

# Oviya Govindan

## Curriculum Vitae

PhD Candidate,  
Department of Anthropology  
University of California Irvine

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### RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Environmental Anthropology, Science and Technology Studies, Multi-Scalar Ethnographic Methods, Energy Infrastructure, Materiality of Water, Borders of South Asia, Indian Ocean.

### EDUCATION

- 2015-present      PhD Candidate, Anthropology,      University of California, Irvine  
(expected 2022)      Title: Making Coastal Nature(s) Work: The Politics of Risk and Value at the Coromandel Coast  
Committee: Bill Maurer (Chair), Eleana Kim, Mei Zhan and Kim Fortun.
- 2009-2014      Integrated MA., Development Studies.      Indian Institute of Technology, Madras  
Title: Rethinking 'Single Stories' of Territory: Land Acquisition or Politics of Space?  
Advisor: Solomon Benjamin.

### FELLOWSHIPS & GRANTS

- 2020      UCI Associate Dean's Fellowship, School of Social Sciences, UC Irvine
- 2018      Wenner Gren Dissertation Research Fellowship  
Center for Global Peace and Conflict Studies Graduate Student Grant, UC Irvine
- 2016      UCI Center for Asian Studies Graduate Student Research Support Grant
- 2016-2018      Department of Anthropology Summer Research Fellowship, UC Irvine
- 2015-present      UCI Social Sciences Teaching Assistant Fellowship
- 2014      Department of Humanities and Social Sciences Dissertation Fellowship, IIT-Madras
- 2012      DAAD Student Exchange Fellowship

### RESEARCH POSITIONS

- July-Dec 2020      Graduate Research Assistant, Institute for Money, Technology and Financial Inclusion, UC Irvine. Authored a report titled '[Covid-19 Relief Payments in The U.S. And California: Overview, Barriers to Access, and Ways Forward to Aid Families in Need](#)' which was presented to the Federal Reserve San Francisco, non-profits and city officials in Orange County. Conducted policy research, report writing, and took part in discussions on COVID-19 Relief Payments and Rethinking Public finance during times of austerity.
- 2014-15      Research Assistant, Indian Institute of Human Settlements, Bangalore India. Conducted fieldwork, literature reviews and qualitative data analysis to study planning processes involved in the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor, India.

May-Aug 2013 Research Assistant, Madras Institute of Development Studies. Conducted fieldwork and literature reviews to study transitions in rural land use for Planning Commission of Tamil Nadu.

## **ACADEMIC WRITING**

*(Peer Reviewed, Editor Reviewed and Other publications)*

- 2021 “Following Fish-Talk through Industrial Waters”, *SSRC ‘Ways of Water’* Blog series. Editor Reviewed. Available at: <https://items.ssrc.org/ways-of-water/following-fish-talk-through-industrial-waters/>
- 2019 “At the Edge of Land and Water: Navigating Sea-Level Change in Chennai”, *Platypus: The CASTAC Blog*. Editor Reviewed. Available at: <http://blog.castac.org/2019/05/at-the-edge-of-land-and-water-navigating-sea-level-change-in-chennai/>
- 2014 MA Thesis, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Madras: “Rethinking single stories of territory: Land acquisition or politics of space?”

## **INVITED TALKS**

- 2020 “Fieldwork Challenges and Positionality”. Invited Guest Lecture. Anthropology Honors Research Design, University of California Irvine, May 21.
- 2019 “Making Spatial Stories of Chennai”. Conducted one-day field methods workshop on how to read the city of Chennai through attention to embodied experience, City Studio, Bachelor of Architecture, School of Environment and Urbanism, Mumbai, July 1.
- 2019 “Space, Memory, and Territory: Locating the Field and Fieldwork”. Invited Guest Lecture. Infrastructure and Housing, MA in Development Studies, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, April 16.

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

- 2020 Disease, Health and Inequality. Spring Quarter. TA for Dr. Angela Jenks
- 2019 People in Society. Fall Quarter. TA for Dr. Paul James Morgan
- 2018 Global Issues in Anthropological Perspective. Spring Quarter. TA for Dr. Tom Douglas  
Introduction to Anthropology. Winter Quarter. TA for Dr. Eleana Kim
- 2017 Introduction to Anthropology. Fall Quarter. TA for Dr. Mei Zhan  
Introduction to Anthropology. Spring Quarter. TA for Dr. Victoria Bernal  
Introduction to Anthropology. Winter Quarter. TA for Dr. Jim Egan
- 2016 Introduction to Anthropology. Fall Quarter. TA for Dr. Mei Zhan  
Global Cultures and Society. Spring & Winter Quarter. TA for Dr. Tom Douglas
- 2015 Computer Based Research in the Social Sciences. TA for Dr. Paul Shirey

## **CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS AND SYMPOSIA**

### **Conference presentations**

- April 2021 American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting, Virtual. Title: "Fluid Hauntings: Techno-Legal Boundaries of Containment and Excess"
- March 2021 Society for Economic Anthropology Annual Meeting, Virtual. Title: "Arriving at Coastal Landscapes: Moral Ecologies and Industrial Value"
- March 2021 Virtual Graduate Conference on Place and Environment, University of Pennsylvania. Title: Imagining Coastal Futures: Place as Locale, Environment, or Recalcitrant Ethnographic Field.
- Nov 2020 American Anthropology Association Annual Meeting, St. Louis. (Panel postponed to 2021 due to COVID-19). Title: "Fishing for Value: Amidst Ecological Ruins on Industrial Coastal Chennai"
- Oct 2019 Annual Conference on South Asia, Wisconsin-Madison. Title: "Liminality and Fixity: Property Relations along the South Coromandel Coastline"
- Aug 2018 Society for Social Studies of Science Annual Conference, Australia. Title: "Property as Socio-Technical Infrastructure"
- May 2017 Annual Conference, Center for Global Peace and Conflict Studies, UC Irvine. Title: "Ethnographic Refusal and Politics of Development".
- May 2017 UCLA Annual Conference on South Asia, Los Angeles, CA. Title: "Ethnographic Refusal and Politics of development: Territory making in Cheyyur"

### **Workshops and Collaborations**

- Dec 2020 Workshop participant and presenter. Normative Eco-Relations Virtual Workshop. Discussants: Dr Alex Blanchette and Dr Sophie Chao
- Mar 2020 Invited Workshop participant. Ways of Water, SSRC Scholarly Borderlands Program, held at Arizona State University. Discussants: Dr Andrea Ballesterro, Dr Christy Spackman and Dr Etienne Benson
- Dec 2018 Workshop participant. Delta Cities Workshop, IIAS, Vietnam. Presented collaborative work on reading the socio-natural landscape of Mekong River Delta. Discussants: Dr Debjani Bhattacharya and Dr David Biggs
- Nov 2018 Invited Workshop participant. Dissertation Workshop, The French Institute of Pondicherry, Pondicherry. Title: "Rising Tides: Making Property and Value on Urban Coastal Chennai."
- March 2014 Workshop participant, Global Think-in on Governing Essential Resources, Columbia Global Center South Asia and the National Institute of Advanced Studies.

## **ACADEMIC SERVICE & ACTIVITIES**

- 2020 Graduate Student Mentor for Anthropology Graduate students.  
Graduate Student Mentor for Anthropology Undergraduate students.

Mentorship includes meeting with mentees and identifying resources to meet mentees' needs.

- 2019 Webinar on Applying to Graduate Programs in the US from India, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Madras.
- Created a public resource for prospective international students on the hidden norms that structure graduate admissions in the US, shared [here](#).
- 2017-18 Student Representative, DECADE Social Sciences Council for Diversity on Campus
- Organized workshop on 'Academia is Our Workplace' for peers in the Department of Anthropology facilitated by Dr. Luzilda Carillo. It focused on helping graduate students reflect on institutional definitions of workplace issues, how student experiences are shaped by race, gender, among other institutional categories of difference.
  - Participated in conversations on how to design anti-racist pedagogies within the department and facilitate reflection among peers and faculty.
- 2016-17 Program Coordinator, Working Title, UCI Social Sciences Dean's Workshop
- Coordinated a graduate student-led forum that offers a platform for graduate students across the social sciences and faculty to workshop writing in progress and receive feedback. Worked on inviting proposals, finding discussants for participants, and organizing the workshops with a team of three peers.

### **PROFESSIONAL TRAINING**

June 2016 California STS Retreat. Weekend retreat and workshop at Marin Headlands, California

Sept 2015 TA Professional Development Program, Division of Teaching Excellence and Innovation, UC Irvine

### **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

American Anthropological Association (AAA), Society for Social Studies of Science (4S),  
American Association of Geography (AAG)

### **LANGUAGE SKILLS**

Fluent in Tamil and English.

### **REFERENCES upon request**