

THE CRITICAL CRIMINOLOGIST: SPECIAL ISSUE

FEATURING:

Dr. Max Osborn

Brenna Jones

Dr. Omara Rivera-Vázquez &
Seema Gadh Kumar, JD

Dr. Walter S. DeKeseredy,
Andrea DeKeseredy, & Ping Lam Ip

Dr. Hyeseon Noh &
Dr. Deena Isom

Dr. David Lane



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Message from the DCCSJ Executive Board

Dear DCCSJ Members,

We hope you are all enjoying a restful and fulfilling summer. Whether you're conducting research, writing, teaching, spending time with loved ones, or finding time to recharge, we hope this season has offered opportunities to reflect, reconnect, and prepare for the year ahead.

We are excited to share the latest issue of the DCCSJ Newsletter. A sincere thank you to our Communications Team for their tremendous work in putting together another outstanding issue, and to everyone who contributed their scholarship, reflections, and updates. The remarkable response to this issue and the record number of submissions we received speak to the strength, creativity, and engagement of our community.

As we look toward the coming year, your Executive Board has already begun working on several initiatives to strengthen the Division. Over the next two years, we will be expanding our social media presence, enhancing communication with members, streamlining our awards processes, and launching new Community Partnership Spotlights to recognize organizations and collaborative efforts advancing the principles of critical criminology and social justice.

We also encourage you to stay engaged with the Division throughout the year. Whether by submitting your work to future newsletters, participating in our events at ASC, or simply sharing opportunities and announcements with fellow members, your involvement is what makes this community thrive.

Thank you for being part of DCCSJ and for the many ways you contribute to advancing critical scholarship, meaningful dialogue, and collective action. We look forward to continuing this work together and hope to see many of you throughout the coming year.

In solidarity,

The DCCSJ Executive Board

Emily Troshynski (Professor, UNLV), Chair

Edward Green (Associate Professor, Roosevelt University), Vice Chair

Kaitlyn Selman (Assistant Professor, Illinois State University), Secretary/Treasurer

Message from the Communications Team

Dear DCCSJ Members,

We are excited to share the latest issue of the DCCSJ newsletter, centered on the theme of the criminalization of status and identity. This issue comes at a critical moment, as individuals across the United States and globally continue to be surveilled, regulated, and punished not solely for their actions, but for who they are and how they are socially positioned. We were especially encouraged by the overwhelming response to this call; this issue received the highest number of submissions to date, and we are grateful to everyone who contributed work!

This issue features a range of contributions that examine the criminalization of identity across multiple contexts. Dr. Max Osborn, Assistant Professor of Sociology and Criminology at Villanova University, contributes “‘Gender Ideology Extremism’ and ‘Radical Indoctrination’: The Far-Right’s Criminalization of Transgender Identity,” which critically interrogates contemporary political narratives targeting transgender communities. Brenna Jones, a graduate student at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, explores spatial exclusion in “The Production of Disabling Spaces: Homelessness and Urban Exclusion.” Dr. Omara Rivera-Vázquez, Director of the Criminology Program at Saint Michael’s College, and Seema Gadh Kumar, J.D., examine issues of access and justice in “Language Access in Restorative Justice and the Criminalization of Linguistic Identity.” Dr. Walter S. DeKeseredy, Professor of Sociology at West Virginia University, along with Ph.D. Candidates, Andrea DeKeseredy, and Ping Lam Ip analyze media and legal discourse in “The Hockey Canada Sexual Assault Trial: Shades of Jian Ghomeshi’s Legal Defense.” Dr. Hyeseon Noh from the University of South Carolina, and Dr. Deena Isom, Associate Professor of African American Studies at the University of South Carolina, contributes “Misrecognition and Victimization: The South Asian American Experience,” which highlights the intersection of identity, marginalization, and victimization. Finally, Dr. David Lane, Associate Professor of Criminal Justice Sciences at Illinois State University, examines how some folks may use tattoos in the process of *othering* in “From Savagery to Tren de Aragua: The Tattooed Body as an Ethnoracial Other.”

We extend our sincere thanks to all of our contributors for their thoughtful and timely work, and to our broader community for your continued engagement and support.

In solidarity,

Jessica Morgan, *Communications Team*

Victoria Espinoza, *Communications Team*

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“Gender Ideology Extremism” and “Radical Indoctrination”: The Far-Right’s Criminalization of Transgender Identity

Dr. Max Osborn

Max Osborn (he/him, they/them) is Assistant Professor of Sociology and Criminology at Villanova University. His research addresses institutional harm toward sexual and gender minority populations, depictions of trans people in crime news and media, and consequences of abuse and victimization. Max’s work has been published across multiple disciplines and can be found in outlets including *Critical Criminology*, *Feminist Criminology*, and *Punishment & Society*. He is the author of *Queer and Trans Risk and Resistance: Responses to Institutional Violence* and the co-author (with Valli Rajah and Janani Umamaheswar) of *Anti-Racist Criminology: Research, Teaching, and Public Engagement*, both forthcoming from NYU Press.

On the first day of his second term, Donald Trump issued a slate of executive orders signaling his administration’s major priorities. Among them was one titled “Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government.” “Across the country,” it began, “ideologues who deny the biological reality of sex have increasingly used legal and other socially coercive means to permit men to self-identify as women and gain access to intimate single-sex spaces and activities designed for women [...] This is wrong. Efforts to eradicate the biological reality of sex fundamentally attack women by depriving them of their dignity, safety, and well-being. The erasure of sex in language and policy has a corrosive impact not just on women but on the validity of the entire American system. Basing federal policy on truth is critical to scientific inquiry, public safety, morale, and trust in government itself” (Exec. Order No. 14168). The order decreed it “the policy of the United States to recognize two sexes,” and that “federal funds shall not be used to promote gender ideology.” It also slashed funding for research on transgender populations, barred trans people from obtaining federal documents with updated gender markers, relocated trans women in federal prison to men’s facilities, and rescinded numerous guidance documents aimed at protecting LGBTQ+ people—and more specifically, trans people.

The current administration has also forcibly attempted to reframe the public conversation around trans issues, redacting content from over 8,000 government websites, including public health data on HIV, LGBTQ+ mental health, and anti-LGBTQ+ hate violence. “Forbidden words” are no longer allowable in federal documents or research proposals, and federal funding for schools is now contingent on not promoting “indoctrination” based on “gender ideology and discriminatory equity ideology” (Exec. Order No. 14190). In restricting broadly-accepted language and replacing it with scaremongering—“radical indoctrination” for education on gender, “chemical and surgical mutilation” for evidence-based treatments backed by reputable medical associations, not to mention redefining gender itself—the Trump administration is attempting to set the terms of the debate, priming less-informed audiences to view trans people as deviant outsiders and necessary care as dangerous experimentation (Leonard, 2025).

These efforts at targeting trans populations have been mirrored at the state level. Last year saw the introduction of over a thousand anti-trans bills, continuing a dramatic pattern of escalation; in 2022, only 174 such bills were proposed (Trans Legislation Tracker, 2022, 2025). In one particularly alarming example, Kansas passed a law immediately invalidating all state-issued identification documents with updated gender markers, putting trans people at risk of fines and imprisonment for driving with invalid licenses (ACLU Kansas, 2026). The law also restricts restroom use to sex assigned at birth and allows private citizens to sue suspected violators for monetary damages, effectively creating a bounty system incentivizing community members to scrutinize and target each other (ACLU Kansas, 2026).

More troubling still is the far-right’s characterization of trans people as national safety concerns: violent, aggressive, and posing not only cultural but physical threats to the public. The Heritage Foundation, architects of the now-infamous “Project 2025,” released fabricated statistics suggesting half of school shooters are transgender (Lemkin Institute, 2026). Donald Trump Jr. claimed on the *Megyn Kelly Show* that “I can’t name, including probably like al Qaeda and the Taliban, a group that is more violent per capita than the radical trans moment” (Ring, 2025). Trump confidante Laura Loomer agreed, asserting: “It’s time to designate the transgender movement as a terrorist movement. Trans people are a threat to society. We can’t allow them to continue killing people. They need to be socially ostracized, and the President should make medical transitioning ILLEGAL in our country. It’s time” (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2025). This May, the White House answered this call, releasing a counterterrorism strategy

prioritizing the “defeat” of “three major types of terror groups”: narcoterrorists and transnational gangs, Islamic terrorists, and “violent secular political groups whose ideology is anti-American, radically pro-transgender, and anarchist” (Allam, 2026). Notably, the document makes no mention of far-right extremist groups, despite consistent evidence that these account for between 75 and 80 percent of domestic terrorism deaths (Jipson & Becker, 2025).

No evidence to support these claims exist. Cisgender men represent over 95 percent of mass shooting suspects, whereas trans people make up around 0.11 percent (Reuters Fact Check, 2023). Given that slightly under 1 percent of the population identifies as transgender, they are thus *less* likely to become mass shooters than the average person (Herman & Flores, 2025). In fact, trans people themselves experience interpersonal and institutional harm at disproportionately high rates, from police brutality to hate violence to intimate partner abuse (Messinger et al., 2022).

The stoking of fear and animosity toward trans people constitutes part of a broader project to make trans lives unlivable. Or, as pundit Michael Knowles preached at CPAC, “for the good of society ... transgenderism must be eradicated from public life entirely” (Gambino, 2023). Knowles’s remarks prompted the Lemkin Institute for Genocide Prevention to issue the first of what are now three “Red Flag Alerts” documenting political developments that risk catalyzing targeted mass atrocity events. Beyond the images of mass murder the term typically evokes, genocide can also encompass the denial and criminalization of identity via two main steps: “preventing people from openly expressing an identity and destroying institutions that reproduce the identity” (Lemkin Institute, 2026). The far-right has explicitly articulated this goal on numerous occasions. Most recently, Heritage Foundation president Kevin Roberts explained his aim to “outlaw” transgender identity via a “radical incrementalist” approach, gradually working toward making access to legal, medical, and even social transition all but impossible (Adamczeski, 2026).

The criminalization of transgender people themselves has been accompanied by the intimidation and punishment of those standing in solidarity with them: clinicians and educators. Providers of gender-affirming care face DOJ subpoenas and threats of prosecution, and over 40 hospitals nationwide have ceased offering these treatments, citing increased pressure and scrutiny as well as the prospect of

forgoing federal funding (Gaffney, 2026; Yurcaba, 2025). Teachers must now contend with educational censorship and “forced outing” policies, risking possible legal consequences themselves for prioritizing their students’ wellbeing. One Missouri bill proposed felony charges and sex offender registration for teachers who “support” a student’s transition—including simply using the name and pronouns that student requests (Duster, 2024). These threats evoke other manifestations of the criminalization of solidarity that increasingly endanger protesters and activists, from the prosecutions of “No Cop City” organizers in Atlanta to the violent repression of anti-ICE demonstrations. The intended message is unmistakable: anyone who dares to defend the trans community will be next on the chopping block.

The regulation of gender expression—while constituting a key component of the far-right’s campaign for political and cultural dominance—cannot be disentangled from that campaign’s other aims, intersecting with restrictions on bodily and reproductive autonomy, curtailment of medical access, censorship of educational content, rollbacks in protections for marginalized groups, the sowing of distrust toward scientific consensus, the reinforcement of social hierarchies, and the use of fear and divisiveness as social control tactics. Attacks on trans people, argues sexualities scholar Kadji Amin (2025), “should be seen as *central*, rather than peripheral,” to the “right-wing revolution” promised by Project 2025. While gender nonconformity has long been framed as unacceptably deviant, the right’s focus on it has recently risen to a fever pitch, with trans and nonbinary people constituting convenient and highly vulnerable targets standing in for a host of cultural and social anxieties.

In criminalizing transness, the state shores up its position as arbiter of sex and gender categories—and consequently of scientific evidence itself—while reinforcing its right to enact “legitimate violence” upon those who prove noncompliant with those narrow parameters of acceptable self-expression (Amin, 2025; Reddy, 2011). The mounting carceral threats faced by trans people and allies necessitate a response by criminologists, as do attendant concerns like increased interpersonal violence, hate group activity, and stochastic terrorism. If we are to understand and contest this nationalist, xenophobic, and gender essentialist project—one that positions all who fall outside the bounds of the white nuclear family unit as threatening “others”—then attending closely to the oppression of trans populations is more imperative than ever, and critical scholars must rise to the occasion.

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The Production of Disabling Spaces: Homelessness and Urban Exclusion

Brenna Jones

Introduction

The built environment plays a powerful role in determining who belongs in public spaces. For unhoused people, urban design, criminalization, and policy frequently restrict movement, visibility, and access to public life (Mitchell, 2020). While homelessness has been framed as a problem of housing access or individual behavior (Devereux, 2015), recent scholarship emphasizes the role of stigma and institutional marginalization in shaping these experiences (Brallier & Southworth, 2023; Terui & Hsieh, 2016; Rosenthal & Vilchis, 2024). Building on this scholarship, this paper argues that homelessness should be understood not only as an economic condition, but also as a socially produced disabling condition.

This argument draws on the minority model of disability and structural ableism. The minority model conceptualizes disability not as an individual medical condition, but as “a product of the values and attitudes of an oppressive majority population [...] whereby the ignorance and prejudice of the ‘able-bodied’ society discriminate against, and oppress, disabled people” (Imrie, 1997, p. 264). Similarly, structural ableism highlights how institutions, policies, and built environments privilege certain bodies while disadvantaging others (Friedman, 2026). Although homelessness and disability are distinct, unhoused people often experience comparable forms of exclusion, surveillance, and spatial marginalization.

Homelessness becomes disabling not only because many unhoused people live with or develop disabilities through material deprivation, chronic stress, violence, and inadequate access to health care (Richards & Kuhn, 2023; Ra et al., 2021), but also because social, spatial, and institutional arrangements systematically restrict their access to housing, employment, public space, and civic participation. Public infrastructure and services are often organized in ways that limit the presence, movement, and autonomy of unhoused people. In this sense, homelessness is disabling not because of

the absence of housing alone, but because exclusion is built into the organization of social life. Viewing homelessness through this lens shifts attention away from individual or housing-centered explanations toward broader processes of exclusion. The disabling dimensions of homelessness are not inherent to being unhoused, rather, they are created through urban design, criminalization, spatial displacement, and stigma, underscoring society's role in producing and maintaining marginalization.

Disabling Spaces

The concept of disabling spaces offers a critical framework for understanding how physical, social, and institutional arrangements actively marginalize unhoused people (Imrie, 1997). Disabling spaces are socially produced environments that restrict participation, mobility, and access, reflecting the values and prejudices of dominant populations while creating barriers that render others "out of place" (Imrie & Kumar, 1998). For example, inaccessible buildings with stairs prevent wheelchair users from fully participating in public life, not necessarily because of individual incapacity, but because environments are designed without them in mind. Hahn (1986) argues that urban spaces often function to shield the majority from bodies considered abnormal or disturbing, demonstrating how architecture and planning reinforce social hierarchies. These forms of exclusion are frequently embedded into everyday practices and norms, making them appear natural or necessary. As Link and Phelan (2014) note, stigma is most effective when woven into ordinary social structures and cultural expectations, creating broadly effective, indirect mechanisms of social control.

Applying this framework to homelessness highlights how urban design, policy, and public attitudes collectively restrict unhoused people's access to space, resources, and citizenship. Hostile architecture, including sloped benches, armrests, fencing, or spikes, limits where unhoused people can sit, rest, or sleep, signaling that their presence is unwelcome (The Neighborhood DesignCenter, 2023). These measures are often justified as beautification, accessibility, or public safety efforts, echoing what Imrie and Kumar (1998) describe as a "knowing best" logic, in which exclusion is framed as a technical, aesthetic, or safety necessity rather than a political choice. Under this logic, restrictive interventions are presented as forms of care or public protection even when they limit autonomy and participation. Yet, as one critic notes, "by removing those elements for one group of users, the space becomes inherently less welcoming for everyone" (The Neighborhood DesignCenter, 2023, para. 20). Legal and policy interventions reinforce these exclusions. Ordinances regulating panhandling, loitering, and encampments criminalize everyday survival behaviors and existence in public spaces (Mitchell, 2020). Many cities also

relocate encampments to peripheral areas far from transit, social services, and downtown resources, effectively segregating unhoused populations under the language of public safety or urban improvement (Gallion et al., 2020).

Support for these interventions is often rooted in public perceptions of homelessness and discomfort with its visibility. Disability scholars note that disabled people are often treated as “out of place” because visible disability evokes what Imrie and Kumar (1998) term *aesthetic anxieties*: fears of vulnerability and dependence associated with the possibility of “becoming like that” (p. 363; Hahn, 1986). Unhoused people often provoke similar reactions. Their visibility can trigger fear, discomfort, guilt, or anxiety about poverty and social decline leading to staring, avoidance, surveillance, or increased policing, that communicate they are unwelcome (Mitchell, 2020; Willse, 2015). Media representations intensify these dynamics by portraying homelessness as disruptive, dangerous, or unsightly (Devereux, 2015). These responses function to socially and spatially exclude unhoused people and reinforce the production of disabling spaces.

Citizenship and the Question of the “Public”

Access to public space is one way citizenship becomes unevenly distributed. Painter and Philo (1995) emphasize that being “at home” in public spaces is a precondition for full citizenship, noting that when people feel “uncomfortable, victimized and basically ‘out of place,’” their status as citizens becomes questionable (p. 115). For unhoused people, this condition of belonging is routinely denied. Encampment sweeps, move-along orders, hostile architecture, and ordinances regulating loitering, panhandling, and public assembly criminalize their presence in public space (Mitchell, 2020). Even access to “public” or semi-public institutions such as libraries, bus stations, or businesses is also restricted through formal policy or informal enforcement. These practices limit unhoused people’s ability to exercise rights or participate as equal members of society. As Link and Phelan (2014) note, stigmatized individuals may be perceived as “so different from ‘us’ as to be not really human” (p. 370), a framing that further legitimizes their exclusion from both physical and civic spaces.

Encampments illustrate how unhoused people navigate public space under conditions of exclusion and social hostility. Painter and Philo (1995) describe how those pushed out of mainstream public spaces often, “avoid the public spaces where ‘proper’ citizens go and instead seek and carve out safe havens away from the ‘terrorism’ of such spaces” (p. 116). Encampments thus function as both necessity and survival strategy, offering limited safety, stability, and community within otherwise hostile

or inaccessible environments. Encampment sweeps, often justified in terms of sanitation, safety, or “reclaiming” public space, are therefore more than simple displacement; they signal that unhoused people are not recognized as legitimate users of public space, undermining their claims to citizenship and belonging. Framing encampments in this way highlights that the production and regulation of space for unhoused people is deeply political, and that their exclusion reflects deliberate spatial and policy decisions that render them “less-than-full-and-equal” citizens (Painter & Philo, 1995).

Conclusion

This paper has argued that homelessness should be understood as a socially produced disabling condition. Unhoused people are limited in their ability to navigate daily life, access resources, and claim full citizenship not only because of economic deprivation, but because of social, spatial, and institutional arrangements that structure exclusion. The framework of disabling spaces reveals how public attitudes, urban design, and policy decisions produce environments that restrict mobility, visibility, and participation.

These insights highlight the value of disability-informed approaches to homelessness. Attention to stigma, aesthetic anxieties, and the built environment clarifies how exclusion is actively produced rather than simply experienced. This perspective suggests that responses to homelessness must go beyond housing provision alone to address the broader conditions that generate exclusion, including spatial justice, equitable access to public space, inclusive urban design, and challenging stigma. Centering rights, citizenship, and belonging rather than control and containment offers a pathway toward a more equitable public sphere.

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Language Access in Restorative Justice and the Criminalization of Linguistic Identity

Dr. Omara Rivera-Vázquez & Seema Gadh Kumar, J.D.

Across the United States, individuals are routinely excluded from meaningful participation in legal systems not because of unlawful behavior, but because they cannot fully understand or be understood within them. Critical criminology has long examined the criminalization of race (Alexander, 2012), poverty (Reiman & Leighton, 2020), immigration status (Ryo et al., 2025), disability (Santoro & Morgan, 2025), and gender identity (Coppola, 2023). However, linguistic identity remains comparatively underexamined as a mechanism through which inequality is produced and punishment is unevenly distributed (Rodriguez, Ballard & Martinez, 2025).

The criminalization of linguistic identity rarely appears in overt or traditionally punitive forms. Instead, it operates through institutional omission: untranslated materials, inaccessible proceedings, inadequate interpretation services, and assumptions that English proficiency is the default condition for civic participation. These barriers are often framed as logistical or budgetary challenges rather than questions of equity. However, when individuals cannot understand legal processes, communicate effectively, or advocate for themselves, exclusion becomes systematic rather than incidental.

Language, in this context, functions as a form of social power, shaping whose voices are recognized as legitimate and whose are marginalized within institutional settings (Rosa & Flores, 2017). Individuals who cannot conform to dominant linguistic norms may be perceived as less credible, less cooperative, or less deserving of procedural consideration. This dynamic is particularly important within restorative justice (RJ), which is often positioned as a more equitable alternative to punitive systems. Restorative models emphasize dialogue, accountability, and community participation (Zehr, 2002). Yet these processes fundamentally depend on communication. Restorative circles, mediation, and facilitated dialogue require participants to articulate harm, express accountability, and engage in emotionally complex exchanges. When individuals cannot fully understand proceedings or communicate in their preferred language, the process itself is compromised.

Rather than serving as an inclusive alternative, RJ can inadvertently reinforce inequality by

privileging those who can engage fluently within dominant linguistic norms. Participation becomes conditional, and language operates as a gatekeeping mechanism that shapes access to repair.

Our research conducted across Vermont's statewide restorative justice network illustrates this tension. Vermont operates RJ programs in all 14 counties, with referrals coming from courts, prosecutors, corrections, and law enforcement. Although often perceived as linguistically homogenous, more than 30 languages are spoken across the state, and thousands of residents report speaking English less than "very well" (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). Despite this diversity, many RJ programs historically lacked formal language access plans, interpreter protocols, translated materials, and staff training related to language justice. There was also no systematic mechanism for tracking language needs. Without processes to identify and respond to language access needs, individuals who speak or sign languages other than English may be less likely to be referred to RJ programs, less able to participate if referred, and ultimately excluded from diversion and rehabilitation opportunities. Language thus operates as an informal, largely invisible exclusion criterion.

The result is a stratified system in which access to restorative pathways is unevenly distributed. Those with linguistic access benefit from diversion and repair, while those without remain within traditional legal processes and face punitive consequences. In this way, language regulates participation and influences exposure to punishment. This debarment is not typically driven by bias or resistance to inclusion. RJ practitioners in Vermont consistently articulate strong commitments to equity (Vermont Association of Court Diversion and Pretrial Services, 2021), while also acknowledging a lack of tools, guidance, and resources to implement language access effectively. As Wacquant (2009) argues, inequality is often reproduced through institutional practices that appear neutral but produce unequal outcomes. The absence of language access infrastructure reflects a design failure, not an individual one.

Statewide language access trainings conducted between 2023 and 2024 highlight the depth of this implementation gap. A majority (68%) of practitioners reported no prior formal training in language access. Staff raised practical questions that revealed systemic uncertainty: How should language needs be identified? Where can interpreters be found? What are legal obligations for language services? How can programs afford interpretation within existing budgets? These concerns underscore a broader institutional reality that language access continues to be treated as optional rather than foundational.

Procedural justice theory helps explain why this matters. Perceptions of fairness are grounded in voice, dignity, and meaningful participation (Tyler, 2003). When individuals cannot understand or

communicate within legal processes, they are effectively denied these elements. Their presence becomes symbolic rather than substantive. This dynamic disproportionately affects immigrant communities, refugees, Indigenous populations, and other racialized groups. Linguistic identity rarely operates in isolation; it intersects with broader systems of inequality and belonging. Raciolinguistic scholarship demonstrates how language and race are co-constructed, shaping perceptions of legitimacy and deviance (Rosa, 2019). In practice, English dominance bolsters assumptions about who “belongs” within institutions and who must adapt in order to be included.

Recent federal policy developments further illustrate these dynamics. The 2025 revocation of Executive Order 13166 marked a significant shift away from federal commitments to language access. While formal protections remain, the rollback signals an ideological reorientation toward English-centered governance. Language access is increasingly treated as discretionary rather than obligatory, intensifying the vulnerability of multilingual communities.

At the same time, Vermont’s restorative justice system demonstrates the possibility of change. Following our statewide training and technical assistance, programs began developing language access plans, establishing interpreter protocols, and creating multilingual outreach materials ([VT RJ Language Access | Vcjin](#)). More importantly, practitioners began reframing language access not as a compliance issue, but as a core dimension of equity and community engagement.

Our engagement in the RJ realm demonstrated that language justice is not rooted in basic access to translation, but rather, it speaks to broader value propositions - power, recognition, and institutional design. Restorative justice programs occupy a critical pivotal position within this landscape. They can either replicate systemic inequalities or model more inclusive approaches that recognize linguistic diversity as a fundamental component of participation. From a critical criminological perspective, this raises an important question: who is justice designed for? When access to participation depends on linguistic conformity, the system effectively conditions fairness on assimilation. Individuals are excluded not because of their actions, but because institutions are not structured to accommodate their identities. Language status, therefore, deserves greater attention within analyses of the criminalization of identity. It functions as a subtle but impactful mechanism through which individuals are sorted into different pathways of justice. Some are offered opportunities for repair and reintegration, while others are routed toward punishment. If restorative justice is to fulfill its promise as an equitable alternative, it must confront this issue. Language access cannot be regarded as an add-on or afterthought. It must be

embedded within the design of justice systems themselves.

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The Hockey Canada Sexual Assault Trial: Shades of Jian Ghomeshi's Legal Defense

Dr. Walter S. DeKeseredy, Andrea DeKeseredy & Ping Lam Ip

According to Karl Marx (1977), “Hegel remarks somewhere that all facts and personages of great importance in world history occur, as it were twice” (p. 13). He forgot to add: the first time as tragedy, the second as farce. Marx means that the historical tendency within the legal system and other formal institutions is the reincarnation of ideological narratives that act as filters through which reality is perceived and understood. In the case of the Hockey Canada sexual assault trial that recently concluded in London, Ontario, the tragedies of trial verdicts like the one given to Jian Ghomeshi occurred once again as farce and as a mockery of justice.

As Moore and Shah (2021) put it, “Hockey exists in its own bubble, literally and figuratively. It’s composed mostly of boys and men who are white, cishet, straight, and upper-class. And those who play often become coaches and teach the same values to the next generation” (p. 1). Yet, this bubble burst because of recent scholarly, political, and media attention given to a case that many sport sociologists and criminologists would probably define as “an episode seen around the world” (Young, 2019, p. 38). In April 2025, five professional hockey players went on trial for allegedly sexually assaulting a woman in a London, Ontario hotel room while they were members of the 2018 Canadian men’s World Junior gold-medal team. She met some players at a bar and then went to a hotel room with one of them. After they had consensual sex, he invited seven of his teammates into the room, and one slapped her, another spat on her, and she was repeatedly sexually assaulted in several ways by all five players who stood trial. The survivor, who is now almost 30-years-old, claimed that Hockey Canada was told about the assaults and neglected to investigate or punish the perpetrators (Westhead, 2025). To make matters worse, it took the London Police Service six years to charge five of the eight perpetrators.

This case, unequivocally, exemplifies victim blaming and other symptoms of patriarchy endemic to sexual assault trials involving white men of privilege. On July 24, 2025, Justice Maria Caroccia acquitted the five players. Her reasoning was that the complainant’s evidence of her assault was not “credible or reliable” (cited in Salvlan, 2025). Sound familiar?

This case also highlights a broader issue: Hockey Canada's silence and lack of accountability. Hockey Canada is the national governing body for hockey in Canada, overseeing all amateur levels of the sport. It also manages national teams. Hockey Canada, too, receives funding from the Canadian federal government, which primarily comes through Sport Canada, a branch of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

On July 27, 2022, news sources reported that Hockey Canada had settled 21 sexual misconduct claims since 1989, paying out CAD\$8.9 million in compensation. Nine victims were paid from Hockey Canada's National Equity Fund, partially funded by membership fees paid for by parents entering their children into the sport (DeKeseredy et al., 2026). Then, there is the words of *Montreal Gazette* journalist Jack Todd (2022), "the mother of all hockey sex scandals, the Hockey Canada Eight and the decision made by hockey's national governing body to pay off the victim of an alleged 2018 gang sexual assault to settle a CAD\$3.55 million lawsuit and buy her silence on behalf of her assailants" (p. 1). There is now substantial evidence to support Todd's (2023) declaration that these payments were:

obviously routine (and a blatant misuse of funds from sponsors, parent, and the government) gives some indication of the depth of the misogyny behind decisions taken by Hockey Canada's directors, the actions of some National Hockey League (NHL) executives, and the players themselves, who operate with the brazen entitlement of those who know they will never be held accountable (p.1).

The famous case of Jian Ghomeshi, though he is not a professional hockey player, is briefly retold here because (1) it, like the Hockey Canada trial, illustrates how negative perceptions of victim credibility are repeatedly perpetuated and legitimated by an unknown number of Canadian defense lawyers in sexual assault cases, and (2) like the Hockey Canada trial, it generated a substantial amount of Canadian media and public attention.

Ghomeshi was the host and co-creator of the Canadian CBC radio show *Q*, a job he held from 2007 to October 2014, when he was fired because CBC saw "graphic evidence that [he] caused physical injury to a woman" (CBC News, 2014a, p. 1). Shortly after his dismissal, the *Toronto Star* newspaper published allegations by three women who said that Ghomeshi sexually assaulted them (Donovan & Brown, 2014). On November 26, 2014, Ghomeshi turned himself in to the Toronto Police Service and was charged with four counts of sexual assault and one count of overcoming resistance by choking after a police investigation that started on October 31. He appeared in court the same day and was released on

\$100,000 bail with the conditions that he surrender his passport, stay in the province of Ontario, and live with his mother (CBC, News, 2014b).

Ghomeshi's trial began on February 1, 2016, and the judge delivered his verdict on March 24, 2016. Many scholars and advocates engaged in efforts to end sexual assault view this outcome as eerily similar to the July 24, 2025, outcome of the Hockey Canada trial. Like the strategy used by the Hockey Canada defendants' lawyers, Ghomeshi's attorney, Marie Henein, attacked the credibility of three complainants by stating that they withheld information from the police and lied under oath (Associated Press, 2016).

Ghomeshi was acquitted based on Justice William B. Hopkins' interpretation that there was "outright deception" in the three complainants' testimonies. He relayed the following information to the court:

The success of this prosecution depended entirely on the court being able to accept each complainant as a sincere, honest and accurate witness... Each complainant was revealed, at trial to be lacking in these important attributes. The evidence of each complainant suffered not just from inconsistencies and questionable behaviour, but was tainted by outright deception.

The harsh reality is that once a witness has been shown to be deceptive and manipulative in giving their evidence, the witness can no longer expect the court to consider them to be a trusted source of the truth.

I am forced to conclude that it was impossible for the court to have sufficient faith in the reliability or sincerity of these complainants. Put simply, the volume of serious deficiencies in the evidence leaves the court with reasonable doubt (quoted by CBC News, 2016).

Three women who claimed Ghomeshi assaulted them made formal legal complaints and appeared in court, but a total of nine women publicly made terrifying allegations against him, ranging from workplace sexual harassment to choking without consent. Seven of them spoke to the *Toronto Star* under condition of anonymity, while *Trailer Park Boys* actress Lucy De Coutere (who went to trial) publicly identified herself (Donovan, 2014).

Reading some of the nine women's revelations makes it plain that such events can enormously impact abused women's lives. Furthermore, as documented in DeKeseredy et al.'s (2023) book *Skating on Thin Ice: Professional Hockey, Rape Culture, & Violence Against Women*, these survivors, like those who were, and are victimized by elite male hockey players and other athletes, do not constitute a minority of

among Canadian women. Annually, thousands of women across Canada experience similar assaults (DeKeseredy, 2022). Even so, hardly any of them report sexual attacks and harassment for reasons like those articulated by a few of Ghomeshi's victims: fear of losing their jobs, intimidation, stigmatization, police and prosecutor insensitivity, and bullying on social media.

This is not to say that all survivors of violence committed by men affiliated with athletic teams (and men in general) are simply passive victims. Though many women, like the complainant in the Hockey Canada case, live through violent events that few people are capable of imagining, they are strong, brave women who make great strides toward recovery and who plan futures free of fear, pain, and patriarchal tyranny. Much more legal, social scientific, and journalistic attention should be devoted to focusing on the resilience of women who are, or were, abused by prominent male athletes and their courageous responses to the face-to-face and digital variants of violence they have endured.

Nonetheless, the Ghomeshi and Hockey Canada trials are powerful reminders that many female sexual assault survivors experience *institutional betrayal*. This involves insensitive responses by trusted persons in authority or leadership that "are experienced by victims as an especially acute form of disbelief and rejection because they come from social groups that victims often identify with and consider important parts of their self-concept" (Swartout & Flack, 2019, p. 291).

Sexual assault survivors will tell you that the criminal justice system symbolizes institutional betrayal. From an early age, they, and most people throughout Canada and numerous other countries, are socialized to trust police officers, prosecutors, and judges. For most of the few sexual assault survivors who have the courage to come forward with allegations, however, reality quickly sets in, and this trust is broken, rarely to be repaired. This, again, happened on July 24, 2025, at 10 a.m., when Justice Maria Carroccia announced her verdicts. As feminist criminologists who focus heavily on the damage caused by sexual assault, we, and all those with similar beliefs, research agendas and politics, contend that it is time to make the collective trauma caused by the Ghomeshi and Hockey Canada trials (and similar ones) go away!

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Misrecognition and Victimization: The South Asian American Experience

Dr. Hyeseon Noh & Dr. Deena Isom

Critical criminology has long recognized that people are policed and punished not only for what they do but for who they are. While *Robinson v. California* (1962) established that status itself cannot be made a crime, research consistently finds those holding marginalized status identities are the most frequently entangled in the criminal legal system and face the greatest collateral consequences after such experiences (e.g., Leighton et al., 2025). Recently, the U.S. Supreme Court went as far as to say appearance and language, among other characteristics, are acceptable factors for consideration of reasonable suspicion (*Noem v. Vasquez Perdomo*, 2025). Critical scholarship often examines the disparate experiences of Black Americans, and there is a significant rise in scholarship around those in the Latine community. Yet, there is dearth of research on the Asian American experience, particularly between the varied lives of those with differing national origins. One group, in particular, often faces discrimination and criminalization based on who they are *perceived* to be – South Asian Americans.

In the American racial imagination, “Asian” means East Asian. South Asians, including Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan, and Nepali Americans, routinely fall out of the category. In national survey data, fewer than half of Americans classify Indians as Asian, and Pakistanis are statistically as likely to be classified as Arab or Middle Eastern as they are Asian (Lee & Ramakrishnan, 2020). South Asians are instead absorbed into a perceptual field we might call “Brown.” Brown is not a demographic group. It is a visual category that collapses South Asian, Middle Eastern and Arab, and at times Latine communities into a single racialized figure, despite different histories, religions, and politics. Cainkar (2018) traces this genealogy. A racial project built first around Arabs, later extended to Muslims under the constructed label of the Middle Easterner, and ultimately expanded to sweep in South Asians as part of a generalized Brown terror threat. Within Asian America, colorism compounds the exclusion, pushing darker-skinned South Asians to the margins of a category built around East Asian faces (Sissoko et al., 2026).

This perceptual logic has deep legal roots. In *United States v. Bhagat Singh Thind* (1923), the Supreme Court held that a Sikh man, classified as Caucasian by the era's racial science, was not white in the understanding of the common man. Perception, the Court announced, overrides classification. A century later the same logic runs in reverse. The common eye reads a turban, a beard, or brown skin as Muslim, and reads Muslim as terrorist, regardless of the person's actual religion, nationality, or politics (Ahmad, 2004; Rana, 2007; Selod, 2015). What gets punished is the misrecognition itself.

The record is unambiguous. Four days after September 11, 2001, Balbir Singh Sodhi, a Sikh gas station owner in Arizona, became the first person killed in post-9/11 retaliatory violence. His killer announced at a bar he wanted to kill "ragheads"; he found Sodhi with three Mexican men and shot only Sodhi, bearded and turbaned (Ahmad, 2004). In 2012, a white supremacist murdered six worshippers at a Sikh gurdwara in Oak Creek, Wisconsin; a seventh later died of his wounds. In 2017, Srinivas Kuchibhotla, an Indian engineer, was shot in a Kansas bar by a man yelling "get out of my country" who later told a bartender he had shot "two Iranians." In each case the victim's actual religion, nationality, and politics were irrelevant. As Ahmad (2004) argued, post-9/11 violence collectively adjudged "Muslim-looking" people guilty. The Brown body stood in for a feared figure, and perception was a sufficient warrant to kill.

These individual acts mirror institutional logics. After 9/11, the NSEERS special registration program required noncitizen men from twenty-four Muslim-majority countries to be fingerprinted and interrogated (Selod & Embrick, 2013). The program placed thousands in removal proceedings and produced not a single terrorism conviction. The NYPD Demographics Unit mapped neighborhoods, mosques, student associations, and businesses by ethnicity and religion rather than conduct, and by its own commander's sworn admission never generated an investigative lead. Pantazis and Pemberton (2009) describe the result as a "suspect community," a population targeted not for what its members have done but for what they are presumed to be. They note this category sweeps in even Sikhs and Hindus mistaken for Muslims by skin color alone. Rios's (2006) account of hypercriminalization extends here. Once a group is marked, ordinary noncriminal behavior reads as deviant, so dress, names, language, and religious identity become indicators of risk when borne by Brown bodies (Selod & Embrick, 2013). Because the suspect category is perceptual rather than empirical, accuracy is never required. Misrecognition does not weaken this form of social control; misrecognition *is* the mechanism.

The South Asian case exposes three blind spots in how American institutions and criminology handle race. First, it reveals the limits of our categories. South Asians are formally “Asian” in census terms, yet their criminalization experience tracks the “Middle Eastern/Muslim” axis. A group can be statistically invisible, aggregated into “Asian” data dominated by East Asian experiences, while remaining hyper-visible as a perceived threat. Disaggregation is the difference between documenting and erasing a pattern of victimization. Second, it strains the legal architecture of protection. Hate crime statutes hinge on bias against the victim’s protected status, but what is the operative status when a Hindu man is killed for being “Muslim” or a Sikh man for being “Arab” (Ahmad, 2004)? Only after sustained Sikh and South Asian advocacy following Oak Creek did the FBI add anti-Sikh, anti-Hindu, and anti-Arab hate crime categories in 2013, with collection beginning in 2015, a reform won by communities acting as agents, not victims. In the FBI’s 2022 data, anti-Sikh hate crimes reached a record high, making Sikhs the second-most-targeted religious group in the nation (FBI, 2023). Third, perceptual criminalization travels. The same conflation sweeps in Arab Christians, Iranian Jews, and Latine men read as Middle Eastern. The threat is projected onto a shared phenotype rather than discrete groups, and scholarship that studies these communities in isolation will miss the mechanism that links them.

Criminalization of status and identity is usually framed as punishment for who one is. The South Asian experience sharpens the claim. People are punished for who they are perceived to be, an injury from outside that operates on a different axis than the internal coping costs documented by disaggregated research. A critical criminology adequate to this moment must treat perception itself as a site of social control, asking how threat perception is produced, institutionalized, and acted upon. Until our categories, statutes, and data can see South Asians clearly, the punishment for misperception will keep falling on those least able to contest the label.

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From Savagery to Tren de Aragua: The Tattooed Body as an Ethnoracial Other

Dr. David Lane

This paper contends that some people use tattoos as evidence of a troubling condition to define a deviant other. Borrowing from the literatures on the social construction of social problems[i] and racial formation[ii] there are many claims where the presence of tattoos coincides with some combination of race, ethnicity, and social class to define this other. Efforts to intertwine tattoos with crime and deviance are ideological attempts to stabilize the social, political, and economic systems of stratification. Moreover, historical and contemporary evidence perpetuates a narrative about western colonialism and the ability to control an ethnoracial other.

Evidence in pre capitalist societies reveals people using tattoos to delineate problematic bodies and establish power relations by ethnicity or class. Xerxes tattooed prisoners of war and inscribed his mark on slaves.[iii] Julius Ceasar's invading Roman armies depicted the Celts as uncivil savages for their use of blue tattoos.[iv] Two kidnapped Inuit women with facial tattoos were displayed in Antwerp in 1566 as evidence of ungodly, flesh-eating, savages.[v][vi] This was an early form of racialization[vii] that tied tattooed bodies to non-white others, that may be less than human. Tattoos were symbolic markers of status divisions, and they functioned to reinforce the dominant social order.

Western science, especially biocriminology, has associated tattoos with criminality,[viii] and questioned if tattoo wearers were human.[ix] Lombroso stated, "Tattooing is the true writing of savages, their first registry of civil condition."[x]. These accounts often minimized the classism and racism associated with these scholars who openly admitted to ignoring wealthy whites in the western world who were collecting tattoos.[xi]

Gangs, Official Agencies, and the State

In the contemporary United States, there are many organizations and agencies that use tattoos as evidence of criminality. These associations are largely the product of bureaucratic record keeping that reinforces

race class dynamics. Historically, sailors, members of the military, and criminals are the three populations with the most documentation of their tattoos.[xii] This record keeping was for practical purposes—people needed to identify bodies or body parts recovered at sea or in times of war. In addition, much like fingerprints, records of tattoos have historically assisted police and prison officials to identify offenders. Importantly, members of all these groups are disproportionately from the working and lower classes—unlike tattooed lawyers, doctors, nurses, and accountants, who were far less likely to have their bodies documented in records.[xiii] These associations persist in the contemporary context.

At the federal level in the United States several agencies specifically depict tattoos as evidence of gang membership. The Criminal Division of the Department of Justice defines gangs as:

Gangs are associations of three or more individuals who adopt a group identity in order to create an atmosphere of fear or intimidation. Gangs are typically organized upon racial, ethnic, or political lines and employ common names, slogans, aliases, symbols, tattoos, style of clothing, hairstyles, hand signs or graffiti. The association's primary purpose is to engage in criminal activity and the use of violence or intimidation to further its criminal objectives and enhance or preserve the association's power, reputation, or economic resources.[xiv]

The vagueness of this definition could apply to upper-class fraternity members who share the same frat logo as a tattoo. Importantly, it is a federal agency engaged in an effort to define an ethnoracial other who is trouble, which functions to reinforce the racial order by subordinating non-white bodies with tattoos.

To understand what constitutes a gang tattoo for the purpose of determining gang membership, I personally contacted the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Bureau of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Information Center, National Gang Center, and National Gang Intelligence Center. None of these agencies admitted to having such a definition. Only one department, the Tattoo and Graffiti team within the FBI, has a conceptualization. Much of their focus is on trying to understand the ways that tattoos may contain coded messages. Despite federal agencies not having a definition of a gang tattoo, published materials from the National Gang Center Newsletter published state: “Gang tattoos are identifiers to show that individuals are part of a gang, which many consider to be their extended family.”[xv] That section later states that lion, crown, and star tattoos are evidence of gang membership. It does not consider that these are popular tattoo choices, and maybe only some who have them are gang members.

The State and Gang Surveillance

In the spring of 2025, mass media revealed Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) used tattoos in part to identify and detain supposed Tren de Aragua (TdA) members for deportation. Common tattoo symbols like clocks, watches, eyes, roses, skulls, crowns, trains, and even the Michael Jordan jumpman logo were evidence of membership.[xvi] Tattoos are only one of one of the 20 criteria listed for gang membership in the *Alien Enemy Validation Guide (AEVG)*, but a single tattoo counts for 4 of the 8 points needed to be defined as a TdA member.[xvii] In any case, this is an effort to define an ethnoracial other by tattoos and reinforce the system of stratification.

This is not a new project stabilizing the racial order. This same use of tattoos has occurred in laws targeting suspected gang members at state and local levels over the past 40 years.[xviii] Both gang injunctions and gang databases function to publicly reinforce racial and class lines.[xix] Both terms are vague and lack objective falsification.[xx] Places like Texas (TXgang), California (CalGang), and Illinois (LEADS) have databases. In each of these states one of the ten or fewer criteria to determine membership in a gang is either ‘tattoos’ or ‘gang related tattoos’.[xxi] These rubrics are less detailed than the *AEVG*, but nonetheless they were chronological predecessors. What constitutes a gang related tattoo may be an innocuous symbol or have some other meaning. Presuming the authorities have cracked this imaginary code is fanciful. Some states even share these databases with ICE.[xxii]

The assumption that tattoos are associated with criminality relies on larger social processes involving race, class, and ethnicity. It is an ideological effort to stabilize race and class relations as it disproportionately targets those under the gaze of the criminal justice system evidenced in contemporary and historical eras. This ideology reflects the imagined criminal underworld.[xxiii] To some degree the tattooed convict body[xxiv] reproduces classed and raced social order much like the styles adopted by the teddy boys, mods, rockers, and punks.[xxv] This body is dangerous and it is easily identified by its tattoos, obscuring the efforts to reinforce ethnoracial subordination through organizations of law enforcement and social control.

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[i] (Best & Monahan 2025; Spector & Kitsuse [1987] 2001).

[ii] (Omi & Winant 1986).

[iii] (Jones 2000, Pp. 6-7; Gustafson 2000, Pp. 26-27).

[iv] (McQuarrie 2000: 35). Later, people like William Camden lobbied to have the Picts excluded from British unification (Flemming 2000, Pp. 68-77). There are many accounts of the Roman empire using tattoos to mark “slaves, prisoners of war, and criminals” (Gustafson 2000, Pp. 18), often with forehead tattoos for some of those defined as the most problematic offenders, such as idolatry.

[v] One of the first cases of colonial domination over native bodies occurred in 1566, when French and Portuguese sailors kidnapped a tattooed Inuit woman and her daughter. The captors killed her husband. Then, they brought the abducted to Antwerp where a tavern displayed them as evidence of ungodly, flesh-eating, savages (Sturtevent 1980).

[vi] Similar versions of this narrative appear in multiple accounts of western explorers (Allen 1991; DeMello 2000), such as Captain James Cook who people (Lemma 2010) often inaccurately described as the discoverer of tattoos.

[vii] (Omi & Winant 1986, Pp. 64-66)

[viii] (Adams 2009; Jennings et al. 2014; Koch et al 2005; Rima et al. 2023; Silver et al. 2009).

[ix] (Darwin [1874] 190; Goring 1913; Hooten 1939; Lombroso 1896). Darwin noted that: “Not one great country can be named, from the Polar regions in the north to New Zealand in the south, in which the aborigines do not tattoo themselves” ([1874] 1902, pp.368).

[x] This quote was in a passage depicting tattoos as evidence of atavism, and after connecting tattooing to various societies like the Picts, Samoans, Māori, and women of Bagdad. (Lombroso 1896, pp. 802)

[xi] (Lombroso [1896] 2006; see also Bolton 1902; and Lodder 2024). Lombroso ([1876] 2006) begins this article on tattooing by stating he is going to ignore the fad of wealthy white women getting forearm tattoos because it is an outlier and cannot be explained as a confirmation of atavism.

[xii] Dye (1976); Lodder (2024); (Royal Museums Greenwich n.d.). As Dye (1976) and Burns (2009) both note early preindustrial seafarers engaged in the practice of tattooing disproportionately when compared to the general population. In part, their tattoos served a practical function—the recovery and identification of bodies lost at sea. King Harold II’s body was identified after the Battle of Hastings by its tattoos (Royal Museums Greenwich n.d.).

[xiii] Parry ([1933] 2006) contains a description of a wealthy New York lawyer and tattoo collector trying to pay a salary to a Japanese tattoo master to work in the U.S.

[xiv] U. S. Department of Justice (2023).

[xv] (National Gang Intelligence Center, 2016, Pp. 2).

[xvi] Texas Department of Public Safety (2024).

[xvii] *J.G.G. v Trump* (2025).

[xviii] Muniz (2013), Siegel (2003).

[xix] Muniz (2013), Powell (2025).

[xx] Popper, K. ([1962] 2002).

[xxi] Texas Department of Public Safety (2022); California Penal Code (2025); Illinois State Police (2021); Siegel (2003).

[xxii] Paddock (2025).

[xxiii] Khalifa (2019).

[xxiv] DeMello (1993), Adams (2009).

[xxv] Hall and Jefferson (1976), Hebdige (1979)

Announcements & New Publications

Announcements

Critical Migration and Deportation Studies Conference

Thursday, August 6th, 2026 from 9:30am to 6:00pm
Baruch College Library and Technology Building, Room H-750
151 E. 25th St., New York, NY 10010

Join us for a day of critical conversations on migration, deportation, and immigration policy. Bringing together scholars, advocates, and individuals with lived experience, the conference examines criminalization, state violence, surveillance, detention, sanctuary policies, and community resistance amid the expanding reach of contemporary immigration enforcement and deportation regimes.

Co-sponsored by the Marx School of Public and International Affairs at Baruch College, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, the Social Change and Transformative Studies Project at John Jay College, and Villanova University.

Link for more information: <https://marxe.baruch.cuny.edu/critical-migration-conference/>

Sukanya Bhattacharya, a Ph.D. student at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, is one of the recipients of the 2026 ASC Ruth D. Peterson Fellowships for Racial and Ethnic Diversity. Congratulations, Sukanya!

The University of North South Wales is seeking a **Senior Lecturer or Associate Professor** in Criminology. For more information on the posting please click [here](#).

The School of Criminal Justice at Michigan State University is recruiting a **Research Associate** (Postdoctoral Scholar) to work on multiple funded projects examining neighborhood influences on youth violence decision-making and effective interventions. The position involves qualitative data analysis — including coding of interview and focus group transcripts using NVivo — with individuals in disadvantaged communities in Lansing, Michigan. This is a one-year, full-time appointment. Review of applications begins July 6, 2026. For more information please click [here](#).

New Publications

Caylin Louis Moore. (2026). "Collateral Decision-Making: The Case of Pretrial Detention and the Criminal Courts." *American Sociological Review*, 0(0).

Link: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/00031224261423211>

Abstract: Research shows that penal state involvement facilitates a wide range of detrimental consequences, yet existing theoretical accounts tend to focus on stigma or exclusion, leaving the role of individual decision-making underspecified. To address this gap, I advance the concept of collateral decision-making: the process by which individuals, embedded in a criminal legal institution, make decisions that carry adverse consequences in another institution, whether within or beyond the criminal legal sphere. Through this process, individuals reframe how they navigate a particular institution to mitigate negative experiences generated by a criminal legal institution. I analyze in-depth interviews with 65 pretrial detainees simultaneously embedded in jails and criminal courts—two state institutions that constitute distinct structural constraints, functions, and decision-making points. The findings expose why and how the disadvantage of pretrial detention recalibrates decision-making and translates into unfavorable court outcomes, as detainees accept plea agreements to escape violence, the misery of court holding tanks, poor jail conditions, and address primary-caregiver role strain—even while maintaining their innocence. The analysis also reveals that detainees sometimes forgo the potential benefit of legal counsel, offering a compelling account of how this decision appears reasonable within the structural constraints of jail detention, yet ultimately reproduces institutional disadvantage. The findings illustrate how penal state involvement cascades across institutional boundaries, shaping individual behavior and reinforcing social disparities.

Caylin Louis Moore and Rebecca D. Gleit. (2026). "Policing Now, Gentrification Later? The Case of Civil Gang Injunctions in Los Angeles." *Urban Affairs Review*, 62(1), 254-290.

Link: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/10780874251350980>

Abstract: While most research examines how gentrification influences policing, we interrogate the opposite. Specifically, we ask whether intensified policing in a disinvested neighborhood can encourage later gentrification. To explore this, we focus on civil gang injunctions (CGIs) in the City of Los Angeles—a legal tool that targets Black and Latinx neighborhoods by criminalizing alleged gang members' public presence. Using geospatial methods and a quasi-experimental design, we compare gentrification rates in CGI-impacted neighborhoods with observably similar non-CGI "control" neighborhoods. Our findings show that CGIs can instigate gentrification in neighborhoods with sufficient "White Visibility"—a minor but noticeable number of White residents. In these cases, policing seems to act as a buffer that draws new, higher socioeconomic status residents to disinvested neighborhoods. This article contributes to broader theories of social control and urban transformation by identifying conditions under which criminal justice policies can actively shape neighborhood change.

Selman, K. J., Baggett, H. C., & Turner, J. (2026.) "If you think this vilifies the police, then you think the police are villains": Teaching Reparations Won as an antidote to copaganda." *Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy*, 1-21.

Link: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/15505170.2026.2685010>

Abstract: Building on prior research about copaganda and pro-police socialization, we argue that the Reparations Won curriculum in Chicago Public Schools is an antidote to police legitimization efforts in K-12 schools. Specifically, the curriculum affirms student experiences that are not accounted for nor deemed possible in a world built by and for policing; it emphasizes relationship-building and centers definitions of community that resist the alienation required for such a world; and it facilitates an understanding of local histories as inseparable from broader social structures. We conclude that in an era of contested curricula, Reparations Won provides the structure needed to grapple with taken-for-granted assumptions about the benevolence and necessity of policing, and from there, to dream up and build alternative futures.

Henson, A. (2026). Abolition Ancestry. In: Anthony, T., Bhatia, M., Pillay, K., Williams, J.M. (Eds). *The Palgrave Handbook of Racial Injustice and Resistance. Palgrave Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Indigeneity and Criminal Justice*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-032-02242-4_28

Abstract: This chapter examines the deep roots of carceral society and the ongoing transformation of racialized social control from colonial conquest to the modern prison system. Abigail Henson challenges the misconception that abolition is simply about ending police and prisons overnight, arguing instead for a radical shift in cultural values and collective consciousness. The chapter traces how the pursuit of wealth and power by European colonizers led to chattel slavery, the creation of racial hierarchies, and the evolution of those systems into convict leasing, Jim Crow, and mass incarceration. Henson highlights how narratives of insecurity and white supremacy fueled laws and practices that criminalized Blackness and normalized white violence. She emphasizes the power of Black resistance and storytelling in driving cultural change that precedes meaningful policy reform. The chapter critiques the culture of control that underlies mass incarceration, exposing how poverty, mental illness, and racial stereotypes are used to justify state violence. Henson calls for abolitionist practice that invests in community-based alternatives, harm reduction, restorative justice, and equitable access to housing and employment. Abolition, she argues, is not about abandoning accountability but about building systems that promote genuine well-being and collective safety. The chapter ultimately calls for a new vision of justice rooted in community, care, and the rejection of carceral logics.

Henson, A. R., Bennett, J. Z., Forney, M., & Martinez, G. (2026). The good, the bad, the ugly: A qualitative exploration of life-course posttraumatic growth for individuals formerly sentenced to juvenile life without parole. *Criminology*, 1–26.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9125.70051>

Abstract: This study explores the profound and often overlooked developmental journeys of individuals sentenced to life without parole as minors. Through in-depth life-history interviews with 30 formerly incarcerated people, we examine how they forged personal growth amid the cumulative trauma of long-term confinement. Our analysis reveals developmental paths aligned with the posttraumatic growth framework, which recognizes how strength and transformation can emerge from profound adversity. Participants shared accounts of how incarceration shaped their identities, values, and sense of purpose, even in the absence of institutional support for meaningful change. Findings challenge readers to reflect on the paradox between the human capacity for change over time and long-term incarceration, particularly as it relates to individuals who entered confinement during a critical period of ongoing psychosocial development.

Salman, S. (2026). ‘We Are Not Freeloaders:’ Harmful Welfare Narratives and Counter-Narratives Among Resettled Iraqi Refugees in the United States. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 0(0).

Abstract: At a moment of dramatic retreat from refugee resettlement, accompanied by anti-immigrant political discourse that criminalizes migrants, this study examines how Iraqi resettled refugees who came to the United States with Special Immigrant Visa status following the 2003 war in Iraq navigate stigmatizing welfare dependency tropes and narrate their identities. Using the lens of narrative criminology and based on interviews with Iraqi resettled refugees and social service staff, this study asks how resettled Iraqi refugees construct narratives of self and identity in relation to the organizational narratives they encounter at social services offices, and what these narratives reveal about welfare administration as a site of social harm. Findings show that while resettled refugees construct counter-narratives, these are limited in their emancipatory potential and reproduce harmful narratives of welfare. The study contributes to narrative criminology’s engagement with welfare settings as sites of social harm.

Thai, M. (2026). *Kid cops: What communities gain and lose from junior police in schools*. University of Chicago Press.

Discount: Use code UCPNEW for 30% off if purchased directly from the [University of Chicago Press](#)

Resource: Downloadable [Reading, Discussion, and Teaching Guide](#)

About the Book: *Kid Cops* moves beyond the narrative of detentions, suspensions, and arrests to tell a less conventional story about police in schools. It asks, does good, friendly policing exist—especially if it continues to tether low-income communities of color to the criminal justice

system? Written in an accessible tone that balances the seriousness of inequality with the playfulness of the study's youth, *Kid Cops* engages with the following themes and course topics:

Criminology, Criminal Justice, Law & Society

Education, Critical Educational Studies

Sociology, including Introduction to Sociology

Youth & Childhood

Economic & Racial Inequalities

Research Methods, Qualitative Methods, Ethnography, Field Methods, Interviewing

What We Are Reading/Watching/Listening To

Reading

Canada, K. E., Givens, A., Garcia-Hallett, J., & Huebner, B. M. (2025). *Community-engaged research with marginalized populations*. Sage Publications, Inc.

Description: This text is a concise, accessible, and applied *how-to* guide for people interested in conducting community-engaged research. The authors define specific community-engaged research approaches, and then present a variety of strategies, resources, and tips throughout the book in the context of social justice and ethics. Written by authors who teach research methods and who conduct community-engaged research, the book benefits from a range of case studies and examples from areas as diverse as mental health, criminal-legal research, and urban planning. A short companion guide posted on the Resources tab above is designed for research teams to use collaboratively to build capacity in carrying out their research within communities.

Barnes-Ceeney, K., & Espinoza, V. (2026). Release day. In *The Routledge International Handbook of Sensory Criminology* (pp. 303-317). Routledge.

Description: An estimated 610,000 people are released from prison in the US each year. The extant literature documents the challenges many returning citizens face as they navigate institutional and social processes rooted in stigma and discrimination. The dulling experience of low-wage work, insecure housing, and weak family ties are the much-documented bleak reality. Limited research examines reentry from a sensory perspective. Sensory criminology seeks to privilege the sensory to uncover new ways of understanding processes of punishment. This chapter shares the many sensory inputs that are experienced on the day of release from prison. We gain an awareness of how release day is experienced, and a glimpse at what release day may mean for those experiencing it. To understand the sensecape of release day, three interviews were conducted with 10 returning citizens over the course of one year. The recordings of the interviews were transcribed and the transcriptions were analyzed to elicit the sensory essences that comprise the release day experience. This chapter explores how the day of release is experienced through the sights, smells, tastes, sounds, and touch described by participants, and uncovers the exhilaration and anxieties that comprise release day.

Lassiter, M.D. (2023). *The suburban crisis: White America and the war on drugs*. Princeton University Press.

Link:

<https://press.princeton.edu/books/hardcover/9780691177281/the-suburban-crisis?srltid=AfmBOoqE6dZu09juQE9nNygIY8QGqg7cDMPskaWeRji8Ge29FICs7GMC>

Description: Since the 1950s, the American war on drugs has positioned white middle-class youth as sympathetic victims of illegal drug markets who need rehabilitation instead of incarceration whenever they break the law. *The Suburban Crisis* traces how politicians, the media, and grassroots political activists crusaded to protect white families from perceived threats while criminalizing and incarcerating urban minorities, and how a troubling legacy of racial injustice continues to inform the war on drugs today.

In this incisive political history, Matthew Lassiter shows how the category of the “white middle-class victim” has been as central to the politics and culture of the drug war as racial stereotypes like the “foreign trafficker,” “urban pusher,” and “predatory ghetto addict.” He describes how the futile mission to safeguard and control white suburban youth shaped the enactment of the nation’s first mandatory-minimum drug laws in the 1950s, and how soaring marijuana arrests of white Americans led to demands to refocus on “real criminals” in inner cities. The 1980s brought “just say no” moralizing in the white suburbs and militarized crackdowns in urban centers.

The Suburban Crisis reveals how the escalating drug war merged punitive law enforcement and coercive public health into a discriminatory system for the social control of teenagers and young adults, and how liberal and conservative lawmakers alike pursued an agenda of racialized criminalization.

Osterweil, V. (2026). *The extended universe: How Disney killed the movies and took over the world*. Haymarket Books.

Link: <https://www.haymarketbooks.org/books/2525-the-extended-universe>

Description: A provocative history of Disney’s rise to cultural dominance, pulling skeletons from the corporate closet to decode the political messages hidden in all of your favorite childhood movies.

In *The Extended Universe*, Vicky Osterweil takes us on a quest to discover how Disney’s “imagineers” have made it impossible to reflect on the wonders of growing up without thinking of Disney’s movies, amusement parks, and merchandising. Drawing on extensive interviews with filmmakers, screenwriters, union organizers, and Disney “adults” alike, Osterweil unearths reactionary political commitments and maleficent legal maneuvers so cartoonishly evil they would make one of Walt’s own animated villains blush.

Along the way, Osterweil braids together corporate skullduggery with a not entirely unsympathetic analysis of some of Disney’s most famous movies. The result is an entertaining and

convincing case that Disney's entire business model has been built upon a ruthless and fanatical insistence on intellectual property rights—from *Steamboat Willie* to *Avengers: Infinity War* and beyond!

Taylor, F. (2026). *The conviction machine: Prosecutors, politicians, and police violence in Chicago*. Haymarket Books

Link: <https://www.haymarketbooks.org/books/2733-the-conviction-machine>

Description: A captivating account of the most corrupt and blood-soaked chapters in Chicago law enforcement history.

In December 1969, the FBI, the Chicago Police Department, and the office of States Attorney, led by rising political star Edward V. Hanrahan, conspired to assassinate Black Panther leader Fred Hampton, and then flagrantly covered up their misconduct. Thirteen years later, Jackie Wilson was tortured by the same police department and wrongfully incarcerated for thirty-six years.

Drawing on unique insights from his role as a leading opposition lawyer in both cases, award-winning author Flint Taylor details the vast political corruption uncovered in the Hampton case and the twists and turns of Wilson's forty-year effort to win his freedom.

With blistering clarity and righteous indignation, *The Conviction Machine* shines a penetrating light on the sordid world of prosecutorial misconduct and police violence.

Gonzalez, V. V. (2026). Punishment as class governance: Bureaucratic (un) knowing and the gradient of state harm. *Punishment & Society*, 1-23.

Link: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/14624745261444370>

Description: Punishment is commonly understood as a response to criminal behavior calibrated by offense severity or legal proportionality. This article advances a different account. It argues that punishment operates as a system of class governance structured through bureaucratic practices of knowing and not-knowing. Criminal-legal institutions do not simply sanction wrongdoing; they organize unequal exposure to punishment by differentially rendering populations administratively visible.

Drawing on scholarship on punishment, bureaucracy, and social stratification, the article develops the concept of bureaucratic (un)knowing to theorize how administrative knowledge and institutionalized ignorance function as penal mechanisms. It introduces the Punishment Gradient as an inverse, class-structured relationship between social position, surveillance exposure, and penal severity. As surveillance exposure intensifies, punishment becomes more likely, more severe, and more durable; as access to insulation and professional mediation increases, penal escalation is constrained or deflected.

By reframing punishment as an epistemic project of governance rather than a neutral legal response, the article explains the persistence of class-stratified punishment and shows how

inequality is administratively produced through routine practices of documentation, classification, and surveillance.

Gonzalez, V. V. (2026). Aesthetic governance in courts and workplaces. *Social & Legal Studies*. 1-25.

Link: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/09646639261461503>

Description: Across courts and workplaces, appearance functions as a condition of institutional visibility. This article theorizes aesthetic governance as a sociolegal mechanism through which law regulates bodies by allocating perceptual attention under conditions of finite observational capacity and dense normative expectations.

In rule-saturated environments, scrutiny cannot be evenly distributed. Aesthetic deviation lowers thresholds of attention, concentrates observation, and increases exposure probability prior to interpretation. Using the concepts of proxy criminalization and anticipatory governance, the article shows how formally neutral standards of decorum and professionalism encode visible difference as scrutiny-relevant and extend attention over time.

Intensified observation amplifies minor deviations, increasing the likelihood that they become actionable even where interpretive standards remain neutral. By locating inequality at the level of exposure rather than judgment, the article demonstrates how differential enforcement can emerge without overt bias or formal rule change.

Listening

Podcast Episode: Are We Falling for ‘Copaganda’? with Alec Karakatsanis

Whatsjust presents Critical Conversations

Dr. Abigail Henson

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/69zbzn11dBC0XSfUjnIsfl?si=VZHqMLdxSla7VzzUhn04EA>

Description: In this episode, I’m joined by Alec Karakatsanis, a trailblazing civil rights lawyer, Founder and Executive Director of Civil Rights Corps, and author of *Copaganda: How Police and the Media Manipulate Our News*. Together, we pull back the curtain on how everyday headlines shape what we believe about crime, safety, and justice, and how those beliefs serve the powerful and not necessarily the public.