

KARISHMA DESAI

Graduate School of Education, Rutgers University–New Brunswick
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PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

- 2018– Assistant Professor of Educational Foundations
Education, Culture and Society Program
Department of Educational Theory, Policy and Administration
Rutgers University–New Brunswick
Faculty Affiliate, South Asian Studies Program
Faculty Affiliate, Center for Security, Race and Rights
Faculty Advisory Committee, Global Asias
- 2017–2018 Gerardo Marin Postdoctoral Fellowship
Department of International and Multicultural Education
University of San Francisco

EDUCATION

- 2017 Doctor of Education, Curriculum and Teaching
Teachers College, Columbia University
Dissertation: Girlscape: Transnational productions of neoliberal girlhoods
- 2017 Master of Education, International Educational Development
Teachers College, Columbia University
- 2006 Master of Science in Teaching, Childhood Education
Pace University
- 2004 Bachelor of Arts, Sociocultural Anthropology (with distinction)
Washington University in Saint Louis
Honors Thesis: Re-centering the Indigenous knowledge debate: Schooling
Maasai youth in postcolonial Kenya

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Articles and Essays

- Desai, K. (2022). Immaterial precarity and affective states of anticipation: NGO afterlives of non-elite young women in New Delhi. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/aeq.12437>
- Desai, K., & Angod, L. (2022). Unsettling the global, moving beyond the liberal: Intimacies as reading practice in childhood studies. *Childhood: A Journal of Global Child Research*, 29 (3)
<https://doi.org/10.1177/09075682221112991>
- Desai, K. (2020). Life skills as affective labour: Skilling girls with gendered enterprise. *Journal of South Asian Studies*, 43(4), 705-722. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00856401.2020.1768479>
- Kirchgasler, C., & Desai, K. (2020). “Girl” in crisis: Colonial residues of domesticity in transnational school reform. *Comparative Education Review*, 64(3), 384-403.
- Desai, K. (2020). [Collective willfulness: Refashioning empowered girlhood](#). *Journal of Political and Legal Anthropology*. Special edited collection on Citizenship Amendment Act.
- Sanya, B. N., Desai, K., Callier, D. M., & McCarthy, C. (2018). Desirable and disposable: Educative practices and the making of (non)citizens. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 48(1), 1-15.

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- Desai, K. (2016). Teaching the “Third World Girl”: Girl Rising as a precarious curriculum of empathy. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 46(3), 248-264.
- Desai, K., & Sanya, B. N. (2016). Towards decolonial praxis: Reconfiguring the human and the curriculum. *Gender and Education*, 28(6), 710-724.
- Bajaj, M., Ghaffar-Kucher, A., & Desai, K. (2016). Brown bodies and xenophobic bullying in US schools: Critical analysis and strategies for action. *Harvard Educational Review*, 86(4), 481-505.
- Chen, C., Desai, K., & Knight-Manuel, M. (2015). Fostering a humanizing pedagogy: Imagining possibilities for African immigrant girls. *Educational Leadership Review*, 16, 34-43.

Peer-Reviewed Articles Under Review

- Desai, K. “Mera Jamia, mera ghar”: The corporeal, collective willfulness of young Muslim women at Jamia Milia Islamia University. Under review with *Feminist Anthropology* (Revise & resubmit).
- Desai, K., & Narayan, P. A partial excavation of care: Feminist collectives, entanglements and inquiry in South Asia. Under review with *Gender, Place & Culture* (Revise & resubmit).

Peer-Reviewed Manuscripts in Progress

- Desai, K., & Casey, O. Measurement anxieties and pleasures: The politics of assessing life skills. In preparation to submission to *American Educational Research Journal*.
- Desai, K., & Goulding, C. Teaching Asian America: Reflections and diasporic pathways. In preparation for submission to *Teachers College Record*.

Book Manuscript

- Desai, K. *Learning to aspire: Girls, skills, and fantasy futures*. (Book manuscript in progress)

Edited Collections

- Desai, K., & Balagopalan, S. (Eds.). *Schooled futures, skilling and gendered temporalities*. In progress with *Children’s Geographies*.
- Switzer, H., Desai, K., & Bent, E. (Eds.). *Girls in global development: Theoretical contestations, empirical demands*. Berghahn (Under contract, under review).
- Sanya, B. N., Desai, K., Callier, D. M., & McCarthy, C. (Eds.). Educative practices and the making of (non)citizens [Special Issue]. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 48(1).

Peer-Reviewed Book Chapters

- Desai, K. (2021). The girl. In K. Tompkins, A. Musser, A. Bahng, K. Chavez, M. Goeman, & A. Aizura (Eds.), *Keywords in gender and sexuality studies*. New York University Press. (Invited chapter)
- Desai, K. (2019). Letting girls learn, letting girls rise: Commodifying girlhood in campaigns for secure global futures. In K. Cheney & A. Sinevro (Eds.), *Disadvantaged childhoods and humanitarian intervention*. Palgrave Book Series on Children and Development. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Desai, K. (2015). Adharshila Shikshan Kendra: An experiment to reconstitute possibilities for Adivasi children. In E. Sumida Huaman & B. Sriraman (Eds.), *Indigenous universalities and peculiarities of innovation* (149-168). Sense Publishers.
- Ginsburg, M., Bermeo, M. J., Desai, K., & de la Garza, K. (2012). Multilogue on the preparation, practice, and politics of teachers. In M. Ginsburg (Ed.), *Preparation, practice, and politics of teachers: Problems and prospects in comparative perspective* (1-16). Sense Publishers.

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Encyclopedia Entries

- Desai, K. (2017). Making educated girls: Insights from anthropology and education. In H. Greenhalgh Spencer (Ed.), Gender and education. Section of M. Peters (Ed.), *The encyclopedia of educational philosophy and theory*. Springer.
- Desai, K. (2016). Cultural studies and the educative spectacle of the Third World Girl. In C. McCarthy, Sanya, B. N., Goel, K., Lin, C., & Prieto, F. N. (Eds.), *World before us: Cultural studies in a different key*. In M. Peters (Ed.), *The encyclopedia of educational philosophy and theory*. Springer.

Book Reviews

- Desai, K. (2015). Review of *Ethnography of schooling in contemporary India*. *Comparative Education Review*, 59(3), 566-568.

Reports

- Knight, M., Bangura, R., Chen, C., & Desai, K. (2014). Strengthening supplemental literacy supports for culturally and linguistically diverse English language learners: 2013–2014 literacy report. Report published for American Educational Research Association.

Curriculum

- Bajaj, M., Ghaffar-Kucher, A., & Desai, K. (2013). In the face of xenophobia: Lessons to address bullying of South Asian American youth. South Asian Americans Leading Together, Washington DC.

SELECT GRANTS AND AWARDS

- 2022 **Engaged Research Grant, Wenner-Gren Foundation** (co-PI) (Under Review)
Adivasi child socialization and relationalities: A collaborative ethnographic approach to educational change in Western India
- 2022 **Spencer Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship**
Shaping Youth Potential: Development, Gendered Aspirations and Contested Visions of Indigenous Futures in Western India
- 2021 **Rutgers Global Asia Interdisciplinary Pedagogy Grant**
Global Indigeneity and Youth Movements in South Asia
- 2020 **Rutgers Global International Collaborative Research Grant**
Skills for Youth in the Global South: Aspirations, Anxieties and Postcolonial Capitalism (with S. Balagopalan)
- 2019 **Concha Delgado Gaitán Presidential Fellow**
Awarded by the Council of Anthropology and Education
- 2019 **Spencer Foundation Conference Grant** (with M. A. Chacko, L. Matthew, R. Maithreyi, and V. Subramanian) Addressing Dissonances Between Education Research and Post-Market Reform Society in India

Invited Talks and Lectures

- 2022 Teaching the Third World Girl: Affective logics of Girl Rising. Postcolonial Geographies, University of British Columbia.
- 2021 Learning affective labor: Skilling girls across New Delhi and New York City. Girlhood Studies, Bowdoin College.
- 2019 Skilling girls: Affective labor and fraught futures. Department of Childhood Studies. Rutgers University-Camden.

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- 2017 Affecting development: Managing girlhood, securing global futures. Centre for Media and Culture in Education, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at University of Toronto.
- 2015 Adivasi social movements and educational innovations in India. Introduction to Indigenous Knowledges in Education, Arizona State University.
- 2014 In the face of xenophobia: A critical curricular intervention. The City College of New York, Long Island University, NY.

Conference Panels Organized

- 2022 Educational landscapes of soft skills and socioemotional learning: Tracing contested regimes of emotional management. Annual Anthropological Association Meeting. Seattle, WA. Nov 9–13. (accepted)
- 2022 Schooled futures, skilling and gendered temporalities. Association of American Geographers Annual Conference. New York, NY. Feb 25–Mar 1.
- 2020 Economizing life through educational reforms: The reconfiguration of racialized hierarchies and differential human worth. American Education Research Association. San Francisco, CA. Apr 17–20. (accepted, cancelled due to COVID-19)
- 2019 International development, global childhoods, and contested regimes of aspirational futures. Anthropology of Childhood and Youth Interest Group Biennial Conference. Camden, NJ. Mar 7–9.
- 2016 Traveling discourses of democracy: Unsettling stable promises and making difference transnationally through inclusion. American Education Research Association. San Antonio, TX. Apr 27–May 1.
- 2016 Childhood(s) in neoliberal India: Mediating gendered aspirations in educative spaces. Annual Anthropological Association Meeting. Minneapolis, MN. Nov 16–20.

Papers Presented

- 2022 Measurement anxieties: The politics of measuring life skills (with O. Casey, doctoral student). Comparative and International Education Annual Meeting. Minneapolis, MN. Apr 18–22.
- 2021 Dreaming otherwise in girlhood development projects: Temporal refusals and pedagogies of collective care. Annual Anthropology Association Meeting. Baltimore, MD. Nov 17–21.
- 2020 Anthropology's contribution to Comparative and International Education. Comparative and International Education Annual Meeting. Miami, FL. March 22–26. (canceled due to COVID-19)
- 2019 Learning to aspire: Affective labor and imagining fraught gendered futures. Annual Anthropology Association Meeting. Vancouver, BC. Nov 20–24. (Invited panel)
- “Girls” in crisis: Colonial residues of transnational school reforms in Kenya (with C. Kirschgasler). Comparative and International Education Annual Meeting. San Francisco, CA. April 14–19.
- 2018 (Im)possibilities: Gender, imagined futures, and precarious presents. Annual Anthropology Association Meeting. San Jose, CA. Nov 14–18. (Invited roundtable participant)
- 2018 Anthropology and youth studies: New optics, topics, and approaches. Annual Anthropology Association Meeting. San Jose, CA. Nov 14–18. (Flash session participant)
- 2018 Teaching empowerment: Affective dispositions of gendered entrepreneurialism in New Delhi. National Women's Studies Association Annual Meeting. Atlanta, GA. Nov 8–11.
- 2018 Rethinking girls in development: Radicalizing girls' empowerment. National Women's Studies Association Annual Meeting. Atlanta, GA. Nov 8–11. (Roundtable participant)
- 2018 Empowerment lessons: Embodying enterprise and aspirations of mobility. Annual Madison South Asia Conference. Madison, WI. Oct 11–14.

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- 2018 Global assemblages: Reconstituting an ethnographic field of girl empowerment. Comparative and International Education Conference. Mexico City, Mexico. Mar 25–29.
- 2016 Adharshila Shikshan Kendra: Decolonizing democratic education through social movement learning. Centre for Integrative Anti-Racism Studies Decolonization Conference. Toronto, ON. Nov 3–5 (accepted, unable to attend).
- 2016 Entrepreneurial domesticity: Negotiating NGO aspirations with desires for middle-class womanhood. Annual Anthropological Association Meeting. Minneapolis, MN. Nov 16–20.
- 2016 Skilling girls, making nations: Curricular coloniality and the promise of freedom. National Women's Studies Association. Montreal, QC. Nov 9–12.
- 2016 Shaping black diasporic girlhoods: Pedagogical formations of belonging and becoming (with M. Knight-Manuel). National Women's Studies Association. Montreal, QC. Nov 9–12.
- 2016 Teaching the "Third World Girl": Affective logics of transnational campaigns for girls' education. American Education Research Association Annual Meeting. Washington, DC. Apr 8–12.
- 2016 Schooling oneself into modernity: Education and fractures in South Sudan (with S. Schmidt, C. Haynes). American Education Research Association Annual Meeting, Washington, DC. Apr 8–12.
- 2016 Imagining the modern woman: Forward aspirations, backward pasts, Annual Meeting of the Comparative and International Education Society. Vancouver, BC. Mar 6–10.
- 2015 Deviating haunted locations: Black female migrants, the politics of exclusion, and the potential of embodied entanglements. National Women's Studies Association Conference. Milwaukee, WI. Nov 3–16.
- 2015 Teaching the "Third World Girl": The precarious pedagogical undercurrents of empathy. National Women's Studies Association Conference. Milwaukee, WI. Nov 13–16.
- 2015 The productive potential of Third Space: Engendering transformative possibilities for African transnational young women through an African feminist leadership program (with M. Knight-Manuel and C. Chen). American Education Research Association Annual Meeting. Chicago, IL. Apr 16–20.
- 2015 The politics of knowledge: Engaging curriculum theory to consider the possibilities and limits of sustainable peace. Advanced Consortium on Cooperation, Conflict, and Complexity Sustaining Peace Conference. Earth Institute, Columbia University, New York, NY. Mar 26.
- 2014 Strengthening supplemental literacy supports for culturally and linguistically diverse English Language Learners: Examining literacy practices among African immigrant girls (with M. Knight-Manuel and C. Chen). American Education Research Association Annual Meeting. Philadelphia, PA. Apr 4–7.
- 2013 Collaborative culturally grounded inquiry: Examining literacy practices with/for African immigrant girls (with M. Knight-Manuel and C. Chen). Culturally Relevant Education and Assessment Conference. Chicago, IL. Oct 13–16.
- 2013 Arriving at democracy through the teacher: Promises and limits of India's National Curriculum for Teacher Education. Comparative and International Society Northeastern Conference. Amherst, MA. Nov 1–3.
- 2013 Caste and schooling: Material and discursive (re)productions of caste. Comparative and International Education Society Annual Meeting. New Orleans, LA. Mar 10–12.
- 2012 In the face of xenophobia: Addressing bullying of South Asian and Muslim youth: Strategies for educators (with M. Bajaj and A. Ghaffar-Kucher). National Association of Multicultural Educators. Nov 1–3.

OTHER GRANTS, AWARDS AND HONORS

- 2017 University of San Francisco Faculty Development Fund Award

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- 2015 Vice President's Grant for Diversity and Community Initiatives
Teachers College, Columbia University (with E. Ohito, N. Fleming, and M. Chacko)
- 2014–2016 American Educational Research Association
Division B Graduate Pre-Conference Travel Scholarship
(2016: Cultural Studies; 2015: Postcolonial Theory and Methods; 2014: Location in the Age of Traveling Discourses)
- 2014 Vice President's Grant for Diversity and Community Initiatives
Teachers College, Columbia University (with E. Ohito, N. Fleming)
- 2014 Dean's Fellowship for Research, Teachers College, Columbia University
- 2013 Dean's Fellowship Program for Teaching and Diversity Award (with M. Knight-Manuel)
- 2012 Fulbright-Hays Group Project Abroad, Curriculum Specialist
Exploring Intersections of Language, Culture, and Society in Education through a Case Study of Tanzania (with E. Ohito, C. Oyler)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- 2022–current **Principal Investigator**
Project: Shaping Youth Potential: Development, Gendered Aspirations and Contested Visions of Indigenous Futures in Western India
- 2020–current **Principal Investigator**
Project: Skills for Girls: An Examination of Life Skills Measurement
- 2015–2019 **Principal Investigator**
Project: Girlscape: Empowerment Projects for Girls in New Delhi and New York City
- 2017–2018 **Co-Principal Investigator** (with M. Knight-Manuel)
Project: African Diasporic Girlhoods and Senses of Belonging
- 2015–2017 **Co-Principal Investigator** (with S. Schmidt, C. Haynes)
Project: Learning to Teach, Teaching to Learn in South Sudan
- 2013–2015 **Graduate Research Assistant** (with M. Knight-Manuel)
Project: Strengthening Supplemental Literacy Supports for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse English Language Learners
- Fall 2011 **Graduate Research Assistant** (with L. Bartlett)
Project: Multilingual Literacy Pedagogies in Dual-Language Programs

TEACHING EXPERIENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- Rutgers University Graduate School of Education** (Graduate and Undergraduate)
- 2018–current Proseminar in Educational Theory & Practice; Qualitative Research Methods I & II;
Gender and Education; Globalization, Migration and Education;
Race, Empire and Education; Race and Inequality in US Education
- University of San Francisco** (Graduate)
- Fall 2017 Social and Critical Theoretical Foundations of Education (Doctoral Seminar)
- Spring 2018 Transnational Feminisms
- Teachers College, Columbia University** (Graduate)
- 2016–2017 Instructor, Gender Difference and Curriculum
- 2015–2017 Instructor, Global Competence Certificate Capstone Project Course
- 2014–2015 Teaching Fellow, Black, Latina, and Transnational Feminisms in Education
- Fall 2013 Teaching Assistant, Qualitative Research Methods
- Fall 2011 Teaching Assistant, International Human Rights and Peace Education
- The City College of New York** (Graduate)
- Fall 2014 Instructor, Teaching Linguistically Diverse Students

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Spring 2012 Instructor, Practicum for Teachers of English as a Second Language

Montclair State University (Undergraduate)

Spring 2016 Instructor, Introduction to Women and Gender Studies

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE IN K-12 EDUCATION

- 2015–2018 **Literacy and School Leadership Consultant**
Unity Preparatory, Brooklyn, NY
- 2015–2016 **Supervision of Pre-Service Teachers**
Elementary Inclusive Education Program
Teachers College, Columbia University
- 2011–2014 **Founding Director of Professional Development**
Central Queens Academy Middle School, Queens, NY
- 2010–2012 **Peace Corps Fellows Teacher Mentor**
Teachers College, Columbia University
- 2010–2012 **Instructional Coach**
Dream Charter School, East Harlem, NY
- 2010, 2011 **School Director**
Teach for America Summer Teacher Training Institute, New York, NY
- 2007–2010 **Literacy and Social Studies Teacher/Instructional Leadership Team**
North Kenwood Oakland Charter School
University of Chicago, Urban Education Institute, Chicago, IL
- 2004–2006 **Upper Elementary School Teacher**, Teach for America Corps Member
New York City Department of Education, Bronx, NY

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE

- 2015–2017 Educational Consultant, Milele Zanzibar Foundation
Project: Literacy In-Service Teacher Development, Zanzibar, Tanzania
- 2012–2013 Curriculum Designer/Graduate Research Assistant (with M. Shepherd, G. Steiner-Khamsi)
Project: Pre-service Teacher Education in Pakistan (Pre-STEP)
Teachers College, Columbia University/USAID
- 2007 Education Program Developer
Bhasha Research and Publication Center/Adivasi Academy, Gujarat, India
- 2006 Curriculum Design Consultant
Society for Integrated Development of the Himalayas, Uttarakhand, India

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Service to Profession

Journal Reviewer

American Ethnologist
Development and Change
Discourse: Cultural Politics of Education
Gender and Education
Diaspora, Indigenous and Minority Education
Anthropology and Education Quarterly
Educational Policy Analysis Archives
Curriculum Inquiry (Editorial Board Member)

KARISHMA DESAI

Grant Reviewer

2020- Woodrow Wilson Dissertation Fellowship in Women's Studies
Selection Committee (Now called Institute for Citizens and Scholars)

Comparative and International Education Society

2022- Co-Chair of Gender Justice Special Interest Group
2019 Comparative and International Education Society Gender and Education Society,
Feminist Mentoring Workshop Panelist

American Educational Research Association

2020–2022 Co-Chair of Division B Section 6: De/Colonization and Transformative Curriculum Studies

Service to the University

Rutgers University–New Brunswick

2018–2022 Commencement Committee; Language and Literacy Education Search Committee;
Black Studies and Education Search Committee (Two Years); Postdoctoral Fellowship in
Social Justice Education Search Committee; PhD Admissions Committee

2022 The Legacies of Protests and the Importance of Gender, Race and Ethnic Studies (Panelist)
Student Support Services Peer Mentorship Faculty Panel

Student Advisement/Supervision

Qualifying Exam and Proposal Committees

2022 Rashmi Kumari (PhD, Childhood Studies, proposal defended)
2022 Sarah Kelly (EdD, proposal defended)
2021 Christine Morales (EdD, proposal defended)
2021 Angela Bardes (EdD, proposal defended)
2021 Yusra Syed (EdD, proposal defended)
2021 Brittany Marshall (PhD, proposal defended)
2021 Catherine Rand (PhD, qualifying exam, proposal defended)
2021 Ajua Kouadio (PhD, qualifying exam)
2020 Mohini Mukherjee (PhD, proposal defended)
2020 Ana Moron (PhD, proposal defended)
2019 Robin Roscigno (PhD, proposal defended)
2019 Juliane Bilotta (PhD, qualifying exam)

PhD Advisement and Dissertation Supervision

2021 Asha Devi (coursework)
2020 Olivia Casey (coursework)
2019 Marina Feldman (proposal defended)

External Advisement

2020 Mamta Markam (IIT-Gandhinagar, MA thesis co-advisor)

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University of San Francisco

2017–2018 Professional Development Committee; Global Forum for Women’s Rights Planning Committee

Service to Community

- 2022 Reframing curricular knowledge through a transnational and feminist lens: approaches to integrating Asian American Studies in K–12. Presentation for the Board of Directors at the Education Service Commission of New Jersey.
- 2021 Teaching Asian America: Curricular Conversations for PK–12 Spaces (professional development co-organized with [YURI Education Project](#) and Dr. Tran Templeton)
- 2021 Integrating Asian American histories and lives in K–12 education, public presentation for Make Us Visible–New Jersey
- 2021 Working with Youth: Anti-Racism Strategies, Panelist, Carleton University.
- 2020 Consultation with *Girl Rising* on Feminist Curriculum Design
- 2020– Lead curriculum designer for [Newest Americans](#), 6–12 curriculum
- 2017–2020 Elm Community School Board Member, Elmhurst, Queens, NY
- 2016 Co-Organizer. Writing for Wellness: A Writing Workshop for Women of Color in the Academy, Teachers College, Columbia University
- 2014 Co-Organizer. Symposium for Women of Color Scholars, Teachers College, Columbia University
- 2012 Co-Organizer. Conference on Educational Justice in South Asia and the South Asian Diaspora, Teachers College, Columbia University

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Anthropological Association (AAA)

Sections: Association for Feminist Anthropology; Council on Educational Anthropology

American Educational Research Association (AERA)

Division B: Curriculum Studies

Comparative and International Education Society (CIES)

National Women’s Studies Association (NWSA)

LANGUAGES

Gujarati: Native speaker,

Hindi: Advanced level spoken, Beginning level written

Swahili: Intermediate level spoken and written

KARISHMA DESAI