

Jonah Blank

Current Position

RAND Corporation. Senior Political Scientist 2012-present
Regional focus: South and Southeast Asia
Topical focus: National Security, Defense, and Intelligence
RAND divisions in which projects are concentrated

- Project Air Force
- National Security Research Division
- Intelligence Policy Center

Education

Harvard University. PhD, MA (Social/Cultural Anthropology) 1998
Yale University. BA (History, *Magna Cum Laude*) 1986

Post Held: United States Government

Committee on Foreign Relations, US Senate 1999-2011
Policy Director (Majority), South and Southeast Asia (most recent title)

Posts Held: Academia

Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS)
Professorial Lecturer, South Asian Studies 2004-present
Georgetown University
Adjunct Associate Professor, School of Foreign Service 2007
Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology 2003
India Review (scholarly journal)
Managing Editor 2002-2005
Harvard University
Assistant Wing Tutor, Department of Social Anthropology 1994-1997
Head Teaching Fellow (Anthropology & Middle East Departments) 1994-1996

Posts Held: Finance/Journalism

US News & World Report
Senior Editor 1997-1999
Foreign Correspondent (India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Nepal) 1994-1999
Fortune Magazine
Staff Reporter/Financial analyst (focus on Asian affairs) 1987-1990
Asahi Evening News (Tokyo)
Finance Editor 1986-1987

Published Works/Media Outlets

Regular contributor to outlets ranging from policy opinion-leaders (*Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*) and large-circulation public interest/literary magazines (*The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic*) to scholarly journals (*American Anthropologist*, *Eastern Anthropologist*, *Journal of Vaisnava Studies*) and mass-circulation newspapers (*Washington Post*, *Boston Globe*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Dallas Morning News*, *Orlando Sentinel*, *Toronto Star*). Media appearances range from CNN's "Situation Room" to National Public Radio's "All Things Considered."

Books Published

Arrow of the Blue-Skinned God: Retracing the Ramayana Through India.

(Grove 2000; earlier editions include Houghton Mifflin, 1992; Doubleday paperback 1993; Simon & Schuster UK 1993 and paperback 1994; Penguin India 1998; *Il Dio Dalla Pelle Azzurra: Alla scoperta dell'India di oggi sulle tracce del principe Rama.* Rome: Edizioni Frassinelli, 1995)

“Blank has proven himself worthy of keeping company with the likes of Naipaul...*Arrow of the Blue-Skinned God* is quite possibly the most perceptive book that I have come across on India since the British Raj ended 45 years ago...Jonah Blank’s extraordinary book is timely, and I dare say, invaluable...*Arrow of the Blue-Skinned God* is simply splendid.”

— *The Washington Post*

“This informative and entertaining book is something to be thankful for.”

— *The New York Times*

“The most appealing rendering of Valmiki’s poetry available in English...One recaptures in his narration a world of visual grandeur, otherwise accessible only to those who can read Valmiki in the original...One has a feeling of gratitude when one comes across a book like this.”

— *Times Literary Supplement* [London]

Mullahs on the Mainframe: Islam and Modernity Among the Daudi Bohras.

(University of Chicago Press, 2001; paperback 2002; Oxford University Pakistan, 2003).

“This is a model piece of scholarship, the kind of work you want to give to younger scholars so as to awaken them to the wonders and the variety of the world. Ethnography, political history, economic history, intermingle, and creatively so, in this unique book—a tribute to a gifted and observant author. Here is one brilliant venture by a young, superbly trained American social scientist who delves into the world of Indian Muslims, and renders that world with artistry, precision, and detail.”

Fouad Ajami, Director of Middle East Studies, Johns Hopkins SAIS

“No other book that I know of has such a wealth of detail on the belief systems and praxis of an Islamic religious community. Blank’s many-level approach makes this one of the most interesting works I have read: his description of customs, lifestyles, and ideas is based on both unprecedented study of written material and his own painstaking, assiduous field research. His text also, very properly, aims to dispel some of the stereotypes that disfigure Western preconceptions of Islam. This unconventional book is a major contribution to scholarship.”

Ainslie T. Embree, Professor Emeritus of History, Columbia University.