

October 5, 2026

CONSTRUCTS

Women, Gender, & Sexualities Committee Newsletter

Letter From the Chair

As outgoing WGS Committee Chair, I am pleased to welcome you to the **MSSA 2026 Annual Meeting in Huntsville, Alabama**. The annual meeting provides an important opportunity for scholars, students, and practitioners to engage in meaningful dialogue, share innovative research, and strengthen the professional networks that support our work.

In this newsletter:

- From the Chair
- WGS Scholarship
- Sessions of Interest

I invite you to join us for the **Women, Gender, and Sexualities Caucus Luncheon on Thursday, October 15, from 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. in Saturn V**. This gathering offers a welcoming space for members to connect with colleagues whose research and professional interests focus on women, gender, and sexualities; foster community among scholars and advocates from diverse backgrounds; discuss emerging issues and priorities facing our section; and help shape the future direction of WGS programming within MSSA. The luncheon will also provide an opportunity to recognize the accomplishments of our members, discuss leadership opportunities within the section, and generate ideas for future conference sessions, panels, and collaborative initiatives. Whether you are a long-time member or attending for the first time, your perspectives and experiences are valued, and we encourage you to participate in the conversation. A limited number of complimentary lunches will be available for registered MSSA conference attendees. We hope you will join us as we celebrate the contributions of our community and continue advancing scholarship on women, gender, and sexualities throughout the region and beyond.

We look forward to seeing you in Huntsville!

Jennifer Cheek, PhD, Committee Chair
Women, Gender & Sexualities Committee

WGS Travel Scholarship Awardee



Madeline Ginsburg is an undergraduate student at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, where she is pursuing dual majors in Sociology and Anthropology. Her interest in sociology began with a focus on the gender inequalities that continue to shape contemporary society. Influenced by Arlie Hochschild's seminal work, *The Second Shift*, Madeline became particularly interested in examining how many gendered inequities originate within the household. Recognizing that the Southern United States is often underrepresented in research on the division of household labor, Madeline partnered with her faculty mentor, Dr. Jiabin Fan, to investigate the perceptions and experiences of women in dual-income households in Arkansas. Their research seeks to address a gap in the literature by exploring how household labor is negotiated and experienced within a regional context that has received comparatively little scholarly attention.

Through this work, Madeline has come to appreciate the important role that home and family dynamics play in advancing gender equity. She believes that the experiences documented in this research resonate broadly, as nearly everyone has witnessed or benefited from forms of invisible labor often performed by women. By bringing greater attention to these experiences, she hopes the research will contribute to ongoing efforts to better understand and address persistent gender disparities. Madeline plans to build upon the research skills and insights gained through this project as she pursues

graduate study in sociology and engages in future scholarly work. Ultimately, she hopes her research will contribute to a deeper understanding of gender inequality and support efforts to create a more equitable society.

Sessions and Papers of Interest

Thursday, October 15

Criminology: The U.S. and Abroad [Regular Paper Session] 9:30 am-10:45 am | Monte Sano

- A Multifaceted Analysis of Violence against Women, Using East Asia as an Example Hua-Lun Huang, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Media Narratives in the Trump Era [Regular Paper Session] 9:30 am-10:45 am | Redstone

- Risk, Responsibility, and Women's Health: Comparing Political and Media Discourses across Three Countries Adenife Modile, Coker University; and Greg Gondwe, University of Alabama

Politics [Roundtable] 11:00 am-12:15 pm | Big Spring B

- "Oops...[They] Did It Again": An Autoethnographic Analysis of Institutional Schism and Culture War Friction in the Daughters of the American Revolution 1939/2026 Roma Hanks, University of South Alabama

Reframing Mentorship as Equity Work: Advancing Leadership for Early-Career African American Women in Higher Education [Workshop] 11:00 am-12:15 pm | Big Spring D

- Panelist and Discussant: Jessica McCarty, University of South Alabama

Storytelling as Research with Incarcerated Women [Regular Paper Session] 11:00 am-12:15 pm | Monte Sano

- The Power of Storytelling and Social Policy Ron Aday, Middle Tennessee State University
- "I've Shaken Hands with Disappointment": The Journey of Just Judy Meredith Huey Dye, Middle Tennessee State University; and Ron Aday, Middle Tennessee State University
- Two Stories of Mass Incarceration Nicole Seabold, Tennessee Tech University; Ron Aday, Middle Tennessee State University; and Meredith Huey Dye, Middle Tennessee State University

Teaching Gender [Regular Paper Session] 11:00 am-12:15 pm | Orion

- Racial Incompetence in the Courtroom: Perpetuating Racial Disparities in the Criminal Justice System Through White-Washed Curricula in Higher Education Jessica Yohey, N/A
- The Bible and Homosexuality: Student Agency from an Essay Assignment Jerome Koch, Texas Tech University; and Patricia Maloney, Texas Tech University
- Why am I Drawn to This? An Exploratory Look into the Relationship Between Gender and True Crime Podcasts Sarah Preston, Troy University; and Andrew Tatch, Troy University

Poster Presentation 1 [Regular Paper Session] 2:00 pm-3:15 pm | Big Spring B

- The Crisis of Online Sexual Exploitation: A Research Proposal Veronica Cunningham, The University of North Carolina Pembroke; Madison Moore, University of North Carolina-Pembroke; and Melanie Anne Escue, University of North Carolina at Pembroke
- Between Cultures and Cleats: A Japanese Woman in American Football's Men's World Kyle Ryan, Northwest Missouri State University; and Maho Kawaguchi, Northwest Missouri State University

"Revisiting Democracy: The Evolution of Career Advancement in Society and the Persistent Barriers for Women and Minorities" [Workshop] 2:00 pm-3:15 pm | Big Spring C

- "Revisiting Democracy: The Evolution of Career Advancement in Society and the Persistent Barriers for Women and Minorities" Pamela Adkins, Career Life and Love Counseling & Consulting, PLLC

Graduate Research: Criminology and Crime [Regular Paper Session] 2:00 pm-3:15 pm | Monte Sano

- "The most vulnerable target is a woman alone": How PWIs and HBCUs Frame Rape Prevention in Campus Safety Messaging Madeline Brock, Mississippi State University

Gender [Regular Paper Session] | 2:00 pm-3:15 pm | Orion

- ‘STEMing’ or Not? Gendered Majoring: Exploring the Differences in College Major Choices, 2012-2023 Veena S. Kulkarni, Arkansas State University; and Christopher Pitts, Arkansas State University
- Staying, Leaving, or Reclaiming: Identity Negotiation and Emotion Work in the Harry Potter Fandom Jacob Church, Jacksonville State University; Brianna Turgeon, Jacksonville State University; and Addie Lott, Jacksonville State University
- He was “something of a dandy”: Augustus Granville Dill’s Modeling of Disidentification and Quareness as Strategies of Racial Uplift Marcus Brooks, Western Kentucky University

Culture [Regular Paper Session] | 3:30 pm-4:45 pm | Orion

- Done with the Toxic Warzone: Examining Passport Bros and the International Dating Scene Andrew Tatch, Troy University; Jenny Beatty, Troy University; and Lottie Crabtree, Troy University

Religion, Politics, and Social Movements [Regular Paper Session] | 3:30 pm-4:45 pm | Saturn V

- The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Revisited John McCollum, Alabama State University
- An Exploration of South LGBTQ+ Religious Experiences Tierra James, Auburn University; Gracie Davis, Auburn University; and Austin Johnson, Kenyon College

Friday, October 15

Potpourri: Gender, Youth, Global Politics [Regular Paper Session] | 8:00 am-9:15 am | Monte Sano

- Wrestling With Gender Tina Deshotels, Jacksonville State University
- Beyond One Size Fits All: Domestic Violence Programs Serving Specific vs. General Populations Jessica Lynn Burke, Francis Marion University; and Lisa A. Eargle, Francis Marion University

The Family [Regular Paper Session] Friday | 8:00 am-9:15 am | Orion

- Gendered Divisions of Household Labor and Perceptions of Fairness in Dual-Income Families: Evidence from Arkansas Madeline Ginsburg, University of Arkansas at Little Rock; and Jiabin Fan, University of Arkansas at Little Rock
- Understanding Sleep Satisfaction Among Women Caregivers After the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Roles of Depression, Social Support, and Caregiving Burden Abolade Oladimeji, Samford University

Graduate Research: Social Theory [Regular Paper Session] | 9:30 am-10:45 am | Madison

- From Private Pleasure to Public Debate: Women’s Erotic Reading and Moral Regulation on BookTok Katie Rhyne, Auburn University at Montgomery

Poster Presentation 2 [Poster Session] | 11:00 am-12:15 pm | Big Spring B

- Women with ADHD, Social Capital and Mental Health Karen Hoefer, University of Alabama at Birmingham

Plenary: The Gendered and Racialized Labor of Democracy: Black Women, Civic Participation, and the Care Economy [Plenary] | 2:00 pm-3:15 pm | Big Spring CD

Saturday, October 16

Race [Virtual Paper Session] | 2:00 pm-3:15 pm | Virtual Room C

- Sex and Race differences in health-related locus of control (HLoc) and associations between HLoC and health behaviors and outcomes among college students. Miranda Reiter, University of North Carolina Pembroke; and Abigail Reiter, UNC Pembroke