

Manisha Sharma

Creative writer & Founder, Gendered Arrangements www.genderedarrangements.com manisha.ju@gmail.com

EDUCATION

2006-09	M.F.A. Creative Writing (fiction), Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA. Supported as an Alfred Knobler Scholar
2000-05	Ph. D. English Literature, Jai Narain Vyas University, Jodhpur, India. Supported by a research scholarship
1997-99	M.A. English, Jai Narain Vyas University, Jodhpur, India. Graduated with distinction
1994-97	B.A. English, Jai Narain Vyas University, Jodhpur, India

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

2016 -	Writing Coach, NuVu Studio, Cambridge, MA
2011- 2016	Visiting Assistant Professor, Women's and Gender Studies, Department of Sociology, Virginia Tech Faculty Fellow, Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology, Virginia Tech
2015	Adjunct faculty, Queensland Conservatorium and Research Center, Griffith University, Brisbane, AU
2013-2014	Affiliate Faculty, Center for Peace Studies and Violence Prevention, Department of Sociology, Virginia Tech
2009-2010	Instructor, English as a Second Language, Virginia Tech Language and Culture Institute
2006-2009	Graduate Teaching Assistant, Creative Writing, Writing & Rhetoric, Writing Center, Department of English, Virginia Tech
2000-2002	Lecturer, Freshman English, Jai Narain Vyas University—Jodhpur, India
1999-2002	Teacher, English Language, Literature, Delhi Public School (Middle-High) —Jodhpur, India

AWARDS AND HONORS

2016	Poetry mentee, AWP Writer to Writer
2015, 14	TedX, Virginia Tech, Shortlisted
2010	Writing Residency, Bread Loaf Writers' Conference, Vermont Peer-Reviewed
2009	The Greenbelt Review Prize for "Aunty Lakshmi." First prize in fiction, Greenbelt Review
2008	Best New American Voices Nomination for "Godhara." Virginia Tech Fiction Prize, (First Runner-up)
2007	GSA 24th Annual Research Symposium Runner-up in Paper Presentation, Virginia Tech
2006-2009	Alfred Knobler Scholarship for attending the MFA program in Creative Writing
2000	Research Scholarship, Jai Narayan Vyas University, Jodhpur

PUBLICATIONS

Creative

2017	"When God is the Groom", <i>TAB, a journal of poetry and poetics</i> . Winter 2016 "Dear Daughter ", "Would You Still Blame Me?" <i>Saturday Poetry Series on As it Ought to Be</i> "Indian Girl Crumbling", <i>New Asian Writing</i> "Five Poems", <i>The Bombay Review</i> "Maneka Gandhi's Baseless Marital Rape Theory...", <i>The Huffington Post</i> A response to political commentary on proposals to deal with feminist issues in India
2015	"Book Review ", "An Epic in Prose: Cutting for Stone by Abraham Verghese", <i>The Common</i> , Amherst, MA
2014	Sharma, Manisha and Sonya Davey. " Understanding perspectives on sex-selection in India: an intersectional study " <i>The Lancet Global Health Section Abstract</i> , Peer reviewed. What's Next: "Blurred Images, Better Futures" By Suzie Boss <i>Stanford Social Innovation Review</i> . Featured research
2013	" Gendered Arrangements: India " Change Observer: <i>Design Observer</i> . Featured article "... The Lingering Problem of Female Infanticide " <i>The Socjournal, A New Media Journal of Sociology and Society</i> . Over 232,233 views as of Sept. 15, 2016
2011	"Dickens in Paris", <i>The Common</i>
2009	" Aunty Laxshmi ", <i>The Greenbelt Review</i> , UC Davis
2008	"Godhara", <i>Superficial Flesh</i> 3.2 "Yoga" " Handle with Care ", <i>Silhouette</i> 31.1. Pages 6, 43

- 2007 Sharma, Manisha. "Heavenly Beauty Reborn", *Pinnacle Living Mountain Homes Southern Style*
- 2006-09 MFA Creative Writing Thesis, A Language of Dolls
- 2000-05 PhD Dissertation: "Partition Novels: Comparison of Indian English with Hindi-Urdu Fiction A Study of the Role of English Language in Indian English Fiction"

Manuscripts accepted/ & under preparation

- 2016 Interview and Analysis of the works of four South Asian fiction writers and poets. *The Writer's Chronicle*, (a publication of the Association of Writers and Writing Programs, the largest and oldest writing organizations) proposal accepted, under preparation

The Vanishing, a poetry manuscript, under revision

Book Chapters

- 2017 Sharma, Manisha. "...[The Lingering Problem of Female Infanticide](#)" *The Socjournal, A New Media Journal of Sociology and Society*. Republished in *At Issues: Gender Politics*, limited print book series, exploring urgent social issues from various points of view: Greenhaven Publishing, Cengage (forthcoming)
- 2011 Sharma, Manisha. "Children's Literature in India: Genres, Reading, Education and the Demands of the Digital Age." In *The Anthology on Literature for Children: A Reader*. Eds. Sharad Rajimwale and Kalpana Purohit, New Delhi, India: Sarup Books & Publishers. 123-134

- 2009 Sharma, Manisha, Ed Falco and Nick Kocz. "The New River: Collected Editors' Notes." In *Putting Knowledge to Work & Letting Information Play* Eds. Hunsinger, Jeremy W. & Timothy W. Luke, Blacksburg: Center for Digital Discourse and Culture, e-book. 200-208
- 2007 Sharma, Manisha. "The Letter and the Image: India in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*". In *Studies in Women Writers in English: Volume 6*. Eds. Mohit K. Ray and Rama Kundu, New Delhi, India: Atlantic Publishers & Distributors. 113-122

Edited journal

- 2008 Managing Editor, Sharma, Manisha and Nick Kocz. *The New River Journal of Digital Writing and New Media*

Conference proceedings

- 2015 Sharma, Manisha. "Fiction: A Cultural Mirror." In *In Between Fiction and Nonfiction: Reflections on the Poetics of Ethnography in Literature and Film in the Formation of World Society*. Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and Commonwealth Conference, Jawahar Lal Nehru University, Delhi, India

Conference panel/ Roundtable discussion/ Presentations

The following presentations, conference presentations explored multiple perspectives of feminist, social cultural issues. Additionally they were presented at conferences that focused on scholarly, art, design, social justice, public interest, public health

- 2016 "The Vanishing" Playdate, an invited presentation of the project at the **Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology**, Virginia Tech
- 2016 "The Vanishing" **International Girls Studies Association**, University of East Anglia, Norwich, Scotland, Creative Panel
- 2014 "Understanding Perspectives on Sex Selection in India: An Intersectional Study" CUGH Conference, **The Consortium of Universities for Global Health**, Washington DC, Selectively eliminating a particular sex before birth is a social issue complicated by multiple perspectives (Accepted)
- "Designing Empowerment" **Art and Design for Social Justice Symposium**, Florida State University, Tallahassee, January 2014. My presentation proposal was about the use of art and design in addressing women's empowerment, social justice issues. (Accepted)
- 2013 "How Long Should We Wait?" **Mid-South Sociological Conference**, Atlanta
- "Issues of Gender Equity in India." At the 4th **International Illustration Research Symposium, Oxford University Museum of Natural History and Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford, UK, Oxford, UK** (Accepted)
- "Selective Elimination of Female Fetuses." Panel Presentation with Sonya Davey, Hindu American Seva Charities, White House Office of Public Engagement, **White House**, Washington DC. The conference was presided by the only Indian American congressman Ami Bera. The fourth annual conference focused on transforming ourselves, our communities and our country
- 2012 "Fiction: A Cultural Mirror." Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and the Commonwealth, **Jawahar Lal Nehru University, New Delhi, India**
- "Reproduction and Technology," **Gender Bodies and Technology Conference**, Virginia Tech, Roanoke, VA
- 2009 "Writing Culturally-Specific Stories: The Authenticity Debate." At *Politics and Writing: A Panel and Open Discussion*, **Kriti Literary Festival**, Roosevelt, University, **University of Illinois at Chicago**, Chicago
- "MFA Programs in Writing." At *The Association of Writers and Writing Programs Conference*, Chicago
- "Page to Stage: VT Playwrights Present New Monologues and Dialogues." At *The Association of Writers and Writing Programs Conference*, Chicago
- Virginia Tech English Graduate Conference
- 2005 "The Letter and the Image: India in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*." At *The, Virginia Tech English Graduate Conference*, Department of English, Shanks Hall, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA

GRANTS/SUPPORT

- 2015 Sharma, Manisha, Kim Cunio, Gautham Dayal, Akshay Sharma. "Gendered Arrangements: Vanishing," Autodesk, \$ 10,000
The grant facilitated the researches to collect and record data in the streets of India. It also enabled the researchers to travel to and stay in India and Australia and for a period of 5 months while conducting research on the project. This resulted in the project being installed at 2 venues in Australia and 2 venues in India
- 2013 Sharma, Manisha and Martha Sullivan (Co-PI). "Gendered Arrangements," Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology, Virginia Tech, \$3,000.00.
The grant made a semester-long collaborative class project for a group of 22 students that came from multiple disciplines in a Women and Creativity course. The grant also enabled development and implementation of the curriculum
- 2015 Griffith University, \$550
I was invited to consult with the Music and Art department at the university on curriculum development around social issues for students in humanities in a creative manner

OUTREACH

- 2015 Female feticide, Ministry of Health, Government of Rajasthan, India. I approached the government of the state of Rajasthan in India, a state with one of the smallest population of girls in India, and worked on a book proposal for possible solutions to curb the social problem of female feticide .

RESEARCH

Research focus: English literature, creative writing, women's studies, interdisciplinary collaboration, feminist social issues complicated by cultural connotations. Literary and ethnographic research methods inform my creative writing and interdisciplinary collaboration. Thematic focus - women's empowerment, social impact/justice, culture, gender imbalance, south Asia (India)

- 2014-15 Ethnographic interviews, gender imbalance, India
69 surveys assessing the role of art, design and technology in interpreting social issues
- 2014 49 semi-structured interviews in 6 North Western states of India to understand the narratives of Indians and field reality on gender imbalance

PROJECTS

- 2014-15 The Vanishing, book manuscript poetry & an art installation
- Issue: While boys continue to be born, 5 girls in a minute are killed before birth in India; 7000 girls/day, & 2,600,000/year girls vanish. The findings of my study inspired my creative endeavors. One result is a manuscript of poems that tells fictionalized stories of unborn girls in India
- The research informed an installation designed to give voice to these unborn girls. Imagine stepping into a dark space and a spotlight reveals a larger-than-life female figure dressed in a sari. As you get closer, the figure tells stories of vanished Indian girls and women, narrated by women and composed into music

- 2014 [Gendered Arrangements: India](#), 3D Animation, Virginia Tech
Sharma, Manisha and Simone Paterson, and students (School Of Visual Arts)
The project explores use of technology and audience engagement in communicating critical issues. It was invited to run at The Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology, Virginia Tech for one week, where the audience sat and engaged with the 3D animation that portrayed the massive gender gap in India in a narrative
Attended by 70-75 students, members of the university and community
- 2012 [Gendered Arrangements](#), India, Digital stories, Information graphics
Sharma, Manisha (Women's and Gender Studies) and Martha Sullivan, industrial design faculty, Virginia Tech
An interdisciplinary and collaborative class project funded by a SEAD, Science, engineering, arts and Design grant from the Institute for Creativity, Art, and Technology at Virginia Tech \$3,000. Student teams in the undergraduate Women and Creativity class that came from different disciplines were presented with social problems complicated by cultural connotations. Their task was to research and simplify the problems and present them using any or all of the engaging means of communication that were part of the class curriculum. Experts from and outside the university gave workshops in class about digital storytelling, hands-on methods, art of storytelling, animation, stopmotion, design and art
Duration of the class: 1 semester
Presentation at a public event at Virginia Tech that was presided over by the poet, Nikki Giovanni, and the Director of ICAT, Ben Knapp
Event attendance: 100 people
- 2006-2009 The Language of Dolls, a collection of short stories, MFA Thesis
The ten short stories in my collection explore Indian women and the struggles they face, often caught between different social demands and their own demands
- 2000-2005 PhD Dissertation: "Partition Novels: Comparison of Indian English with Hindi-Urdu Fiction A Study of the Role of English Language in Indian English Fiction
My dissertation analyzes 3 languages the fiction on partition of India and Pakistan was written in, Indian English, Hindi and Urdu. Hindi is the national language of India and Urdu is the national language of Pakistan. The analysis looks at theories of language and the capacity of a language in carrying the emotional weight of harrowing tragedies such as the partition

Invited Installations

(Brisbane, Sydney, Australia; Jaipur, India)

- 2015 I was invited to present The Vanishing, art installation for a week-long event called the Art Week at Queensland Conservatorium Research Center, Griffith University, in Australia
Attended by approx. 500 people

Invited Discussions on Global Social Issues

- 2015 The Vanishing - A Social Issue, [Community](#) event
City-Fringe Art Gallery, Sydney, Australia
Conversation about the social issue of female feticide in India and its repercussions around the world was followed by a run of the art-sound installation, and a Q&A session
Attended by 100 people, connoisseurs from the art scene, members of the literary community and film industry, general public

Invited Speaker

- 2015 **Meet the Makers** The Vanishing: Tech talk and immersive listen of the project followed by a Q & A on the project, Queensland Conservatorium Research Center, Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia, Sharma, Manisha, and Kim Cunio
Women's Forum, Women artists and faculty talked about their research challenges and successes in working on social issues. Queensland Conservatorium Research Center, Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia, Sharma, Manisha, Brydie-Leigh Bartleet, Vanessa Tomlinson, Irene Bartlett, Louise Denson.

"Law Mantra' on 'Female Foeticide: A Challenge to Indian Society' Law College, Rajasthan University, Jaipur, India.

Message NGO, International Women's Day, Jaipur. "Perspectives on female foeticide"

2012 Through Feminist Eyes Speaker Series, Women's Center, WGS, Virginia Tech, Robeson Hall. Guest Scholar

Invited Organizer

2015 **Brainstorming session**, gender imbalance in India, Department of Health, Government of Rajasthan, India. Tapri, Jaipur. 15 participants

SERVICE

2014 Presider and Moderator, Human Rights Forum, Virginia Tech

2013 Manuscript Reviewer, Sociological Compass

Scholarship Reviewer, College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, Virginia Tech

Committee Co-Chair, Website Committee, WGS, Department of Sociology. Virginia Tech

2009 Instructor, "Yoga Workshop." Graduate Life Center, Virginia Tech

2008 Reader, Los Angeles Review

2006 "Yoga Instructor." Blacksburg Community Center

9 April 2017