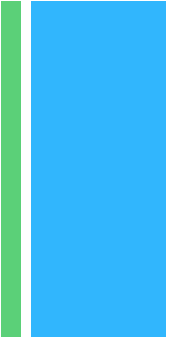
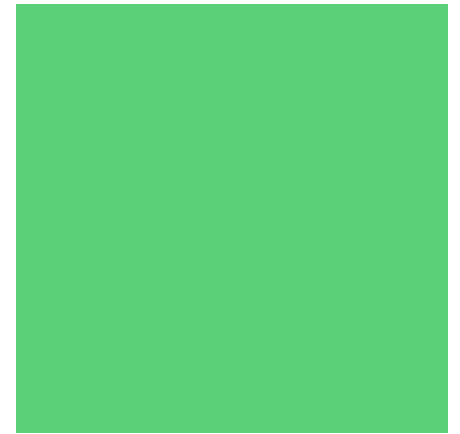
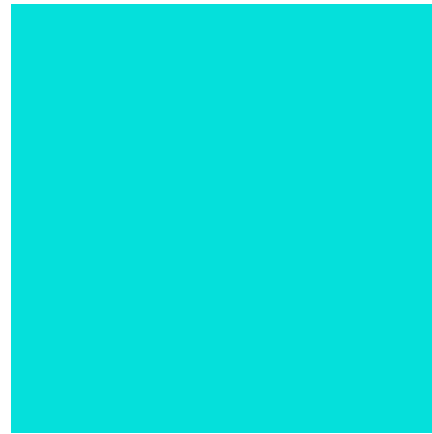


+ Forthcoming Essay

- 600-words
- Topics available Friday 18 March midday
- Due date 8 April
- need to be submitted through the LMS site as 'Turnitin' assignments.
- Purpose
 - demonstrate understanding of key topics we have discussed in lectures and tutorials
 - demonstrate writing and research skills
 - find academic sources (~6) and incorporate into an argument
 - clear and concise response to the assigned questions

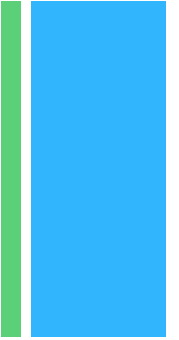




Assessing Distribution Theory

Geography of Scarcity

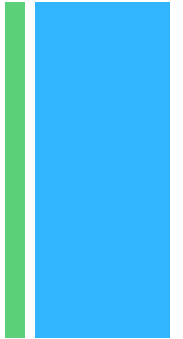
Dr. Sangeetha Chandrashekeran



Famines often take place in situations of moderate to good food availability, without any significant decline of food supply per head.

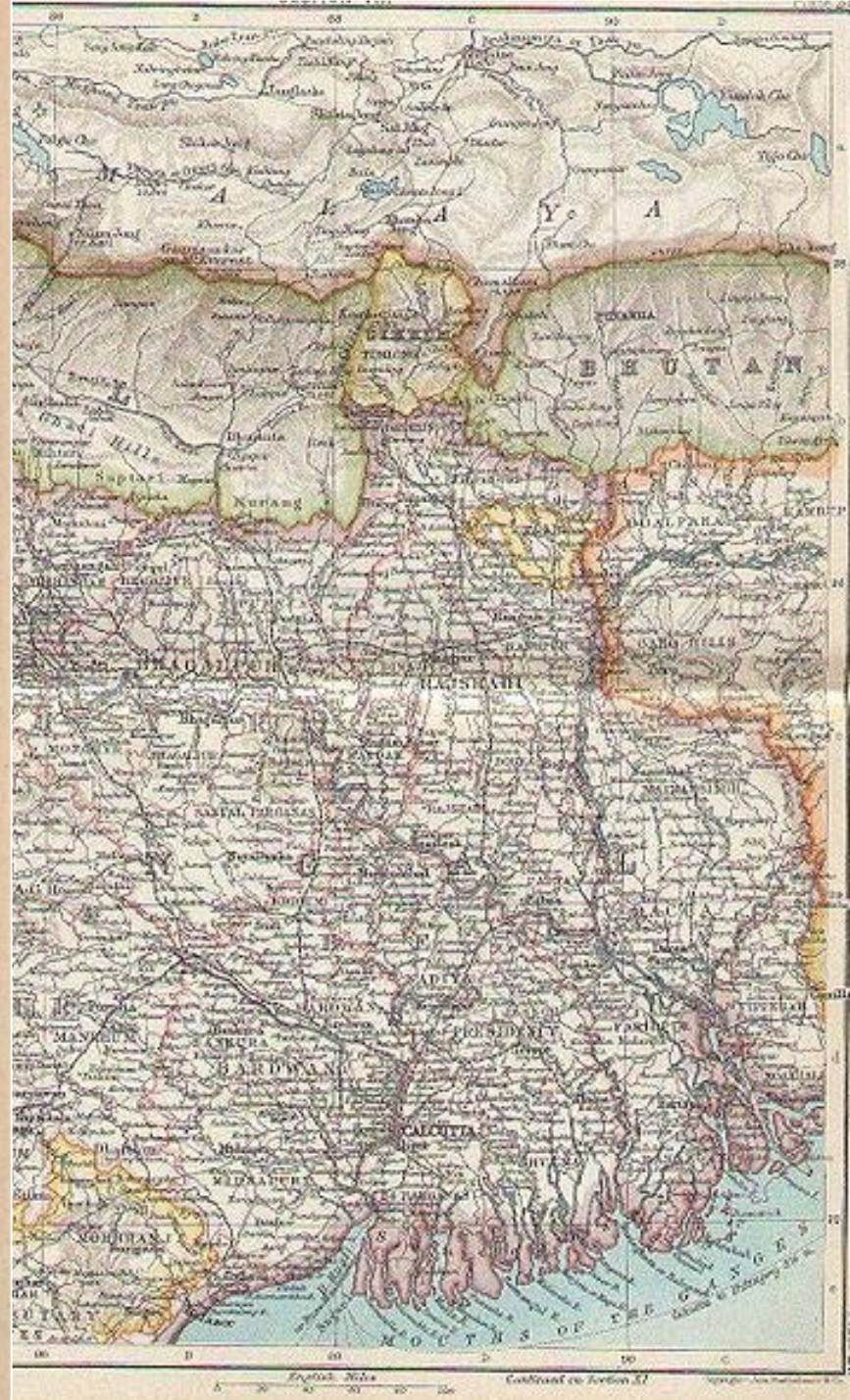
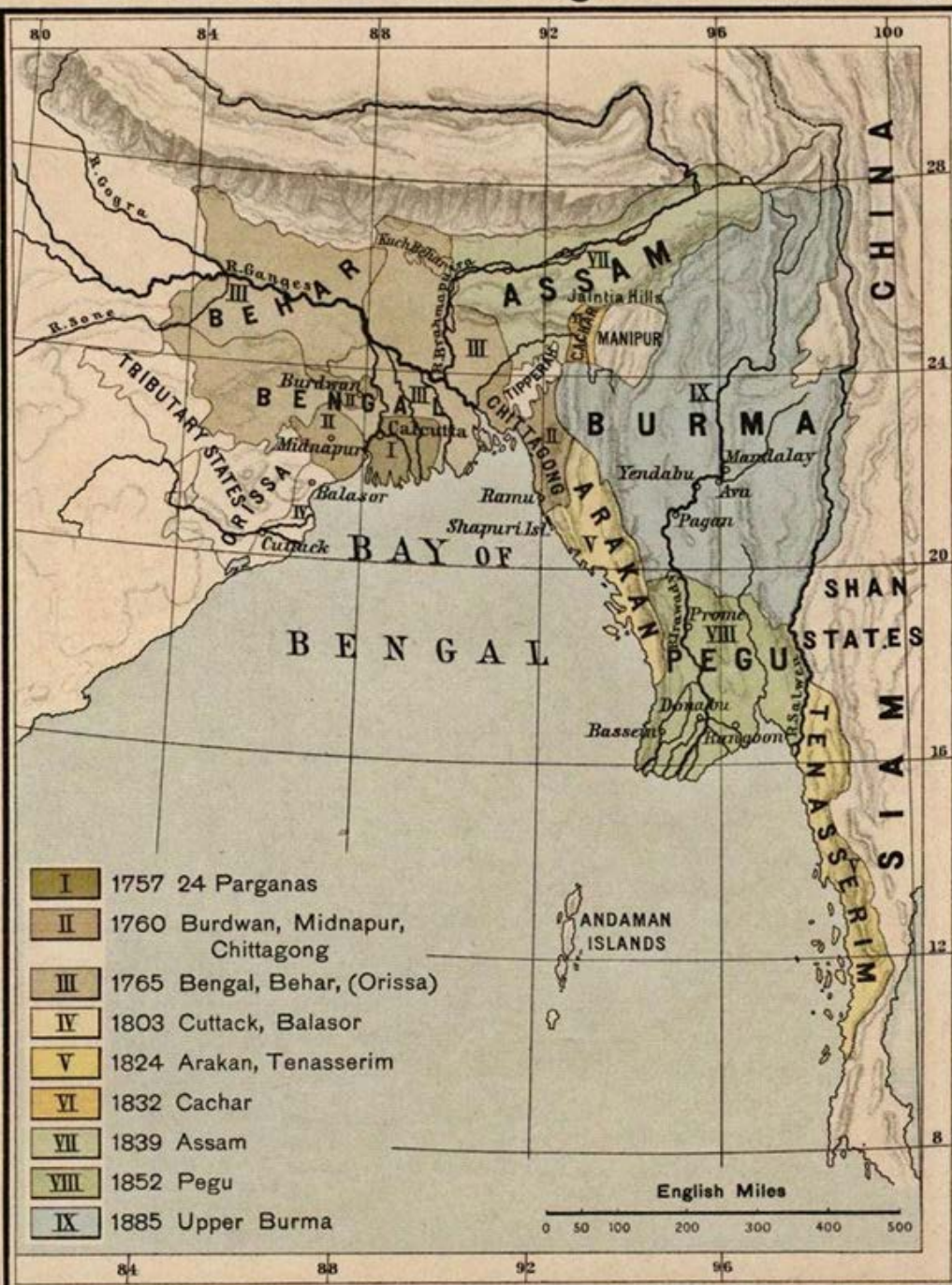
Sen 1981

+ Outline



1. Case study: Bengal Famine
2. Sen's Entitlements Approach
3. Critiques of Sen's Approach
4. Conclusions

BENGAL FAMINE





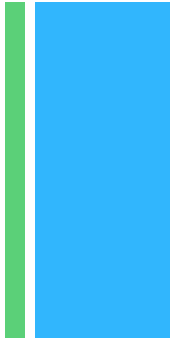
Sen's Major Arguments on the Bengal Famine



- food availability decline (FAD) not an explanation
 - *Crop availability 5% lower than usual and 13 % higher than in 1941, when there was no famine*



Sen's Major Arguments on the Bengal Famine



- **Phase 1, 1942 to March 1943: war pressures on the economy**
- **Phase 2, March 1943 to November 1943: "indifferent winter crop" and panic hoarding**
 - Current supply was not equal to market supply
 - Chaos in the Government
 - Famine is a rural phenomena
- **Phase 3, November 1943 through 1944: health crisis**
 - Outbreak of epidemics
 - Death rate reaches its peak
 - Economic shifts that caused famine were permanent

+

Sen's Major Arguments on the Bengal Famine



- food availability decline (FAD) not an explanation
- wages did not keep pace with rising rice prices (inflation)
- people outside agriculture most affected
 - *fishermen, haircutters, craftsmen, agricultural landless labourers, transporters, and general labourers*
- those who cultivated rice were least affected



2. ENTITLEMENTS AND DISTRIBUTION

+ 2. The Limits of Abundance thinking

The abundance theory:

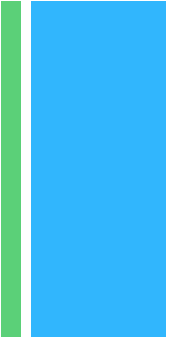
- Focuses on relationship between population and food supply
- Large scale, aggregated data:
 - number of people and growth
 - food supply and growth
 - focuses on the national level
- Broad-scale environmental limits:
 - i.e. water availability, land degradation, arable land...
- Malthus...

+ POVERTY AND FAMINES (1981)

- Amartya Sen
- Nobel Prize (economics)
 - Many famines occurred where no food availability deficit
 - Relationship between people and food
 - People can acquire food legally from several sources – production, trade, labour, gifts or transfers

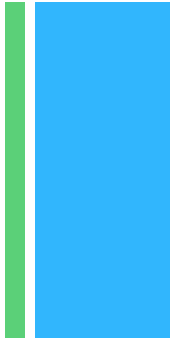


+ Poverty and Famines (1961)



- ~~Is there enough food?~~
- Does everybody have enough food?

+ 2. Entitlements and Distribution Theory



The distribution theory:

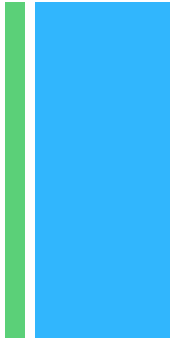
- Focuses on the *distribution* of food: *who* produces it, *who* gets it, and *why* distribution is uneven.
- Considers the economic, political, and cultural factors that effect food availability
- Macro-micro scale:
 - global, regional, national, local, household and individual
 - Micro-macro scale data
- Poverty is a key issue



Entitlement sets

■ Four 'entitlements' categories:

1. Production-based (growing food)
2. Trade-based (buying food)
3. Own-labour (working for food)
4. Inheritance and transfer (being given food by others)



Starvation: entitlements set doesn't provide basic subsistence

Famine = geographically, occupationally, socially defined group of people experiences catastrophic decline in entitlements



Entitlements



“the set of alternative commodity bundles that a person can command in a society using the totality of rights and opportunities that he or she faces.”

- Sen, 1984: 497

But in Sen's approach *entitlements* are:

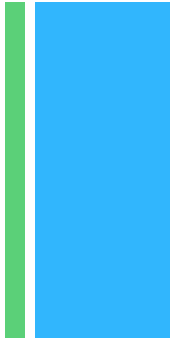
- Legally-based property rights
- Not moral, human-rights based imperative

“Starvation deaths can reflect legality with a vengeance” (Sen, 1981: 49)



Entitlement sets

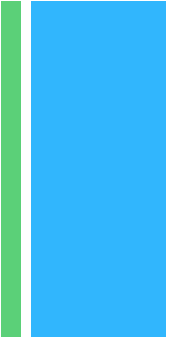
- Sen sets entitlements up against 'FAD' – '*food availability decline*'



Food Availability Decline (FAD Approach)

Food Entitlement Decline (FED Approach)

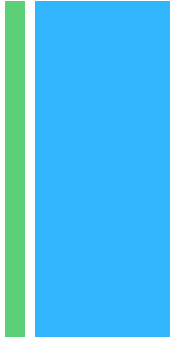
+ Key points



- Shifts focus away from too little food not enough people
- Focuses on distribution of food
- From general theory to context-specific explanations of food shortages
- Relationships

3. POVERTY

+ Poverty



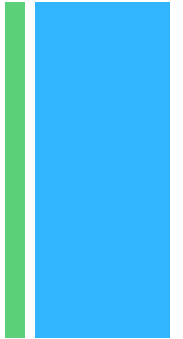
If the main cause of food problems is the *distribution* of food, not the amount of food that is produced, then...

The central issue in understanding the distribution of food is ***poverty***:

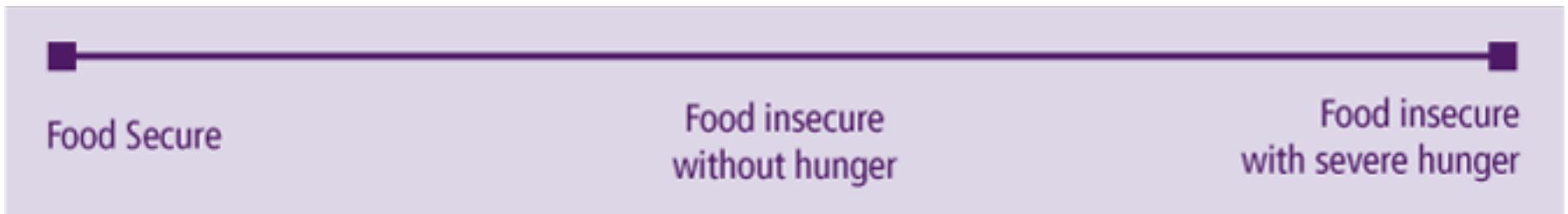
- Who are the poor and ultra-poor?
- What are their capabilities to access food?
- How are these shaped by economic, political and social forces

Food insecurity is a function of poverty

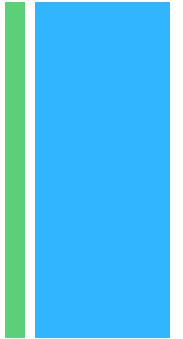
+ Food insecurity



- “whenever the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or the ability to acquire acceptable food in socially acceptable ways is limited or uncertain” (Radimer et al, 2002)



+ Understanding poverty



- Poverty occurs across a range of scales:
 - Some countries are poorer than others
 - Some regions within countries are poorer than others
 - Some households within regions are poorer than others
 - Some people within households are poorer than others
- Interconnection between people and systems (market, resources)

4. LIMITATIONS TO THE ENTITLEMENT APPROACH

+ Qualifications



- Sen recognised 4 qualifications
 1. Ambiguities in the **specification of entitlements**
 2. While entitlement relations concentrate on rights within the legal structure, some transfers involve **violations of these rights** (e.g. looting)
 3. Food consumption may fall because of **ignorance, fixed food habits or apathy**
 4. Entitlements focuses on starvation which has to be distinguished from famine mortality, since **most famine deaths are caused by epidemics**

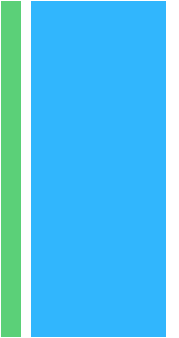
+ Fuzzy entitlements

- Sen - legal ownership by individuals of alienable commodities
 - Ignored weaker claims on resources (access, usufruct, customary)
 - Institutional rights on property (e.g. community or common pool)
 - t/f fuzziness between mapping individual and community based rights

		Rivalry in Consumption	
		high	low
Excludability	high	private goods	club goods
	low	common resources	public goods

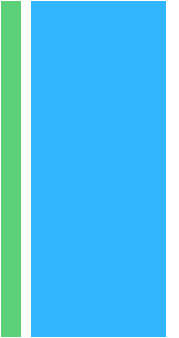
+ Fuzzy entitlements

- Sen - legal ownership by individuals of alienable commodities
 - Ignored weaker claims on resources
 - Institutional rights on property
- Sen uses 'representative individual' but scales up
 - Problematic with complex ownership of resources
 - With common resources **entitlements cannot be modeled** to the representative individual
 - Rules and norms of 'belonging', 'seniority' and other axes of inclusion/exclusion
 - *These influence an individuals entitlements too*



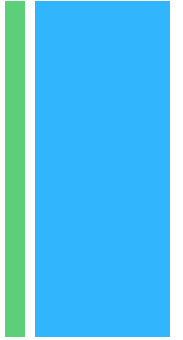
+ Fuzzy entitlements

- Therefore:
 - Unit of analysis difficult
 - Community level institutions are therefore important in understanding access to resources (e.g. Leach et al 1997)
 - AND so intra-household, and intra-community entitlements are important (Sen 1990)





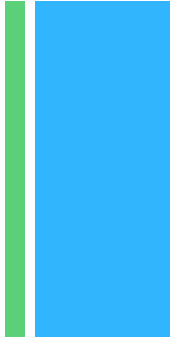
Looting and extra-legal entitlements



- War Famines:
 - Famines triggered by political instability and war (e.g. Horn of Africa)
 - Combination: War + Drought
- 20th Century famines: 21/32 famines had adverse politics at local, national or international level as principal **cause** (Devereux 2000: 6)
- Drought or other economic trigger then **became** politicised by failures of government or response
- Entitlements overlooks the centrality of political processes



Looting and extra-legal entitlements



War:

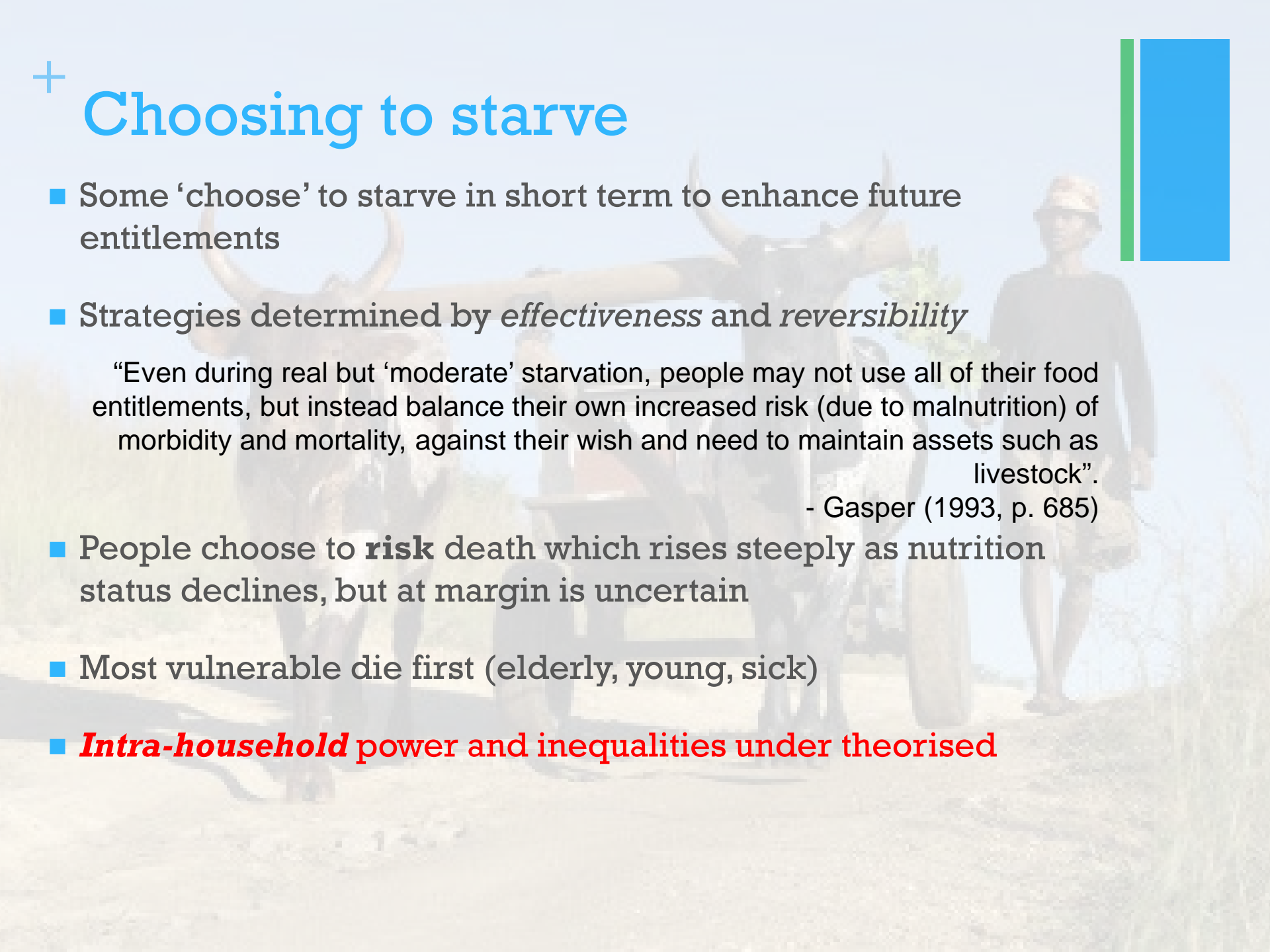
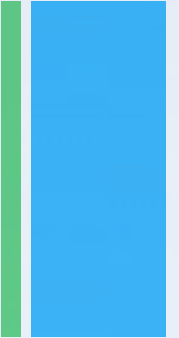
- Disrupts economic activity (employment based entitlements)
- Disrupts food production – scorching the earth, landmines (production entitlements)
- Disrupts food transport and storage (Trade-based entitlements)
- Labour shortages through conscription and death, destroyed social networks (Transfer entitlements)
- Armed forces appropriate food and medical assistance (extra legal Transfer entitlements)

Therefore, extra legal process have structural impacts on entitlements

+ Choosing to starve

- Some 'choose' to starve in short term to enhance future entitlements
- Strategies determined by *effectiveness* and *reversibility*

“Even during real but ‘moderate’ starvation, people may not use all of their food entitlements, but instead balance their own increased risk (due to malnutrition) of morbidity and mortality, against their wish and need to maintain assets such as livestock”.
- Gasper (1993, p. 685)
- People choose to **risk** death which rises steeply as nutrition status declines, but at margin is uncertain
- Most vulnerable die first (elderly, young, sick)
- ***Intra-household*** power and inequalities under theorised



+ Health or starvation?

- Most famine deaths are from epidemics
- Hunger related diseases
 - Diarrhea
 - Gastro-enteritis
 - Lack of biological resistance to these illnesses
- De Waal (1989): indicators of poverty “no evident relation to mortality”
 - Migration and exposure to new disease
 - E.g. African famines: cholera, measles, typhus
 - Therefore: famine because of **social processes**, *not economic processes* at individual level (i.e. collapse of entitlements)



+ Health or starvation?

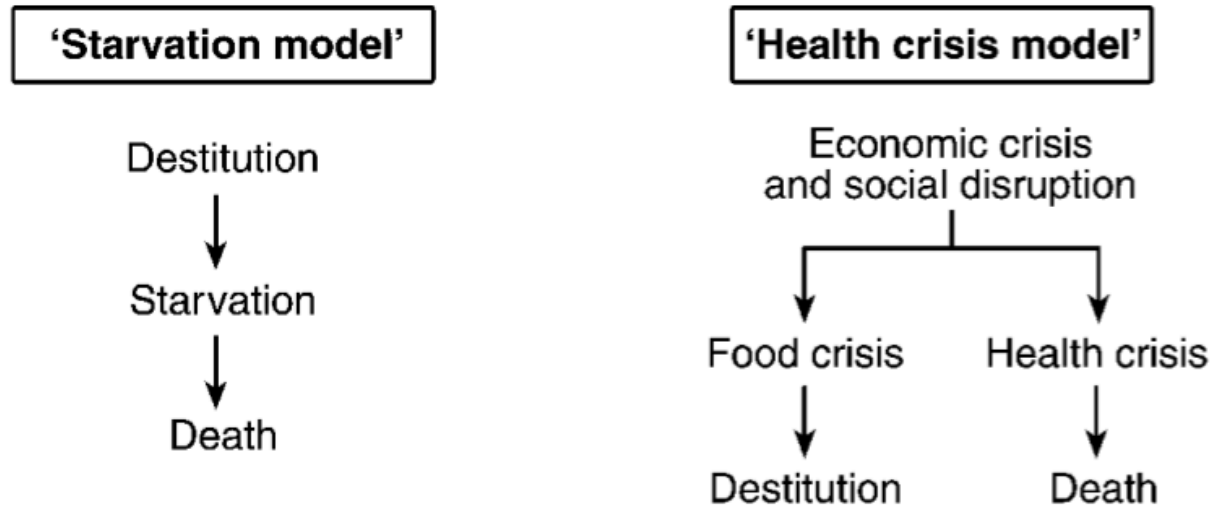


Figure 1. Famine mortality models.

Source: De Waal (1989, pp. 187–189).

+ Health or starvation?

'Starvation model'

'Health crisis model'

Household level entitlements scaled up to the group level doesn't always work; there are social crises that lead to famine too

Figure 1. Famine mortality models.

Source: De Waal (1989, pp. 187–189).

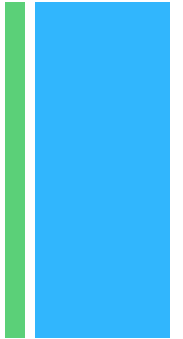
- Young and Jaspars (1995): synergism between malnutrition and morbidity best explaining famine mortality
- People may have left homes and migrated *because* they lost their entitlements to food

Therefore:

- Mortality comes from both
 - Increased *susceptibility*
 - Increased *exposure*
- Both from **disrupted access to food**



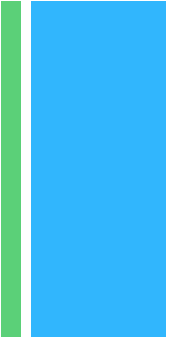
SEN'S CASE FOR DEMOCRACY



- Popular media
 - To hold government accountable and expose misdeeds
- Campaigning civil society
 - To publicize civil emergencies, drive votes in response to disaster
- Multi-party elections
 - To pander (in a good way) to voters (who would rather not starve)
 - Democracy is an 'anti-famine political contract' (Waal 1997).
- Good governance (democratic) is entwined with this interpretation and approach, and it too has been very successful.
 - Fueling the adage that “democracy ends famines”

5. CONCLUSIONS

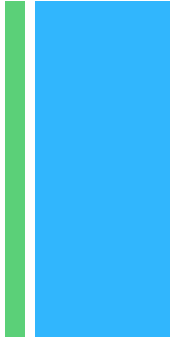
+ Conclusions



- Entitlement approach revolutionised famine thinking
- It explains some famines well (e.g. Bengal 1943)
- But, it attracted much controversy, and its claims as a ‘robust theory’ of famine causation remain contested
 - Not a theory, but an *abstract general account of reality*
- It can’t explain all famine, but components of it can be used
- Political and social factors need to be incorporated
- Need to understand broader political economic and scale shifts in distribution (next time...)



References



De Waal, A., 2004. *Famine that Kills: Darfur, Sudan*. oxford university Press.

Edkins, J., 1996. *Legality with a Vengeance: Famines and Humanitarian Relief in 'Complex Emergencies'*. *Millennium-Journal of International Studies* 25, 547–575.

Gasper, D., 1993. *Entitlements Analysis: Relating Concepts and Contexts*. *Development and Change* 24, 679–718. doi:10.1111/j.1467-7660.1993.tb00501.x

Peacock, M.S., 2010. *Starvation and Social Class: Amartya Sen on Markets and Famines*. *Review of Political Economy* 22, 57–73.

Radimer, K.L., Radimer, K.L., 2002. *Measurement of household food security in the USA and other industrialised countries*. *Public health nutrition* 5, 859–864.

Ray, S., 1973. *Asahni Sanket (Distant Thunder)* Nanda Bhattacharya (101 minutes)

Sen, A., 1981a. *Poverty and famines: an essay on entitlement and deprivation*. Oxford University Press, USA.

Sen, A., 1981b. *Ingredients of famine analysis: availability and entitlements*. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 96, 433–464.

Watts, M.J., Bohle, H.G., 1993. *Hunger, famine and the space of vulnerability*. *GeoJournal* 30, 117–125. doi:10.1007/BF00808128