

CURRICULUM VITAE

PAROMITA SANYAL

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY  
HARVARD UNIVERSITY  
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**EDUCATION**

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Ph.D. Sociology, Harvard University expected June 2008 (Cambridge, MA)

Dissertation Committee: Martin K. Whyte (Chair), Mary C. Brinton, Peggy Levitt

*Credit, Capital, or Coalition: Microfinance and Pathways to Women's Agency*

My dissertation examines microfinance programs, which have come to be globally recognized as an important development initiative. I investigate how and under what conditions membership in these programs increases women's agency. I operationalize agency as including multiple dimensions of human capability, viz, social awareness, social interactions, physical mobility, domestic power, and civic participation. I undertake a detailed analysis of group participation and loan usage through in-depth interviews with approximately four hundred Hindu and Muslim women who are members of microfinance groups in rural India. I distinguish between two mechanisms through which group membership increases women's agency: the economic mechanism of access to capital in the form of loans; and the associational mechanism of participation in group meetings and training sessions and access to expanded social networks. Based on this framework I identify the actual processes through which women's participation in these groups enhances (or does not) their agency and the structural and cultural factors which positively or negatively influence their control over loans and participation in the associational activities of the group.

A.M. Sociology, Harvard University 2004 (Cambridge, MA)

M.A. Sociology, Jawaharlal Nehru University 1999 (New Delhi, India)

B.A. Sociology, Presidency College 1997 (Kolkata, India)

**PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS**

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Researcher Aug 2007- June 08  
The World Bank, Development Research Group (Washington, DC)  
Project: Deliberative Democracy in India  
Lead Supervisor: Dr. Vijayendra Rao

**AREAS OF INTEREST**

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Substantive Areas: Sociology of Development; Gender; Gender and Development; Gender and Work; Culture; Economic Sociology; Social Capital; Participatory Democracy and Decentralized Governance; Nonprofit Organizations

Methods: Qualitative methods - conducting Interviews (individual and focus-group) and Participant Observation; Developing and pre-testing questionnaires for structured and unstructured interviews; Fieldwork; Household surveys;

Software: Atlas.Ti, QSR Nudist

## **PUBLICATIONS – PEER REVIEWED ARTICLES**

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Sanyal, Paromita. 2007. “From Credit to Collective Action: Microfinance, Women’s Group-based Mobilizations and Implications for Social Capital” Under Review

Sanyal, Paromita. 2007. “Nonprofit Organizations and the Politics of Self-Presentation: Controlling Access and its Methodological Implications – A Meta-Analytic Approach” Under Review

Sanyal, Paromita. 2006. “Capacity Building through Partnerships: Intermediary Nongovernmental Organizations as Local and Global Actors.” *Non-Profit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* 35(1): 66-82.

## **WORKING PAPERS**

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Sanyal, Paromita. “Credit versus Coalition: Exploring the Influence of Microfinance Programs on Women’s Agency”

## **BOOK REVIEWS**

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Sanyal, Paromita. 2006. “G.N. RAMU, *Brothers and Sisters in India: A Study of Urban Adult Siblings*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006.” *The Canadian Review of Sociology*.

## **HONORS AND AWARDS**

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GRADUATE SOCIETY DISSERTATION COMPLETION FELLOWSHIP 2006-07  
Harvard University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

PASCUCCI FELLOWSHIP 2006-07  
Harvard University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

EMERGING SCHOLAR AWARD 2005  
The Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action

CERTIFICATE OF DISTINCTION FOR TEACHING 2005  
Harvard University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

CONFERENCE TRAVEL AWARD (3) 2005, 07  
Harvard University, Department of Sociology

‘ABOVE PHD LEVEL’ DISTINCTION FOR SPECIAL FIELD EXAMINATION 2004  
Harvard University, Department of Sociology

‘HONORS’ FOR OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE IN GENERAL EXAMINATION 2001  
Harvard University, Department of Sociology

GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP 2000-04  
Harvard University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

NATIONAL ELIGIBILITY TEST QUALIFIED 1998  
Junior Research Fellowship, University Grants Commission, India.

NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME AWARD 1997  
University Grants Commission (Govt. of India) award for top rank in national entrance examination for the M.A.(Sociology) program

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

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- GLOBALIZATION AND ETHNICITY Fall 2005  
Teaching Fellow: Planning and leading sections, grading and commenting on student work, determining final grades.
- CLASSICAL AND CONTEMPORARY SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY Spring 2004 & 2005  
Sole Instructor: Independent teaching and discussion leading in undergraduate tutorial for sociology concentrators, grading and commenting on student work, determining final grades.
- INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY Fall 2003  
Teaching Fellow: Planning and leading sections, grading and commenting on student work, determining final grades.
- GENDER AND SOCIAL POLICY Spring 2003  
Teaching Fellow: Assisting students with coursework.
- SOCIOLOGY OF DEVIANCE Fall 2002  
Teaching Fellow: Planning and leading sections, grading and commenting on student work, determining final grades.

## **LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY**

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Bengali (India, Bangladesh) – Fluent in speaking, reading and writing

Hindi (India) – Fluent in speaking and partial fluency in reading

## **SELECTED PRESENTATIONS**

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‘Credit versus Coalition: Exploring the Influence of Microfinance Programs on Women’s Agency’ presented at the American Sociological Association meeting (Regular Session on Development) August, 2007, New York.

‘Microfinance and Beyond: Structural Interventions Promoting Economic Opportunity and HIV Risk Reduction’, Center for Interdisciplinary Research on AIDS, Yale, July, 2007, New Haven, Connecticut.

‘Microfinance: Cultural consequences of an economic intervention’ presented at the American Sociological Association meeting, Philadelphia, August 2005, Philadelphia.

‘Contentious Collaborators: Research and Practice in the field of Microfinance’ and ‘Capacity Building through Partnership: Intermediary Nongovernmental Organizations as Local and Global Actors’ presented at the Meeting of the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action, November, 2005, Washington DC.

## **INVITED LECTURES AND PRESENTATIONS**

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The World Bank, Social Science and Policy Seminar Series September, 2007  
Social Development Department and Development Research Group  
Title: *Credit, Capital or Coalition: accounting for women’s agency and group-based collective mobilizations of microfinance groups*

Harvard University, Dept. of Sociology June, 2007  
Course: Gender and Work  
Title: Microfinance in the context of gender and work in developing countries

Brown University, Dept. of Sociology Title: <i>Credit, Capital, or Coalition: Microfinance and Pathways to Women's Agency</i>	November, 2006
Princeton University, Dept. of Sociology Title: <i>Credit, Capital, or Coalition: Microfinance and Pathways to Women's Agency</i>	October, 2006
University of Massachusetts (Boston), Course: Introduction to Human Rights Title: <i>Microfinance Groups as Vehicles of Human Rights</i>	March, 2006

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**SERVICE TO THE PROFESSION**

Faculty Search Committee, Dept. of Sociology, Harvard University	2005-06
Session Chair: 'Organization Analysis in Comparative Perspective', Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action, Washington DC.	November, 2005
Session Chair: 'Welfare and National Organizations', American Sociological Association, Philadelphia.	August, 2005

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**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

American Sociological Association

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**SERVICE TO COMMUNITY**

Dudley House Literary Fellow, Harvard University	2003-04
Resident Advisor in Graduate Residence Hall, Harvard University	2001-03

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**REFERENCES**

Prof. Martin K. Whyte  
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mwhyte@wjh.harvard.edu

Prof. Mary C. Brinton  
Dept. of Sociology, Harvard University  
Phone: 617-384-9668  
brinton@wjh.harvard.edu

Prof. Peggy Levitt  
Dept of Sociology, Wellesley College  
Phone: 781-283-2186  
plevitt@wellesley.edu

Prof. Peter V. Marsden  
Dept. of Sociology, Harvard University  
Phone: 617-495- 3823  
pvm@wjh.harvard.edu