



Newsletter

Gender, Sexual Behavior, Politics, and Communities

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Summer 2026



Message from Co-Chairs (from Kat Fuller & Hannah Regan)

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We hope everyone is having a wonderful summer!

As many of our members prepare for the upcoming SSSP 2026 conference in New York City, New York, we recognize that the current political climate in the United States continues to pose challenges and uncertainties for many scholars. As mentioned in our previous newsletter, we fully understand why international scholars and/or trans or non-binary individuals, in particular, might choose not to attend this year's conference. We encourage everyone to prioritize their safety and well-being and to carefully consider any potential risks associated with traveling to and leaving the US. For those of you who are unable to attend the conference, consider attending the Virtual Town Hall on 7/28, and keep an eye out for other upcoming virtual opportunities.

For those who are able to participate in New York, we hope you all enjoy building community and engaging with the flourishing work in our area and beyond. We encourage you to attend the divisional sessions, which are listed below, as well as

the Division-Sponsored Reception. Safe travels to you all, and we hope you are able to enjoy the rich life of NYC alongside the conference.

At a time when anti-intellectualism and attacks on higher education continue to intensify, disciplines such as sociology, gender studies, racial/ethnic studies, history, and other fields that critically examine political power and social inequality are increasingly facing political scrutiny. Efforts to restrict DEI programs and to frame scholarly inquiry as “woke” or part of “gender ideology” remind us that protecting both our research and ourselves is essential to sustaining academic communities.

The work by members of GSPBC, or the entire SSSP organization, remains vital. As the movement within and outside of the US continues to censor, silence or even punish critical studies, it becomes more important for scholars, educators, and students to support one another and to cultivate spaces where research and dialogues can flourish.

We will continue to publish, collaborate, and communicate whenever it is safe and possible to do so, as part of resistance.

At the same time, we are inspired by remarkable work our members have accomplished over the past year. Your research, teaching, mentorships, activism, and involvement remind us why intellectual pursuit and social change are made possible through our efforts and mutual support. During uncertain times, these contributions provide hope for a radical transformation regarding human rights.

Please remember that we have an upcoming annual GSPBC meeting on July 23, 2026 at 1 pm (EST).

We would like to close with the words of Angela Y. Davis regarding scholar-activism and resistance:

“I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change. I am changing the things I cannot accept.”

We hope you have a refreshing and safe summer, and we are eager to see the impactful contributions you will continue to make in the years ahead!

Hannah and Kat, Division Co-Chairs

Introductions

Co-Chair (2025-2027)

Hannah Regan (she/her) is the Associate Director for Research and Evaluation in the Flora Stone Mather Center for Women and Adjunct Faculty in Sociology at Case Western Reserve University. Her research interests include romantic and sexual relationships, especially as they interact with media and technology. Her book, *Dating Apps, Modern Romance, and Social Inequality* is now available from Bloomsbury Academic. Her next project is considering how young couples are handling the division of finances in their relationships. Her other work looks at gender in higher education, sexuality education, and the intersections of identity with mental health.



Co-Chair (2025-2027)

Kat Fuller (they/he) is a PhD student in sociology at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. They are also the co-founder of the Canadian Institute for Far-Right Studies (CIFRS). Fuller served as a co-guest editor for the recent special issue of the *Bulletin of Applied Transgender Studies* (BATS) focused on transphobic online disinformation. Currently, he is the guest co-editor for an upcoming special issue of the *Journal of Right-Wing Studies* on techno-authoritarianism.

Fuller's research interests include far-right radicalization, disinformation, and online spaces, especially in the context of anti-gender movement. Fuller is also co-editing a volume that critically examines how both alternative media (also known as alt-tech) and mainstream platforms are utilized by the far-right movement to spread disinformation and promote acceptance of fascism.



Division-Sponsored Conference Sessions at Annual Meeting

Friday, August 7

8:30-10:10 AM: The Biopolitics of LGBTQ+ Lives in the Age of Disinformation - Ambassador I

12:30-2:10 PM: GSPBC Works in Progress - Ambassador III

2:30-4:10 PM: Masculinities & Political Power - Ambassador I

4:30-6:10 PM: Gender and Violence: International Perspectives - Plymouth

Saturday, August 8

8:30-10:10 AM: CRITICAL DIALOGUE: Resistance and Joy - Melville

10:30 AM -12:10 PM: CRITICAL DIALOGUE: Medicalization and Surveillance of Gender and Sex (Thematic Session) - Melville

2:30-4:10 PM: The Politics of Disinformation and Gender - Manhattan

Sunday, August 9

8:30-10:10 AM: Resisting Colonization of the Family - Broadway I

12:30-2:10 PM: Gender and Violence: Structural Issues - Plymouth

2:30-4:10 PM: Gender and Violence: Institutional Perspectives - Plymouth

Announcements

Help needed!

Neither Hannah nor Kat can attend the Division Chair Meeting at the annual conference. We need to select a representative to attend in our place. The meeting is on Sunday, August 9, 2:30-4:10 PM. Please email Hannah or Kat if you are able to attend.

Due to personal circumstances, as well as to help the division get back on its normal election cycle following an off-cycle election, Hannah will be stepping down as chair following the annual meeting. More information about an election for the new co-chair will be provided at the divisional business meeting. (If you are interested in running, consider volunteering to attend the chair meeting at the conference, to get a sense of the responsibilities!)

Awards

Graduate Student Paper Award Winner (formerly Gender Division):

"Strategizing Gender: Experiences of Transmasculine Folk with Police and Security Forces in the Metropolitan Area of Buenos Aires," Francis J. Fabre, The University of Chicago

Graduate Student Paper Award Honorable Mention (formerly Gender Division):

"Codifying Binaries: Moral Entrepreneurs and Anti-Transgender Legislation in U.S. State Legislatures Between 2018-2024," Anneliese M. Schenk-Day and Jack G.R. Wippell, The Ohio State University

Graduate Student Paper Award Winner (formerly Sexual Behavior, Politics, and Communities Division):

"Bounded Desirability: How Anti-Blackness Shapes Interracial Intimacy among and between Queer Men of Color," Jyun-Jie Yang, University of California, Davis

Graduate Student Paper Award Honorable Mention (formerly Sexual Behavior, Politics, and Communities Division):

"'Comphet Is Ableism's Next-Door Neighbor': #Neuroqueer Counterdiscourses on TikTok," Jules Vivid, Rutgers University

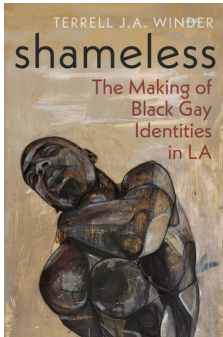
Article Award Winner (formerly Gender Division):

Yuchen Yang, (2025). Gender Uptake: Theorizing the Semiotics of (Un)Doing Gender. *Sociological Theory*, 43(4), 360-384.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/07352751251368897>

Article Award Winner (formerly Sexual Behavior, Politics, and Communities Division):

Jonathan S. Coley, Gabby Gomez, Transmorphic Organizations: Racial Segregation and Discrimination against LGBTQ Students at Christian Colleges and Universities, *Social Forces*, 2025; soaf175, <https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/soaf175>

Publications



Winder, Terrell J. A. (2026). *Shameless: The Making of Black Gay Identities in LA*. NYU Press.

Vivid, J. (2026), Identity Entanglement: Rethinking Marginality through the Intersectional, Liminal, and Antithetical. *Symbolic Interaction*.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/symb.70061>

Mallick, Rafia, and Deirdre Oakley. 2026. "Beyond the British Raj: Coloniality, Caste, and Race in South Asia" in *The Handbook for the Geographies of Race, A Multidisciplinary Global Perspective*, De Gruyter

Mallick, R. (2026). Book Review: *The Other Side of Assimilation: How Immigrants Are Changing American Life*. *Teaching Sociology*, 54(3), 282-284.

shuster, stef and Andrew Kirks-Cler. 2026. "Identity Impermanence as a Generic Social Process: The Malleability of Gender in the Lives of Trans and Nonbinary People." *Symbolic Interaction*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/symb.70059>.

Kirks-Cler, Andrew, **stef shuster**, Mark H. Walker, and Ning Hsieh. 2026. "How Identity Nonrecognition Shapes the Health Experiences of LGBTQ+ People." *Social Psychology Quarterly*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01902725261436857>.

Hsieh, Ning, and **stef shuster**. 2026. "Bargaining and Calibration: How SGM People Navigate Intersectional Oppression in Healthcare." *Social Science & Medicine*.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2026.119384>

Baboolal, A. A. (2025). "Harassment and Violence against Muslim Women: Twice Racialized Intersectional Victimization" In *Victims & Offenders Special Issue Theoretical Approaches in Victimology Research*.

Hormel, L. (2024). Social reproduction, manufactured home parks, and the crisis of housing affordability. *Urban Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00420980251388767>

Member News

Leontina Hormel was awarded Fulbright Scholar grant for Fall 2026, Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic. Research "Informal Work During War in Ukraine: A Study of Brno, Czechia, and Ukrainian Refugees and Immigrants"

Jules Vivid was awarded Matilda White Riley Published Article Award, Rutgers University Department of Sociology

Meredith Worthen was recently awarded the Edith Kinney Gaylord Presidential Professorship

Andrew J. Shapiro presented "'Elitism, Exclusion, and Mutual Antagonism in the Homosexual Politics of Pre-Nazi Germany," Session on "Dictators, Capitalists, And Economies Of Queer Resistance," at the CLAGS Center for LGBTQ Studies Queer-Class Relations Conference, New York, NY, April 17-18, 2026

On The Social Eye Podcast, sociologists Winona Wood, **Wynn Strange**, and Michelle Fretwell talk with a variety of guests to explore the complex relationships between the personal and the political. We use a sociological lens to explore big ideas and the taken-for-granted in everyday life. With our guests, we break down the complexity of institutionalized issues and inequality through research and lived experiences. Our guests have included recent PhD graduates Rina James and Yasi Shaker, Akron NAACP chapter President Judi Hill, and professor of Sociology Arthur Scarritt. Please take a listen! Let us know what you would like to hear next, and if you want to be a guest! Check out our website here: <https://thesocialeypod.com/> Find us on all major podcast platforms as The Social Eye Podcast. Email us here: thesocialeypod@gmail.com

Andrew J. Shapiro presented "(De-)Zionizing Jewishness, (De)colonizing Palestine," Session on "Dictators, Capitalists, And Economies Of Queer Resistance," Decolonial Sociology in Times of Resistance Mini-Conference: Ethics, Moral Accountability, and Decolonizing Dominant and Subaltern Subjectivities, Eastern Sociological Society 96th Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, March 5-8, 2026

Andrew J. Shapiro was awarded GC Center for Jewish Studies Bloch Award on Gender and the Jewish Experience in Global Perspective; GC Mina Rees Library LGBTQIA+ Consortium Fellowship; Center for Jewish History Archival Research Fellowship

Call for Proposals

Journal of Gender Studies: Special Issue

Moral Panics and Gender Studies

Guest Editors:

Dr. Morena Tartari (Northumbria University, UK) and Dr. Anita Lavorgna (University of Bologna, Italy)

In recent years, political shifts in the agendas of several Western and non-Western countries have increasingly mobilized anxieties around gender, sexuality, and identity, and, more in general, issues pertaining to Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policies. We have witnessed the resurgence of extremist and nationalist discourses that draw heavily on anxieties surrounding gender and other EDI themes. These anxieties are frequently mediated and amplified through traditional and digital media, thus contributing to construct threats to social order and fueling waves of moral panic. In these moral panics, specific groups or individual or behaviors can be perceived as a menace to societal values or national identity.

From public debates over feminism and LGBTQ+ rights to the contested narratives of masculinity or family, gender issues and policies have become a key terrain of dispute upon which wider political battles over culture, nation, and morality are fought.

Such dynamics highlight the need to revisit and expand the concept of moral panic as a means of understanding how the representations of these critical dimensions are related to social anxieties, fear, control, and moral regulation in contemporary societies. Consider for instance how framing gender issues or gender education as a threat or as a crisis of moral values – whether in political rhetoric, popular culture, or online spaces – highlights how moral boundaries are constructed and contested in social and media arenas. By examining these dynamics, scholars can discuss how moral panic discourses operate not only to regulate gendered and sexual identities and behaviors but also to shape public debate, social and political agendas, and state interventions.

This special issue invites contributions that critically discuss the conceptual interplay between moral panic and gender-related debates and policies, including intersections of gender with other categories – such as sexuality, race, social class, ability, age, religion, culture, location, politics –, and draw on theoretical innovation and empirical research to explore how these specific moral panics emerge, circulate, transform and disappear within the local or global social and media landscapes, within and across global and local contexts, and the actors that characterize them.

Background

Since its introduction by Stanley Cohen in the 1970s, the concept of moral panic has provided a widely used framework for analyzing collective anxieties, social control, and the construction of social problems in the public arena. Cohen (1972: 9) defines a moral panic as follows:

A condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylized and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people; socially accredited experts pronounce their diagnosis and solutions; ways of coping are evolved or (more often) resorted to; the condition then disappears, submerges or deteriorates and becomes visible.

Over the decades, the concept has evolved through critical engagement with different sociological and criminological theories and concepts such as risk (Cricher, 2008), moral regulation (Hunt, 2011), fear (Furedi, 2011), social problems construction (Best, 2012), social anxieties (Hier, 2011), and discourse (e.g., Cricher 2003). These and other original contributions have expanded the scope of moral panic research, making it a convincing lens for understanding processes of tension and transformation in our contemporary societies around social problems. At the same time, the moral panic concept has attracted criticism, and it cannot be considered as an unproblematic analytical tool. Scholars have questioned some of the model's assumptions on different grounds. Criticism has concerned mainly 1) theoretical aspects of the concept itself and of its reformulations, 2) an increasing loose application of the concept in analytical and empirical terms that reduces its explanatory value, 3) the trivialization of the concept due to its popularity that impacts on its (academic) reputation. The first group includes, for instance, criticisms towards Cohen's original model including ambiguous terminology, limitations in explaining the role of the public as media audiences or a body of opinion, biased assumptions about the model's dynamics, and limited attention towards media effects (Cricher 2008); Best's (2013) observations about the conceptual weakness and ideologization of the model – that bring to suggest that moral panic can be considered as a specific type of social problem; Ungar's (2001) remarks about the inappropriateness of the model to grasp contemporary anxieties that are specific to risk societies; Hier's (2024) considerations about the problem of disproportion; Hunt's (2011) reflections about a certain ideological propensity of the model to judge claims-making in a negative way; but also McRobbie and Thornton's (1995) emphasis on the need to update the model not yet ready to interpret the complexity of the effects of social media and new media. The second group includes criticism from Jewkes (2004), who, among several other flaws, mentions the looseness of the terminology. The third group hosts remarks from Garland (2008) about the trivialization of the concept that has lost its analytical subtlety and precision. Similarly, Falkof (2020) acknowledges that the term's widespread adoption – including in everyday discourse – risks reducing

its explanatory value.

Besides these three main groups of criticisms, we are aware of the challenges that the relationship between moral panics, ideology, and structural political change brings. As Hall et al. (1978) demonstrated in their classic account of authoritarian populism in *Policing the Crisis*, isolated episodes of moral panic can be symptoms of deeper hegemonic crises rather than discrete, episodic phenomena. This distinction matters in the current conjuncture: the sustained rise of authoritarian and neo-populist right-wing movements across Europe and beyond over the past decade or more raises the question of whether superficial analyses of situated moral panics are sufficient to capture what may be a long-term structural transformation of political culture (Walsh, 2020; Hier, 2019). At the same time, a problematization of the definition of “good” and “bad” moral panics is necessary: some consider the concept as ideologized because it tends to consider as moral panics only the reactions from certain conservative and traditionalist groups (Waiton 2008).

While we are aware of these criticisms, we reject extreme positions that suggest ditching the entire conceptual model and its terminology (Horsley 2017), and instead we acknowledge the theoretical vitality and empirical versatility of the research on moral panics.

Despite this exuberance, research on moral panics has paid limited attention to gender as a structuring dimension of social anxieties, fear, and moral outrage. However, in recent years, several current debates about gender issues – for instance the controversies around “gender ideology”, contemporary masculinities, sexuality, and identity – have fueled visible moral panics which reveal moral discourses and labelling processes, and reproduce inequalities and exclusions, while proposing or implementing changes in policies and law enforcement. These contemporary gender-related moral panics do not unfold in an institutional vacuum: they are intertwined with transnational moral crusades against gender studies as a field of knowledge. A substantial body of scholarship has documented the rise of anti-gender movements that explicitly target feminist and gender scholarship within universities and across public institutions (Kuhar and Paternotte, 2017; Bracke and Paternotte, 2016; Graff and Korolczuk, 2021). Judith Butler, whose foundational work on gender performativity and the social construction of sex has been a recurring target of such campaigns, has argued that the contemporary movement against “gender ideology” is best understood as an attack on democracy’s freedoms, which concerns not only trans rights and reproductive autonomy but feminist scholarship and sex education more broadly (Butler, 2024). Butler situates these campaigns within a global authoritarian political context and explains how right-wing movements, religious institutions, and state actors have deployed “gender ideology” as a device for political mobilization. As recently discussed in this journal, scholars working in gender studies programmes across multiple national contexts have increasingly faced not only discursive delegitimization but concrete institutional attacks, e.g., the closure or defunding of gender studies departments (Ergas et al., 2022; Pető, 2020). This special issue aims to engage directly with this literature and treats attacks on gender studies as an object of critical analysis and as a key dimension of the contemporary moral panics surrounding

gender.

Aim and Scope

This special issue seeks to explore how categories related to gender – and intersections of them – operates within, through, and across moral panics in contemporary societies. We invite contributions that investigate how gender-related moral panics are produced, circulated, represented, and tackled in mass media and new media, and in public arenas. We particularly welcome contributions that advance theoretical dialogues between gender studies, moral panic studies, feminist theory, behavioral studies, media and cultural studies, and critical sociology and critical criminology. At the same time, we invite contributions that use the moral panic framework reflexively, critically interrogating both its analytical purchase and its limitations when applied to contemporary gender issues and politics.

We aim to address the following topics, but also to accept other topics suggested by the authors:

- Rethinking moral panic theory through gender studies;
- Feminist, queer, and intersectional studies applying or critically contributing to the moral panic models;
- Gendered moral panics in traditional and digital media;
- Media and political discourses and moral panics surrounding “gender ideology,” trans rights, and sexual citizenship;
- Moral panics and moral regulation of sexuality, reproduction, and family life;
- Moral panics related to forms of masculinity and misogyny;
- Online and digital moral panics: social media outrage, trolling, and gender-related disinformation;
- The role of institutions (e.g., law, education, religion) in (re)producing, circulating, or countering gender-related moral panics;

- Moral entrepreneurs, claim-makers and gender-related moral panics;
- Comparative and historical analyses of gender-related moral panics;
- Emotional dimensions of gender-related moral panics;
- Rethinking moral panic theory through gender, emotions, and intersectionality.

We seek contributions that combine theoretical innovation with empirical depth, and that reflect the interdisciplinary approach of the *Journal of Gender Studies*. By stressing the critical dimensions of moral panics, this special issue welcomes interdisciplinary dialogues among scholars working in sociology, criminology, gender studies, feminist, queer and transgender studies, behavioral studies, media and communication studies, cultural studies, and related fields. We invite contributions that interrogate how gender issues and moral discourses shape public debates, behaviors, social control, and moral panics in contemporary societies. These papers will deepen understanding of the complex relations between gender issues and moral panics happening in a rapidly changing world.

Submission Guidelines

Authors are invited to submit abstracts of max 500 words, indicating the research focus, theoretical approach, and methodological orientation. A short biographical note (up to 100 words) should be included with the submission. Abstracts should clearly demonstrate how the proposed paper contributes to the understanding of moral panics in relation to gender studies.

For the full paper submission, please follow the “instructions for authors” on the journal’s website and select “special issue Moral Panics and Gender Studies” when submitting your paper to ScholarOne.

Timeline

Abstract submission deadline: September 15th, 2026

Notification of acceptance: September 30th, 2026

Full papers submission deadline: March 15th, 2027

Completion first round of peer review: June 30th, 2027

Final papers submission: September 30th, 2027

Contact Information

Authors should send abstracts and correspondence to both the guest editors at: morena.tartari@northumbria.ac.uk and anita.lavorgna@unibo.it

[Click here to access the call for submissions](#)

Job Market Candidates

Rafia Javaid Mallick is a Ph.D. Candidate in Sociology at Georgia State University, graduating May 2026. With extensive research experience in urban studies, immigration, race, and inequality, she has contributed to multiple university and community-based projects, including work with the Southern Poverty Law Center and the City of Atlanta. Her scholarship includes peer-reviewed publications, book chapters, and reports on topics ranging from policing alternatives to immigrant integration. She is skilled in qualitative, quantitative, and geospatial methods and has held leadership roles in professional organizations such as ASA and SSSP. Rafia is prepared for roles in academia, research, or policy analysis.

Dissertation/project title: Tangled Threads of Belonging: Racial Discrimination and Segmented Assimilation among Asian Indian Immigrants in the United States

Research specialization: Diasporic Belonging and Decolonization. Patriarchal Systems and Gender Violence. Urban Inequities and Performative Governance.

Website: <https://www.rafiamallick.com/bio>

Email: rmallick1@gsu.edu



Andrew J. Shapiro is a Ph.D. Candidate in Sociology at the City University of New York. His work explores why and how movements against oppression become complicit in oppression and how they might do otherwise. Through a comparative-historical case study of twentieth-century Jewish and LGBTQ movements in the US, Europe, and Palestine, he traces the complicity processes through which relatively advantaged movement actors prioritize narrow advancement over collective change. His work has been published in *Men and Masculinities*.