

*Imagining Religious Communities* tells the story of the Gupta family through the personal and religious narratives they tell as they create and maintain their extended family and community across national borders. Based on ethnographic research, the book demonstrates the ways that transnational communities are involved in shaping their experiences through narrative performances.

Jennifer B. Saunders demonstrates that narrative performances shape participants' social realities in multiple ways: they define identities, they create connections between community members living on opposite sides of national borders, and they help create new homes amidst increasing mobility. The narratives are religious and include epic narratives such as excerpts from the Ramayana as well as personal narratives with dharmic implications. Saunders's analysis combines scholarly understandings of the ways in which performances shape the contexts in which they are told, indigenous comprehension of the power that reciting certain narratives can have on those who hear them, and the theory that social imaginaries define new social realities through expressing the aspirations of communities. *Imagining Religious Communities* argues that this Hindu community's religious narrative performances significantly contribute to shaping their transnational lives.