

BISHEMBARNATH AND SHEELA MATTOO



STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY

invites you to a lecture

Dr. Joel Bordeaux
Visiting Scholar

**Giving Up the Goat:
Sacrifice and Substitution in
Bengali Goddess Worship**

Wednesday, November 29, 4 PM
Humanities 1006

To outward appearances, sacrifice is on the wane in Bengali Hinduism. Even at explicitly “tantric” Kali Pujas, one increasingly finds fruits and vegetables offered at points in the ritual where a goat had been customary even a generation ago. In other cases, the sacrificial portion of the puja has been elided entirely. Some differences in practice can be accounted for with references to classical Sanskrit legal texts (dharma shastras) and others according to the tantras themselves. Not all local variations depend on such theoretical rationales, however, so a short excursion into ethnography will round out the picture.



Joel Bordeaux is a Visiting Scholar at the Mattoo Center for India Studies. He received a B.A. in Religious Studies from Georgia State in 2003 and a Ph.D. in Religion from Columbia University in 2015. He is a specialist in the religions of South Asia, working primarily in Bengali and Sanskrit. His research explores how political authorities, canonical works of literature, and esotericism mediate differences between and within religious traditions.



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For more information, call the Mattoo Center at 631-632-9742. Email: indiastudies@stonybrook.edu

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The lecture is free and open to the public. All are cordially invited.