



# SAGE: Studies Abroad for Global Education

## Summer SAGE Resource List

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### Community Service in Eastern India

#### Websites

*Mother Teresa.* These sites are just a few examples of those dedicated to Mother Theresa and Missionaries of Charity in Calcutta. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mother\\_Teresa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mother_Teresa). <http://www.motherteresa.org/layout.html>  
[http://nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/1979/teresa-bio.html](http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1979/teresa-bio.html)

*Rabindranath Tagore.* Mr. Rabindranath Tagore is perhaps one of the greatest Indian Poets of all time. He could pen his poems both in Bengali, his mother tongue and also English. He wielded tremendous influence not only on the literary scene but also on the freedom movement. His classic *Gitanjali* won him the Nobel Prize for literature. <http://www.schoolofwisdom.com/tagore-bio.html> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rabindranath\\_Tagore](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rabindranath_Tagore)

*Satyajit Ray.* Mr. Satyajit Ray is considered one of the foremost Indian filmmakers and among the dozen or so great masters of world cinema. He is known for his humanistic approach to cinema. <http://www.satyajitray.org>

*Swami Vivekananda.* A spiritual genius of commanding intellect and power, Vivekananda crammed immense labor and achievement into his short life, 1863-1902. Born in the Datta family of Calcutta, the youthful Vivekananda embraced the agnostic philosophies of the Western mind along with the worship of science. He is credited with bringing yoga and Vedanta philosophy to the West.  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swami\\_Vivekananda](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swami_Vivekananda) <http://www.vivekananda.org/biography.asp>  
<http://www.ramakrishna.org/sv.htm>

*Muhammad Yunus.* Another Nobel Prize winner from the state of Bengal (now divided into West Bengal and Bangladesh). Yunus is the creator of the Grameen Bank, one of the most innovative grassroots lending institutions in the world focusing on the poor. Grameen Bank (GB) has reversed conventional banking practice by removing the need for collateral and created a banking system based on mutual trust, accountability, participation and creativity. GB provides credit to the poorest of the poor in rural Bangladesh, without any collateral. At GB, credit is a cost effective weapon to fight poverty and it serves as a catalyst in the overall development of socio-economic conditions of the poor who have been kept outside the banking orbit on the ground that they are poor and hence not bankable. Professor Muhammad Yunus, the founder of "Grameen Bank" and its Managing Director, reasoned that if financial resources can be made available to the poor people on terms and conditions that are appropriate and reasonable, "these millions of small people with their millions of small pursuits can add up to create the biggest development wonder."  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muhammad\\_Yunus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muhammad_Yunus) <http://www.grameen-info.org/index.html>

*Kiva.* Based on the philosophy of Muhammad Yunus, Kiva's mission is to connect people through lending for the sake of alleviating poverty. Based in San Francisco, it is the world's first person-to-person micro-lending website, empowering individuals to lend directly to unique entrepreneurs in the developing world.  
<http://www.kiva.org>

*Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni.* Ms. Divakaruni is an award-winning author and poet. She has been published in over 50 magazines, including *The Atlantic Monthly* and *The New Yorker*, and her writing has been included in over 50 anthologies. Her books have been translated into 16 languages, including Dutch, Hebrew, Russian and Japanese. Two of her books have been made into movies. She is one of the founders of Maitri, a Bay Area organization for abused and neglected South Asian women. <http://www.chitradivakaruni.com/>

## Films

*City of Joy.* Set against the breathtaking beauty and poverty of Calcutta, India, CITY OF JOY follows American doctor Max Lowe (Patrick Swayze), who abandons his calling as a physician, and travels to India to search for meaning in his life. Attacked and robbed upon his arrival, he is taken to Joan (Pauline Collins), an Irish nun struggling to provide basic medical care for Calcutta's most overcrowded and impoverished slum, where the rich Godfather (Shyamanand Jalan) controls the rent and livelihood of the many families struggling to survive. Hasari Pal (Om Puri) and his family are new to the city and struggling to make enough money to survive. Shocked by the poverty surrounding him, Max refuses to be a bystander to the suffering, befriendng Hasari and helping Joan to open a new clinic. A moving and electrifying portrait of poverty and repression being overcome by support and faith, Roland Joffé's CITY OF JOY features stunning footage of Calcutta and its citizens. Even though the movie is visually compelling, it is strongly criticized for simplifying the issue of poverty and glorifying the help of well-intentioned but misguided outsiders.

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0103976/maindetails>

*Born into Brothels: Calcutta's Red Light Kids.* Amid the apparent growing prosperity of India, there exists a dark and hidden underbelly of poverty. This film is a chronicle of filmmakers Zana Briski and Ross Kauffman's efforts to show the world of Calcutta's red light district. To do that, they inspired children of local prostitutes to photograph images of life in the sex industry. As the kids excel in their new found art, the filmmakers struggle to help them get away from a life of miserable poverty and to have a chance at a better life.

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0388789/>

*Mother Teresa: In the Name of God's Poor.* This is the true story of Mother Teresa, beginning in Calcutta, India, where she faces adversity from every direction and where she lays the foundation for her crusade to help the poorest of God's poor. <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0136414/maindetails>

## Books

*Banker to the Poor: The Autobiography of Muhammad Yunus, Founder of Grameen Bank.* By Muhammad Yunus

[http://www.amazon.com/Banker-Poor-Micro-Lending-Against-Poverty/dp/1586481983/ref=pd\\_bbs\\_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1212030012&sr=8-1](http://www.amazon.com/Banker-Poor-Micro-Lending-Against-Poverty/dp/1586481983/ref=pd_bbs_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1212030012&sr=8-1)

This book is an autobiographical account of the founder of the Grameen Bank, Muhammad Yunus. This work is a fundamental rethinking of the economic relationship between the rich and the poor, as well as their rights and obligations. *Banker to the Poor* is an inspiring memoir of the birth of microcredit, written in a conversational tone that makes it both moving and enjoyable to read. The Grameen Bank is now a \$2.5 billion banking enterprise in Bangladesh, while the microcredit model has spread to over 50 countries worldwide, from the U.S. to Papua New Guinea, Norway to Nepal. Ever optimistic, Yunus travels the globe spreading the belief that poverty can be eliminated: "...the poor, once economically empowered, are the most determined fighters in the battle to solve the population problem; end illiteracy; and live healthier, better lives. When policy makers finally realize that the poor are their partners, rather than bystanders or enemies, we will progress much faster than we do today." Dr. Yunus's efforts prove that hope is a global currency

*The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time.* By Jeffrey Sachs.

[http://www.amazon.com/End-Poverty-Economic-Possibilities-Time/dp/0143036580/ref=pd\\_sim\\_b\\_img\\_1](http://www.amazon.com/End-Poverty-Economic-Possibilities-Time/dp/0143036580/ref=pd_sim_b_img_1)

Celebrated economist Jeffrey Sachs has a plan to eliminate extreme poverty around the world by 2025. If you think that is too ambitious or wildly unrealistic, you need to read this book. His focus is on the one billion

poorest individuals around the world who are caught in a poverty trap of disease, physical isolation, environmental stress, political instability, and lack of access to capital, technology, medicine, and education. The goal is to help these people reach the first rung on the "ladder of economic development" so they can rise above mere subsistence level and achieve some control over their economic futures and their lives. To do this, Sachs proposes nine specific steps, which he explains in great detail in *The End of Poverty*. Though his plan certainly requires the help of rich nations, the financial assistance Sachs calls for is surprisingly modest--more than is now provided, but within the bounds of what has been promised in the past. For the U.S., for instance, it would mean raising foreign aid from just 0.14 percent of GNP to 0.7 percent. Sachs does not view such help as a handout but rather an investment in global economic growth that will add to the security of all nations. In presenting his argument, he offers a comprehensive education on global economics, including why globalization should be embraced rather than fought, why international institutions such as the United Nations, International Monetary Fund, and World Bank need to play a strong role in this effort, and the reasons why extreme poverty exists in the midst of great wealth. He also shatters some persistent myths about poor people and shows how developing nations can do more to help themselves.

*Interpreter of Maladies*. By Jhumpa Lahiri

[http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/product-description/039592720X/ref=dp\\_proddesc\\_0?ie=UTF8&n=283155&s=books](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/product-description/039592720X/ref=dp_proddesc_0?ie=UTF8&n=283155&s=books)

The past few years have seen a number of fine writers springing from India--some living on the subcontinent and others, like the author of this collection of stories, who live elsewhere but whose work is still imbued with Indian culture and sensibilities. Lahiri explores "Indian-ness" in all her stories, wherever they are set. Some, such as "A Real Durwan," take place in urban settings in or near Calcutta. Others deal with immigrants at different stages on the road to assimilation. In "A Temporary Matter," Lahiri's sensitive and subtle portrayal of a troubled marriage, the fact that the couple is Indian seems almost incidental. In the title story, Mr. and Mrs. Das, both born in America, are taking their children to visit India for the first time. One of Lahiri's gifts is the ability to use different eyes and voices. Readers who enjoy these stories should also appreciate the work of Bharati Mukherjee and G. S. Sharat Chandra's collection *Sari of the Gods*, which was published last year. Lahiri's earlier book, *The Namesake*, was recently made into a feature film by noted Indian director Mira Nair.

*The Mistress of Spices*. By Chitra Divakaruni

[http://www.amazon.com/Mistress-Spices-Novel-Chitra-Divakaruni/dp/0385482388/ref=pd\\_bbs\\_3?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1211934499&sr=1-3](http://www.amazon.com/Mistress-Spices-Novel-Chitra-Divakaruni/dp/0385482388/ref=pd_bbs_3?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1211934499&sr=1-3)

Divakaruni's debut story collection, *Arranged Marriages* (1995), inspired high praise, and her first novel, which uses romance as a conduit to explore more serious matters of the soul, will win her even greater acclaim. Mythical and mystical, *Mistress of Spices* is reminiscent of fables and fairy tales. It revolves around the age-old magic of spices, which are imbued with powers as complexly spiritual as India itself, the birthplace of Divakaruni and her fearless heroine, Tilo. Clairvoyant from birth, Tilo eagerly learns the secrets of spices and becomes, in essence, a nun, wedded to these miraculous substances and devoted to the art of healing. She works her gentle magic in a tiny, rundown shop in Oakland, California, hidden within the body of an old woman. The spices are harsh taskmasters, and Tilo's life is limited until her rebelliousness reasserts itself, and she becomes involved in the lives of her troubled customers. She falls in love with Raven, the quintessential romantic hero--dashing, handsome, rich, and brooding--but Raven actually embodies nothing less than the great spirit of the American Indian. As the wild story of their unlikely ardor unfolds, Divakaruni draws evocative parallels between the racism and violence immigrants from India face in the U.S. and the tragic conquest of Native Americans. The story Divakaruni tells is transporting, but it is her gift for metaphor that makes this novel live and breathe, its pages as redolent as any freshly ground spice.

*Sister of My Heart.* By Chitra Divakaruni

[http://www.amazon.com/Sister-My-Heart-Chitra-Divakaruni/dp/038548951X/ref=pd\\_bxgy\\_b\\_text\\_b](http://www.amazon.com/Sister-My-Heart-Chitra-Divakaruni/dp/038548951X/ref=pd_bxgy_b_text_b)

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni made an indelible impression on the literary world with her first novel, [The Mistress of Spices](#), a magical tale of love and herbs. *Sister of My Heart* is less reliant on enchantment but no less enchanting as it tells the tale of two cousins born on the same day, their premature births brought on by a mysterious occurrence that claims the lives of both their fathers. Sudha is beautiful, Anju is not; yet the girls love each other as sisters, the bond between them so strong it seems nothing can break it. When both are pushed into arranged marriages, however, each discovers a devastating secret that changes their relationship forever.

*Sister of My Heart* spans many years and zigzags between India and America as the cousins first grow apart and then eventually reunite. Divakaruni invests this domestic drama with poetry as she traces her heroines' lives from infancy to motherhood, but it is Sudha and Anju who give the story its backbone. Anju might speak for both when she says, "In spite of all my insecurities, in spite of the oceans that'll be between us soon and the men that are between us already, I can never stop loving Sudha. It's my habit, and it's my fate."

*The Calcutta Chromosome.* By Amitav Ghosh.

[http://www.amazon.com/Calcutta-Chromosome-Fevers-Delirium-Discovery/dp/0380813947/ref=pd\\_bbs\\_sr\\_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1212163524&sr=8-1](http://www.amazon.com/Calcutta-Chromosome-Fevers-Delirium-Discovery/dp/0380813947/ref=pd_bbs_sr_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1212163524&sr=8-1)

*The Calcutta Chromosome* is one of those books that's marketed as a mainstream thriller even though it is an excellent science fiction novel (It won the prestigious Arthur C. Clarke Award). The main character is a man named Antar, whose job is to monitor a somewhat finicky computer that sorts through mountains of information. When the computer finds something it can't catalog, it brings the item to Antar's attention. A string of these seemingly random anomalies puts Antar on the trail of a man named Murugan, who disappeared in Calcutta in 1995 while searching for the truth behind the discovery of the cure for malaria. This search for Murugan leads, in turn, to the discovery of the Calcutta Chromosome, which can shift bits of personality from one person to another. That's when things *really* get interesting.

*Something Beautiful for God.* By Malcom Muggeridge

[http://www.amazon.com/Something-Beautiful-God-Malcolm-Muggeridge/dp/0060660430/ref=pd\\_bbs\\_sr\\_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1212163753&sr=1-1](http://www.amazon.com/Something-Beautiful-God-Malcolm-Muggeridge/dp/0060660430/ref=pd_bbs_sr_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1212163753&sr=1-1)

No woman alive today has inspired so many with her simplicity of faith and compassion so all-encompassing. As she daily embraces the "least of the least" in her arms, Mother Theresa challenges the whole world to greater acts of service and understanding in the name of love.

First published in 1971, this classic work introduced Mother Theresa to the Western World. As timely now as it was then, *Something Beautiful for God* interprets her life through the eyes of a modern-day skeptic who became literally transformed within her presence, describing her as "a light which could never be extinguished."

*No Greater Love,* By Mother Teresa and Thomas Moore.

[http://www.amazon.com/No-Greater-Love-Mother-Teresa/dp/1577312015/ref=pd\\_bbs\\_sr\\_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1212164048&sr=1-1](http://www.amazon.com/No-Greater-Love-Mother-Teresa/dp/1577312015/ref=pd_bbs_sr_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1212164048&sr=1-1)

*No Greater Love* is the essential wisdom of Mother Teresa — the most accessible, intimate, and inspiring book of her teachings. Thematically arranged to present her revolutionary vision of Christianity in its graceful simplicity, the book features her thoughts on love, generosity, forgiveness, prayer, service, and what it means

to be a Christian. A passionate testament to deep hope and abiding faith in God, *No Greater Love* celebrates the life and work of one of the world's most revered spiritual teachers.

*City of Joy*. By Dominique Lapierre.

[http://www.amazon.com/City-Joy-Dominique-Lapierre/dp/0446355569/ref=pd\\_bbs\\_sr\\_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1211935221&sr=1-1](http://www.amazon.com/City-Joy-Dominique-Lapierre/dp/0446355569/ref=pd_bbs_sr_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1211935221&sr=1-1)

What irony that one of Calcutta's most devastating slums should be known as Anand Nagar, ``the City of Joy." By interweaving impressionistic glimpses from the lives of a French priest, a rickshaw driver, and an American doctor, Lapierre creates a searing vision of the struggle for survival, the flashing violence, and the social and cultural practices of the slum. His theme that from human misery can emerge joy might seem to some readers as a bogus acceptance of a terrible evil. Yet Lapierre's narrative slides skillfully in and out of both history and fiction to create an effective but horrible montage of disease, death, and destruction amid elements of charity, hope, and love. This classic narrative about Calcutta was later made into an American feature film, however the book is generally thought to be more nuanced and true-to-life than the movie adaptation.

### **Articles**

*Mother Teresa—Her Agony*. By David Van Biema.

<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1655415,00.html>

A decade after Mother Teresa's death, her secret letters show that she spend almost 50 years without sensing the presence of God in her life. What does her experience teach us about the value of doubt? And about the humanity of our heroes?