
Alumnus but not forgotten: an interview with Arnab Dey

When were you at global dis:connect, and what did you work on while here?

I was at global dis:connect from January till July 2023. While there, I started work on my second book on the history of industrial disease and labour health in India between 1880 and 1950. This monograph examines the history, politics and medical origins of numerous ailments that beset working-class members of India's industrial enterprises, small and big. Though largely forgotten, this project reminds us of the enormous human costs – and silences – of globalisation and global history.

Where do you work now, and are you still dealing with dis:connectivity?

I am back at my home institution (State University of New York at Binghamton) and continue to research labour health. This project has advanced to include questions of law, labour union activity and vernacular histories of occupational disease. I am still very much interested and invested in questions of dis:connectivity that commenced at global dis:connect. The study of embodied industrial disease (largely suffered in private and away from the public gaze) reminds us repeatedly that global capital and processes of globalisation cannot be fully grasped without also understanding what they hide (or refuse to let us see) and what they disrupt.



Fig. 01
Arnab Dey



What text – whether a book or article – have you read recently that particularly impressed you?

I recently read Salman Rushdie's *Knife: Meditations After an Attempted Murder* (Random House, 2024) in one sitting. A riveting work of private and public introspection, it offers a thoughtful account of how to navigate loss, despair and political convictions in a deeply polarising world.

Which song could be the sound-track for your time at gdc?

With appropriate tweaks and contextual changes, of course, but Bill Medley and Jennifer Warnes's (*I've Had*) *The Time of My Life* (1987) pretty much sums up the song for my time at the gd:c!!

Given the choice of anyone dead or alive, or even a fictional character, whom would you want as a dinner guest?

I would certainly love to have both Calvin *and* Hobbes (the furry version) at my dinner table if I had the chance! Given their wicked profundity and dark humour, it would be interesting to have their perspective on our contemporary world and prognosis for the future ...