associate Dean Gloria Gonzalez-Rivera, College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences (CHASS), UC Riverside, CA, USA

Dr. Harkeerat S. Dhillon, Board of Advisors, UC Riverside School of Medicine, CA, USA

6:50 pm Dinner

7:30 pm Keynote Speech II - "Changes Over Time: Punjabis, Punjabi Mexicans, and Sikhs in North America"

– Dr. Karen Leonard, Professor Emerita of Anthropology, University of California, Irvine, CA, USA

Honorees

Dr. Parminder Bhachu, Professor of Sociology, Clark University, Worcester, MA, USA

Dr. Doris Jakobsh, Professor of Religious Studies, University of Waterloo,
Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

Dr. Opinderjit Kaur Takhar, MBE, FHEA, Associate Professor and Director of
Centre for Sikh and Punjabi Studies, University of Wolverhampton, UK

Dr. Robin Rinehart, Professor of Religious Studies, Lafayette College,
Pennsylvania, USA

Dr. Michael Hawley, Associate Professor of Religion, Mount Royal University, Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Dr. Parvinder Singh Khanuja, 5Rivers Foundation, Phoenix, AZ, USA



Conference Program

Saturday, May 6th

***Note:** All panels will be in the Interdisciplinary Building Symposium Room, INTS 1113*

7:45 am Hotel Pickup Begins

8:30 am Tea/Coffee

9:00 am Panel # 5: Roundtable on Preserving, Documenting, and Narrating Sikh North American History

Chair: Dr. Karen Leonard, Professor Emerita of Anthropology, University of California, Irvine, CA, USA

Panelist 1: Dr. Sharanjit Kaur Sandhra, Sessional Instructor, Fraser Valley University, British Columbia, Canada

Panelist 2: Dr. Michael Hawley, Associate Professor of Religion, Mount Royal University, Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Panelist 3: Tejpaal Singh Bainiwal, Doctoral Candidate, Department of Religious Studies, University of California, Riverside, CA, USA

Panelist 4: "Who Owns the Past? Sikhs in North America"
– Dr. Nirvikar Singh, Distinguished Professor of Economics, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA, USA

11:00 am Break

11:20 am Panel # 6: White Supremacy, Violence, Right-Wing Politics and the Sikhs

Chair: Adam Tyson, Doctoral Candidate, Department of Religious Studies, UC Riverside, CA, USA

"The Predication, Subjective Capture, Translation of White Supremist Violence: Semiotics Problems of the Sikh"

– Randeep Singh Hothi, Doctoral Candidate in Asian Languages and Cultures, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

"Sikhs and Right-Wing Politics in America"

– Puninder Singh, Doctoral Candidate in Anthropology, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA

Respondent: Dr. Opinderjit Kaur Takhar, MBE, FHEA, Associate Professor and Director of Centre for Sikh and Punjabi Studies, University of Wolverhampton, UK

Conference Program

Saturday, May 6th

***Note:** All panels will be in the Interdisciplinary Building Symposium Room, INTS 1113*

1:00 pm Lunch

2:00 pm Panel # 7: Roundtable on “Twenty Years of Change: The Legacy of 9/11 and Oak Creek on Sikh American Organizing

Chair: Navdeep Singh, Sikh American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (SALDEF), Richmond, VA, USA

Panelist 1: Kiran Kaur Gill, SALDEF, Washington, DC, USA

Panelist 2: Manpreet Kaur, Jakara Movement, Bakersfield, CA, USA

Panelist 3: Jagpreet Singh, Desis Rising Up and Moving, New York City, NY, USA

4:00 pm Break

4:20 pm Panel # 8: Roundtable on “Sikh American Youth: The Perspective of a New Generation

Moderator: Kiran Kaur Gill, SALDEF, Washington, DC, USA

Panelist 1: Amris Kalika, Oak Creek Sangat, WI, USA

Panelist 2: Komal Kaur Chohan, Indianapolis Sangat, IN, USA

Panelist 3: Tarina Kaur Ahuja, SikhLEAD/Young Khalsa Girls, Boston, MA, USA

Panelist 4: Jaslin Kaur: Richmond Hill Organizer, New York City, NY, USA

6:30 pm Dinner at Punjab Palace



Conference Organizers



Dr. Pashaura Singh is Distinguished Professor and Dr. J.S. Saini Endowed Chair in Sikh and Punjabi Studies at the University of California, Riverside. His work on the Sikh scripture and early Sikh history is widely noted. He is the author of four Oxford monographs. His monograph on Guru Arjan, was on the “Best Sellers List” in India (2006) and his *A Dictionary of Sikh Studies* was launched on Oxford Quick Reference on April 15, 2019, to commemorate Guru Nanak's 550th Birth Anniversary. In addition, he has edited or co-edited eleven volumes, including *The Oxford Handbook of Sikh Studies* (OUP 2014) and the most recent volume *The Sikh World* (2023) for the *Routledge Worlds* series.



Tejpal Singh Bainiwal is a PhD Candidate at the University of California, Riverside and holds an M.A. in Religious Studies. His research focus is on Sikh American history throughout the 20th century. Tejpal has been working with educators across California to ensure the inclusion of Sikhs and Sikhism within school curriculums. He also serves on the board of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Historic Preservation (APIAHIP) to ensure the proper preservation of Sikh American history. Currently, he is working on a statewide research project looking at the history of the Sikh community in Colorado as well as an online archive to preserve the historic Farmers' Protest.



Adam Tyson is a Ph.D. Candidate with a designated emphasis in Middle East and Islamic Studies and holds an M.A. in Comparative Religion from the University of Washington as well as a B.A. in Religious Studies from Lawrence University. He is currently in his sixth year at the UCR Religious Studies Program. Adam's focus is on Islamic Mysticism in the Early Modern period with an emphasis on Intellectual History and Sufism in the Ottoman and Mughal Empires. His dissertation research explores philosophies and theologies of mystical monism in the late Medieval and early modern period as well as the role of Sufism in crossing religious boundaries in the Ottoman and Mughal Empires.

Keynote Speaker - 1 and Honoree



Dr. Parminder Bhachu is a Professor in the Department of Sociology at Clark University. She is the author of *Movers and Makers: Uncertainty, Resilience and Migrant Creativity in Worlds of Flux*; *Twice migrants; Dangerous Designs*; and co-editor of *Enterprising Women*; and also *Immigration and Entrepreneurship*. She has held a Henry R. Luce Professor of Cultural Identities and Global Processes and has been a Director of Women's Studies. She has lived in multiple sites in East Africa, the United Kingdom and on both the east and west coasts of the United States.

Keynote Speaker - 2



Dr. Karen Isaksen Leonard is an historian and anthropologist who taught at the University of California, Irvine. With a 1969 Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin on the history of India, she has published on the social history and anthropology of Hyderabad State, and on Punjabi Mexican Americans, South Asian Americans, and Muslim Americans.

Her books include *Making Ethnic Choices: California's Punjabi Mexican Americans* (1992), *South Asian Americans* (1997), *Muslims in the United States: the State of Research* (2003), and *Locating Home: India's Hyderabadis Abroad* (2007), a multisite ethnography of the diaspora from Hyderabad to Pakistan, the UK, Australia, Canada, the US, and the Gulf states of the Middle East.

Honorees



Dr. Michael Hawley is Associate Professor in Religious Studies at Mount Royal University and Adjunct Associate Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Calgary. He is teaching courses on Sikhism, Hinduism, and Religion and Violence. He is the editor of *Sikh Diaspora: Theory, Agency, and Experience* (Brill 2013). His research - the *Alberta Sikh History Project* - documents for the first time a comprehensive archive of Sikh history, religion, culture, and space in Alberta.



Dr. Doris Jakobsh holds degrees from the University of Waterloo, Harvard University and University of British Columbia. She is Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Canada. She has published numerous articles, chapters and books, including *Relocating Gender in Sikh History: Transformation, Meaning and Identity* (OUP 2003; 2005) as well as *Sikhism, Dimensions of Asian Spirituality Series* (University of Hawaii Press, 2011). Professor Jakobsh also edited *Women in Sikhism: History, Texts and Experience* (OUP 2010) *Exploring Gender and Sikh Traditions* (MDPI 2021) as well as a two-volume textbook series, *World Religions - Canadian Perspectives: Eastern and Western Traditions* (Nelson 2012; 2013). She has, most recently with Opinderjit Kaur Takhar, published *Global Sikhs: Histories, Practices and Identities*, Routledge 2023, a volume which brings together distinguished scholars in Sikh Studies from across the globe.



Dr. Parvinder Jit Singh Khanuja M.D. is a practicing medical oncologist, founder and managing partner of Ironwood Cancer Centers, based in Phoenix and is one of the largest cancer care provider in the United States. He also serves on the board of Select Medical, a Fortune 500 health care company. He is on the board of Dasvandh Network and 5 Rivers Foundation (family foundation), committed to helping and growing Sikh related causes. He is an avid art collector, has endowed a permanent Sikh art gallery at Phoenix Art Museum where he is also on the board of trustees, and has recently published a book on Punjab heritage and art in association with Smithsonian, edited by Paul Taylor.

Honorees



Dr. Robin Rinehart is Professor of Religious Studies at Lafayette College in Easton, PA, USA. She earned her Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. Her publications include *One Lifetime, Many Lives: The Experience of Hindu Hagiography* (1999), a study of the many hagiographies of Swami Rama Tirtha; the edited volume *Contemporary Hinduism: Ritual, Culture, and Practice* (ABC-CLIO 2004); *Debating the Dasam Granth* (Oxford 2011), and articles on topics in Punjabi religious literature such as the poetry of Bullhe Shah and gender issues in the discourse surrounding the Dasam Granth, as well as Punjabi atheist and rationalist critiques of religion.



Dr. Opinderjit Kaur Takhar MBE is Associate Professor of Sikh Studies and Director of the Centre for Sikh and Panjabi Studies at the University of Wolverhampton, UK. In January 2022, she was elected as President of 'Theology and Religious Studies UK' (TRS-UK). She has published widely on Sikhs through books and journal articles as well as teaching resources on the Sikhs and Sikhi. Her research is widely disseminated in the British Sikh community through projects such as raising awareness of organ donation amongst Sikhs, on developing Panjabi digital tools and on addressing Gurdwara Governance when exploring the younger generation's engagement with Sikhi and the Gurdwaras. She is a regular consultant to the BBC on Sikh related matters and was honoured with the 'Sikh Jewel Award' in November 2021 at the House of Lords in London. She was named as 'Inspirational Woman of the Year' by Asian Today in 2020, and 'Influencer of the Year' at the British Indian Awards in 2019.

UC Riverside Administrators



Dr. Daryle Williams (he/him/his) serves as UC Riverside's Dean of the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences. His academic training is in Latin American history with a specialization in modern Brazil with degrees from Princeton and Stanford University. He has been awarded grants and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Fulbright, the Ford and Rockefeller foundations, and the Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities. Most recently, his research has largely involved Atlantic slavery and emancipation in Brazil, with a strong focus on the methods and tools of the digital humanities. He is editor of the *Journal of Slavery and Data Preservation* and has taken the lead on several collaborative initiatives about enslaved peoples' experiences and black digital humanities, supported by more than \$7 million in awards from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the National Endowment for the Humanities, among others. With the lead support of the Mellon Foundation, his work to build the Enslaved.org online database has won widespread national media attention.



Dr. Gloria Gonzalez-Rivera is Associate Dean for the Social Sciences within the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences and Professor of Economics at UC Riverside. She served as the Chair of the Economics Department (2003-2008) and she was elected President of the Board of the International Institute of Forecasters (2016-2020). Professor Gonzalez-Rivera received her Ph.D. from the University of California San Diego where she wrote her dissertation under the supervision of 2003 Nobel Laureate Professor Robert F. Engle. Her research focuses on the development of econometric and forecasting methodology with applications in financial markets, volatility forecasting, risk management, and agricultural markets. Her research has been published in top venues such as *Journal of Econometrics*, *Journal of Business and Economic Statistics*, *Journal of Applied Econometrics*, *International Journal of Forecasting*, and the *Handbook of Empirical Economics and Finance*, among others. She has also written a textbook in forecasting, *Forecasting for Economics and Business*, published by Routledge/Taylor and Francis Group.

UC Riverside Sikh Chair Supporters



The **Dr. Jasbir Singh Saini** Endowed Chair in Sikh and Punjabi Studies is the result of generous contributions given by the Saini Foundation, the Sikh Foundation, and by a number of individuals and the University. The title of the Chair honors the memory of the late Dr. Jasbir Singh Saini, who was a cardiologist in Phoenix, Arizona.



S. Dilmohan Singh Chadha is the President of The Sikh Foundation, a non-profit organization that conducts programs in publishing, academics, and the arts. He is the CEO of Integrated Resources Group, Inc which imports, markets, and sells marble, granite, and other stone from around the world. After graduating with his MBA from the University of Kentucky in 1979, Mr. Chadha set forth into the world to become a leading businessman in the San Francisco Bay Area. The IRG Group now has three office-showroom-warehouse locations (Brisbane, Sacramento, and Dublin) and is the premier stone supplier in the Bay Area. Prior to opening his own business, Mr. Chadha was the vice-president of the commercial lending group at Wells Fargo.



Dr. Harkeerat Singh Dhillon, MD, FRCS, MSc Orth., is an Orthopedic and Hand Surgeon at the Riverside Medical Clinic (Riverside, CA, USA). He and his wife have established the Harkeerat and Deepta Dhillon Research Award – Sikh and Punjabi Studies in the Arts and Humanities at UC Riverside. He was a Trustee of the University of California, Riverside Foundation from 2004 to 2019 and chaired the Campaign for Sikh Studies at UC Riverside. Dr. Dhillon is the Founder and President of the Riverside International Film Festival and the Producer of a feature film, *Beyond Honor* (2004). Additionally, he is the author of *Invisible Hands: A Book of Poetry* (2011), *Misty Darkness: A Book of Poetry* (2015) and *Cell You a Theory, A Study of Life* (2020). Currently, he is on the Board of Advisors for UC Riverside's School of Medicine.

Speakers



Tarina Kaur Ahuja is a junior at Harvard and the Co-Founder/ED of Young Khalsa Girls, a grassroots nonprofit founded in 2012 with a mission of empowering young girls to serve their communities. She is also the co-founder and president of The Greater Good Initiative, a youth-led national policy think-tank. She co-organized the Kisaan Youth Benefit, a virtual fundraiser for the Indian Farmers' Protests raising \$25,000. Tarina was the youth keynote speaker at the Madeline Albright luncheon, the Foreign Policy HerPower Summit, named a speaker for the first-ever Unity March, and gave a TEDx talk entitled 'Radical Empathy Reimagined.'



Komal Kaur Chohan is a Sikh American Activist based out of the Midwest. She is a law and social work student with a deep desire to learn about trauma-induced addiction. After the FedEx Mass Shooting, she was pushed to the forefront as a community leader to help heal many individuals and come up with a foundation for the Indianapolis Sikh community to cope with trauma. She recently founded Umeed-Hope, a nonprofit that provides legal and mental health resources to survivors of family violence in hopes to break down barriers and allow open conversations surrounding trauma.



Dr. Amrit Deol is Lecturer in the Anthropology and Asian American Studies Department at Fresno State. Prior to coming to Fresno State, Deol received her PhD in Interdisciplinary Humanities from the University of California, Merced. Her current book project *Waves of Revolution: Interrogations of Sikh Political and Spiritual Subjectivities in Punjab and the American West, 1900-1928*, explores the intellectual history of non-secular traditions in the anticolonial Ghadar Party. More broadly, she is interested in race, religion, and empire in relation to anticolonial movements in Punjab and its diaspora.

Speakers



Philip Deslippe is a PhD candidate in the Department of Religious Studies and a former instructor in the Department of Asian American Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He has published in journals including *Sikh Formations* and the *Journal of Yoga Studies* as well as popular venues such as *Baaz News* and the Indian news site *Scroll*.



Dr. Verne A. ("Van") Dusenbery is Professor Emeritus of Anthropology and was the founding chair of the Global Studies Department at Hamline University in Saint Paul, Minnesota. In 2017, for his research with Sikhs in North America, Southeast Asia, Australia, and Punjab, he received a Lifetime Achievement Award for 'Contributions to the Study of the Sikh Diaspora' from The Dr. Jasbir Singh Saini Endowed Chair in Sikh and Punjabi Studies at the University of California-Riverside. He came to Sikh studies via research he first conducted in the 1970s with 3HO/Sikh Dharma.



Dr. Louis Fenech has focused his entire academic career on understanding the history of the Sikhs, with a special focus on the period of Guru Gobind Singh and the hundred years after his death. To this end he has written a number of books and articles. His most recent book, *The Cherished Five in Sikh History*, was published in 2021.

Speakers



Kiran Kaur Gill is the Executive Director of the Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF), a national Sikh American advocacy organization based in Washington, DC. In her role, Ms. Gill is responsible for executing and overseeing programs related to policy, research, education, civic engagement and youth leadership for the Sikh American community. Ms. Gill also currently serves as Chair of the 25 member DHS Faith Based Security Advisory Council (FBSAC) where she advises on strategies to keep faith-based communities safe. She has also provided testimony and policy recommendations to the White House, Congress and various Federal agencies.



Randeep Hothi investigates Sikh diasporic formations, focusing specifically on racialization and secularization, public formation, and community-operated media projects. His work is grounded in long-term situated ethnographic fieldwork that follows transregional socio-cultural networks, relaying between Sikh communities in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Continental Europe, and India. The ethnographic research informed his investments in philosophy, critical theory, and social theory. He is defending his PhD in the Departments of Anthropology and Asian Languages & Cultures at the University of Michigan.



Dr. Anneeth Kaur Hundle is Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Presidential Chair in Social Sciences to Advance Sikh Studies at the University of California, Irvine. She has held appointments at UC Berkeley, UC Merced, and Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. In addition to her forthcoming manuscript, *Insecurities of Expulsion: Race, Violence, Citizenship and Afro-Asian Entanglements in Transcontinental Uganda*, (under contract with Duke University Press), she has published in a wide variety of forums, such as the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, *Africa is A Country*, and *Al-Jazeera*. She currently serves as Associate Editor of the journal *Sikh Formations: Religion, Culture, Theory*. She can be reached at ahundle@uci.edu.

Speakers



Amaris Kaur Kaleka is a Sikh-American junior at Shorewood High School. She's received recognition for her writing at school and has a published article in Milwaukee Independent. She started her work in social justice after the Sikh Temple shooting of August 5th, 2012. Her interests include activism and raising awareness for issues that go undermined. She hopes to one day continue activism by going to law school and receiving her J.D.



Jaslin Kaur is a Sikh Punjabi organizer born and raised in Queens, NY. She hails from a union family, and her working-class background pushed her to run for City Council in her hometown. After the campaign, she organized with the New York Taxi Workers Alliance to win a medallion debt forgiveness plan for over \$350 million in relief. Prior, Jaslin has worked on survivor justice policy at Know Your IX and immigration policy work at the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum. She is a proud graduate of CUNY Hunter College and Nassau Community College. Now, Jaslin serves as co-chair of NYC Democratic Socialists of America.



Manpreet Kaur is the Director of Development for the Jakara Movement. Manpreet's established the Jakara Movement's Kern County chapter as a community organizer in her hometown. Manpreet has been appointed to numerous city and county commissions while receiving numerous awards, including Bakersfield's Top 30 under 40 in 2019. Manpreet studied Ethnic Studies and Political Science at UC San Diego and Urban Planning and Public Policy at the University of Wisconsin - Madison. Manpreet's lens is shaped by her commitment to economic, racial, health, and social justice. In 2022, she became the first Sikh Punjabi woman elected to the Bakersfield City Council.

Speakers



Dr. Tavleen Kaur (she/her/hers) is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Asian American Studies at California State University, Fullerton. She researches contemporary hate violence on the bodies and buildings of communities of color in North America and Europe. Tavleen's teaching, research, and community work bring together art, architecture, film, hate violence, media, and social justice. At Fullerton, she teaches courses in Ethnic Studies/Asian American Studies and is expanding her research on Desi American architecture and urbanism, community theater, ecologies, migration, and pan-ethnic abolitionist solidarity.



Dr. Niringan Kaur Khalsa-Baker is Senior Instructor Theological Studies at Loyola Marymount University, where she also served as Clinical Professor Jain and Sikh Studies and Acting Director Graduate Yoga Studies. Her ethnographic research and publications investigate Sikh knowledge systems through a decolonial lens to explore diversity in Sikh identity, pedagogy, and practice. She currently serves as co-chair Sikh Studies Unit at the American Academy of Religion. Her CV and publications can be found at <https://lmu.academia.edu/NiringanKaurKhalsaBaker>



Dr. Simranjit Khalsa is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Memphis. Her academic research is united by an effort to understand religion at its intersections, with a particular interest in religion and race.

Speakers



Dr. Prema Kurien is Professor of Sociology at Syracuse University as well as the Director of the South Asian Center. She is a scholar of international migration, race, ethnicity, and religion. Dr. Kurien adopts a transnational approach in her work and has also done research in India, to show how a variety of global factors, including developments in the country of origin, play a profound role in shaping community structures, cultures, and activism profiles of immigrants and even the second generation. She is the author of three award-winning sole-authored books and over 60 other sole-authored publications. She has completed her next book *Claiming Citizenship: Race, Religion, and Belonging among New Ethnic Americans* which is currently under review. She has received awards, postdoctoral fellowships, and grants from a wide variety of sources.



Dr. Sangeeta Luthra is an anthropologist, educator, and independent researcher. After graduating from Bryn Mawr College with a B.S in Anthropology, she began her teaching career in the New York City public schools. Teaching high school students in New York led her to pursue a career teaching at the university level. After completing her doctorate in Cultural Anthropology from Duke University, she went on to teach at Georgia Tech, Stanford University, and Santa Clara University. Sangeeta continues to be engaged in academic research on women's development programs in South Asia, and recently on civil and political participation in the US.



Dr. Arvind-Pal Singh Mandair is Director of Graduate Studies and Professor in the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures at the University of Michigan, where he holds the Tara Singh & Balwant Kaur Chatha and Gurbax Singh & Kirpal Kaur Brar Endowed Chair in Sikh Studies. His most recent book publications include: *Violence and the Sikhs* (2022); *Sikh Philosophy: Exploring Gurmata Concepts in a Decolonizing World* (2022). His forthcoming books include: *Event and Revelation: Philosophical Reflections on the Śabda-Doctrine* and *Geophilosophical Encounters*. His earlier books include: *Religion and the Specter of the West: Sikhism, India, Postcoloniality and the Politics of Translation* (2009) and *Sikhism: A Guide For the Perplexed* (2013). He is a founding editor of the journal *Sikh Formations: Religion, Culture and Theory*, and he is founding co-editor of two book series: Routledge Critical Sikh Studies and Routledge Studies in Translation and Religion.

Speakers



Dr. Sasha Sabherwal (she/her) is an interdisciplinary scholar of Asian American Studies with research interests in the South Asian diaspora, anthropology of religion, and transnational feminism. She is currently a postdoctoral fellow at the Center for the Humanities at Tufts University. In the Fall of 2023, she will begin as Assistant Professor in Cultural Anthropology and Asian Studies at Northeastern University. She received her PhD from Yale University in the Department of American Studies with a certificate in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. Her research examines caste and gender hierarchies in the Sikh diaspora of the Pacific Northwest.



Author of *Late Colonial Sublime: Neo-Epics and the End of Romanticism* (Northwestern UP), **Dr. G.S. Sahota** is currently writing his second book on the question of identity through investigations into the history of Indo-German cultural exchange and its ramifications for transnational method. He teaches in Literature at UC Santa Cruz, where he holds the Aurora Chair in Sikh and Punjabi Studies. His work has appeared in *boundary 2*, *Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, and *Sikh Formations*, where he serves on the editorial board. More about him and his work can be found at <https://gssahota.sites.ucsc.edu>.



Dr. Sharanjit Kaur Sandhra (Sharn) is a Historian with Parks Canada, sessional faculty in the Department of History at the UFV and the UBC, and founder of Belonging Matters Consulting. Previously Sharn worked as Coordinator at the South Asian Studies Institute at UFV for more than 12 years and as co-curator and co-manager of the Sikh Heritage Museum, National Historic Site and Gur Sikh Temple (gurdwara). Her PhD looks at the affective experiences of museum visitors through a critical race theory lens with the dissertation titled "Museums as Spaces of Belonging: Racialized Power in the Margins."

Speakers



Dr. Amritjit Singh is Langston Hughes Professor of English and African American Studies at Ohio University. Past President of MELUS and SALA, he received the MELUS Lifetime Achievement Award in 2007 and the SALA Distinguished Achievement Award in Scholarship in January 2014. Singh has published over 15 books in African American and South Asian Studies. In 2017, Fairleigh Dickinson UP published a festschrift titled *Crossing Borders: Essays on Literature, Culture, and Society in Honor of Amritjit Singh*.



As a life-long tenant and the son of immigrants, **Jagpreet Singh** works with others to empower them to fight back similar obstacles shared in his family history including tenant harassment, unwarranted evictions, deportation, and the lack of in-language services that would otherwise prevent South Asians from falling through the cracks. A native of New York City and New Jersey, he attended LaGuardia Community College and Rutgers University where studied Political Science, History, and South Asian Studies. Jagpreet has worked as a Lead Organizer for Chhaya CDC, Campaign Manager and other positions for a number of electoral and issue based campaigns, and is involved in local Queens-based political organizations and associations.



Navdeep Singh is a lawyer, public policy professional, and public affairs strategist with over a decade of experience leading advocacy, engagement, and community development programs across the nonprofit sector. He uses legal, communications, and organizational strategy tools to help communities and organizations flourish. Navdeep runs his own impact consulting firm, Novalux Solutions, that is dedicated to building, uplifting, and valuing community power. He previously served as the policy director and lead organizer for the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA) and the Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund (SALDEF). He is a co-founder of the Sikh American History Project.

Speakers



Dr. Nirvikar Singh is Distinguished Professor of Economics at the University of California, Santa Cruz, where he held the Sarbjit Singh Aurora Chair of Sikh and Punjabi Studies from 2010 to 2020. His research includes economic theory, development economics, political economy, and an award-winning book on Indian-Americans. He has written on several aspects of Punjab's economy and serves on the Chief Minister's expert group on revitalizing the Punjab economy. In Sikh Studies, his work includes essays on Sikh identity, history, entrepreneurship, art, and literature; and on translating the Guru Granth Sahib.



Puninder Singh is a doctoral candidate in linguistic anthropology at the University of Michigan. His research focuses on language and language use in the Sikh tradition, Sikh philosophy, Sikh interpretive traditions, pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial knowledge formations, and interactions between Sikhi and other traditions.

Staff Organizers



Diana Marroquin
(Financial Analyst)



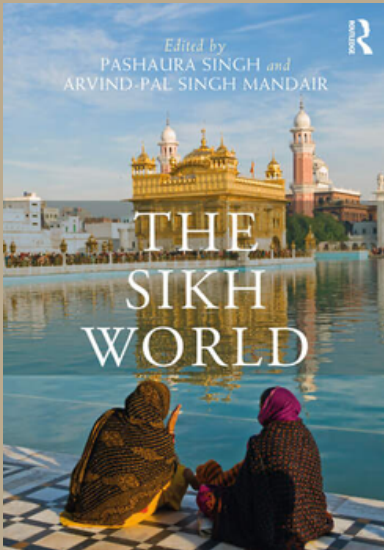
Geneva Amador
(Event/Admin Assistant)



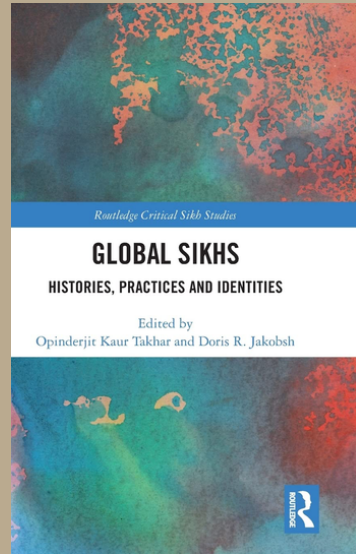
Dawn Viebach
(Academic Personnel & Payroll Assistant)

Irene Dotson (Event/Admin Assistant)

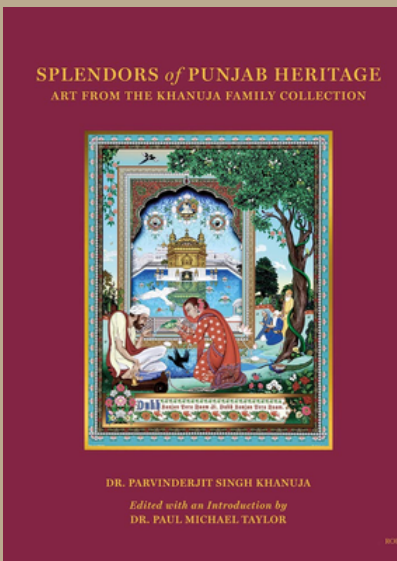
Recent Publications



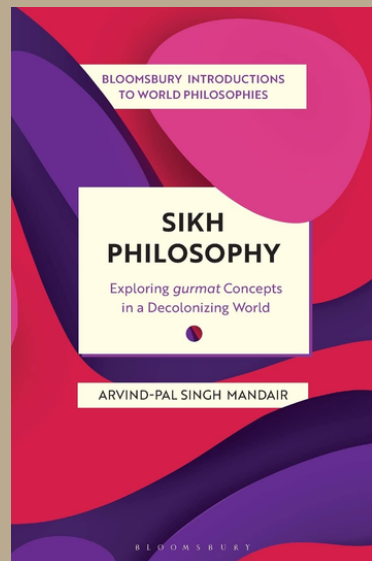
June 2023



March 2023



November 2022



August 2022



The Department of Religious Studies at the University of California, Riverside offers a wide range of courses covering all of the major religions of the world and exposing students to a wide variety of methodological and theoretical approaches to the academic study of religion. The Department offers undergraduate Majors and Minors in Religious Studies, and Master of Arts and Ph.D. degrees in Religious Studies. Students at all levels have the opportunity to explore in depth the diverse social, intellectual, ethical, and theoretical issues that arise when studying the manifestations and impacts of religion today and throughout human history.

Faculty members in the department are active scholars in the field of Religious Studies and command a broad spectrum of scholarly approaches to a wide range of religious traditions. Throughout the year, the Department hosts an active calendar of lectures, colloquia, conferences and other events centered on the academic interdisciplinary study of religion. Currently, the Department has 4 chairs: The Holstein Family and Community Endowed Chair, The Dr. Jasbir Singh Saini Endowed Chair in Sikh and Punjabi Studies, The Maimonides Chair in Jewish Studies, and The Shrimad Rajchandra Endowed Chair in Jain Studies. These chairs have been actively hosting lectures, conferences, and various events throughout the academic year.